Chapter I
Report Writing

A. Introduction

Formal report writing in professional, technical, business and organizational contexts has evolved certain conventions regarding format, style, referencing and other characteristics. These will vary in detail between organizations. Therefore, only general report writing process, formatting and checklist are given below. These should be treated as general guidelines which hold good in the absence of any more specific style of the organization.

B. The process

Identify the purpose of the report

Unless you are certain about the purpose of your report, it is unlikely that your conclusions and/or recommendations will be relevant. Therefore, it is important to clearly identify the purpose of the report. This can be achieved by writing a one-sentence statement about the problem, issue or question being posed. For example, the report may be required to assist in decision-making, to solve a problem or perhaps to persuade the reader to adopt an idea or a particular approach. In any event, this activity requires reflective and analytical thinking.

Alternatively, it may be useful to write a concise title which clearly indicates the content and scope. If you take this approach, however, you should be careful that the title is impartial and does not reflect a bias toward a preferred outcome.

Whenever you write, you should keep your purpose and audience clearly in focus. Begin by considering

- what you want to accomplish with your report: what are your primary and secondary objectives?

- who will be reading your report and for what purposes: What is their background? What questions might they have? What might they expect in terms of content and format?

Identify the readers and their needs

Generally speaking, the reader's knowledge of the subject will influence the type of background information and language you use in your report.

This approach emphasizes the importance of creating meaning for the reader by avoiding unnecessary explanations and focusing on clearly defined issues that help the reader understand the nature and direction of the report.

Research the topic

In order to produce a high quality report, it is necessary to use relevant and current information from a variety of sources. Individuals who may have first-hand knowledge of the subject are a valuable source of information. However, secondary data contained on the net, texts and journal articles will form the bulk of the information for writing your report. It is also worthwhile supplementing this with information contained in newspaper articles, theses, conference papers, speeches, annual reports, brochures, and so on. Besides being an efficient means of collecting data, reading a variety of materials may provide useful insights into the nature of the problem, acquaint you with terminology, theory or methods you had not previously considered, refer you to other sources of information and generally assist you in formulating a tentative outline.

Whilst depth and breadth of reading are highly recommended, for practical purposes you should also be selective in what you read. Ignore outdated and irrelevant materials and always keep in mind the purpose of your report.

It is also important to record your sources on some type of database such as Endnote. Cite the author, date, title, publisher, city of publication and page numbers. The database will assist you to prepare an accurate and complete reference list.

Outline the report

The information gathered by you needs to be reviewed, synthesized and interpreted. Having done so, the next step is to prepare the body of your report. (Leave the introduction and conclusion until later.) This is done by establishing a framework, or structure, around which you will write. Start off by experimenting with four or five major headings as signposts for your thinking. It is within these major sections that you will present the facts, explanations and reasoning that will lead to your conclusions and recommendations. This means that you place related issues into groups according to common characteristics. Again, this is based on the purpose of your report.

Each section heading should clearly indicate its content, should have reader interest and be as brief as possible. You then need to arrange these groups or headings into a logical sequence. The outlining process often requires a number of revisions, but once you are satisfied with it, you can work on developing the sub-sections under each heading.

Write the draft

When you have outlined the body of report, that is, arranged the major section headings and sub-headings, the next step is to prepare the first draft. Do not worry overly about spelling and punctuation at this stage. Instead, focus on the ideas you are presenting, the evidence to support them and their logical flow.

Try to form your own line of argument based on your research data. For every section, commence by writing a sentence which encapsulates your main idea or ideas, then elaborate with supporting evidence. This means that you are expressing the ideas in your own words and explaining to the reader how other writers' ideas have had an influence on your argument, or how your argument has incorporated these ideas, and the reasons for this. If you find a quotation in your reading that makes a strong contribution to your argument, quote it, and ensure that you give reference of the source of the quote. However, avoid over-quoting as the reader will soon lose sense of the argument.

Once this has been done, ensure that the information flows logically and that you have guided the reader's understanding by adding linking statements such as 'After considering..., it follows that... is important'. In other words, you need to explain your line of thinking for the reader, highlighting the relevance and importance of the sections which lead to the conclusion and/or recommendations.

An important consideration in this drafting stage is impartiality. As a researcher and writer, you need to express your ideas in an objective manner. Consequently, it is general practice to write the report in third person, past tense. For example, instead of ' We did this study...' write 'The purpose of this study was to...'. Also remember to write clearly and concisely without contractions such as 'don't' or shouldn't', and avoid using slang.

Edit the draft

Once you have completed a rough draft, you need to check that your ideas are clearly expressed and that your writing makes sense. If possible, you should leave the report for at least one day before editing. Edit it yourself or have someone else proofread the report, checking for inconsistency of argument, poor grammar, spelling, typographical errors. Keep in mind that you may have to prepare several drafts of your report, reading through, correcting and refining your ideas and expression with each one.

The finished product

Making your report as comprehensive and professional as possible plays an important role in communicating your ideas to your reader.

There are various ways of enhancing the visual appeal of your report. Firstly, choose a typeface that is easy to read. Most word processing software offers a variety of font choices. You can also enlarge the font for a title page or reduce it for notations. Use bullet points, italics or boldface for emphasis, but use them consistently throughout the report.

Format the report so that it is visually pleasing. Leave plenty of room in the side margins (particularly the left), and at the top and bottom of each page. Include illustrations, tables or graphs, but make certain that they have been adequately explained in the body of the report. Do not incorporate them unless they are relevant to the point you are making.

C. The Format

The format will depend upon the type and purpose of the report, its intended readers, and the conventions of presentation and layout prescribed by the organization in which you are operating. In general, there are two broad types of format which are differentiated by whether the summary and/or recommendations are placed after the main body of the report, or are placed earlier, before the main body. The eventual format chosen might be a combination or a condensed version of these two formats.

A format where the findings/recommendations follow the main body

- *Cover sheet*
- Title page
- Abstract
- Table of contents
- Introduction
- The body of the report
- Conclusion (and recommendations if applicable)
- References / Bibliography
- Glossary (if needed)
- Appendices

A format where the findings/recommendations precede the main body

- Letter of transmittal
- Title page
- Table of contents
- Summary and/or recommendations
- Body of report
- Conclusions
- Appendices
- Bibliography

Report checklist

Here are some aspects which may be found in each section of a report and which may be of use in organizing and checking the details in your own reports. Section 1.4 Report Sections provides more information on the content and setting out of some of these.

Title page

- title
- writer
- organization
- date
- person/group who commissioned the report

Table of contents

- accurate, clear layout
- section numbering system and indentation
- complete
- page numbers
- list of illustrations if applicable

Abstract

- appropriate length
- complete summary of key information
- informative, not descriptive, in form
- impersonal tone
- connected prose

Introduction

- relating topic to wider field
- necessary background information
- purpose of report
- scope of report
- explanation of arrangement of report
- sections

Body format

- main headings indicating equal level of importance
- all subheadings relating to section heading
- choice of levels indicating hierarchy of importance
- hierarchy of importance shown by careful and consistent use of features such as capitals, different fonts, underlining, bold, italics
- indenting
- numbering/letter system
- space between sections to enhance readability and layout
- when using charts, statistics and illustrations check for suitability, captions, reference in text and positioning
- acknowledgement of all sources, including material referred to indirectly, direct quotations, copied diagrams, tables, statistics
- ensure a systematic link between references in the text and the reference list and bibliography

Section/point identification systems

An important difference between an essay and a report is the layout. This aspect of a report is not merely a surface feature of the presentation. It represents important choices made by the writer regarding the range of the material covered, the relative importance of the sections in the report, and the relatedness of information within sections. As such, it plays a very important role in **communicating meaning** to the reader. The report presents meaning and information in two complementary and equivalent ways:

- the meaning represented by the words, thought, research, information
- the meaning represented by the layout

A writer usually chooses one of the following two layout systems: decimal numbering or number-letter. Once a system is chosen, the writer must present this system consistently throughout the report.

Decimal numbering

First level	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0
(of importance; also termed the A heading)	N.B. The `point-zero' is not always used in decimal numbering systems				
Second level (also termed the B heading)	1.1	2.1	3.1	4.1	5.1
Third level (also termed the C heading)	1.1.1	2.1.1	3.1.1	4.1.1	5.1.1
Fourth level (also termed the D heading)	1.1.1.1	2.1.1.1	3.1.1.1	4.1.1.1	5.1.1.1

This is generally used with indenting to structure the text in the following way.

It is possible for a reader to gain a strong indication of the relatedness, and relative importance of the parts of the text as a result of this layout, even though no **meaning from the content** is provided.

1.0 ____

    1.1 ________________________________

    1.2 ________________________________

        1.2.1_________________________
        1.2.2 _________________________

            1.2.2.1________________
            1.2.2.2 _______________

2.0 ____

    2.1 __________________________________ etc

1.5.2 Number - letter (still encountered, but becoming less commonly used)

First level (of importance/generality) (A heading)	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Second level (B heading)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Third level (C heading)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fourth level (D heading)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
Fifth level (E heading)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)	(vii)

I ______________________________________

  A ______________________________

  B ______________________________

    1 ________________________

    2 ________________________

      (a) ________________

      (b) ________________

II ______________________________________

  A ______________________________

G. Table of contents

The table of contents is assembled from the headings and subheadings of the report's sections, and includes the appropriate identification numbers/letters as well as the page numbers. Here are two examples of setting out, although there are many variations.

Example A

Example B

CONTENTS

Expression

- correct
- own words
- concise
- clear to intended reader
- formal and factual

Content

- logical development of ideas from one section to another, and within each section
- citing evidence
- relevant
- objective
- specific

Conclusion(s)

- arising out of the facts
- convincing
- a substantial basis for the recommendations

Recommendations (if applicable)

- based on the conclusions
- practical
- specific
- well organized, with the most important first

List of references

- sources used in the text listed

Bibliography

- texts consulted but not referred to directly in the report

Glossary (if included)

- arranged alphabetically

Appendix (appendices)

- placed at end of a report if included
- arranged in the order referred to in the report

D. Report sections

Introductions

Introductions to formal reports deal with the following aspects of the text:

(a) *Topic or subject matter:*

It deals with how the report relates to a field, discipline or area of knowledge (reference to external framework). This is normally expressed in terms of why the topic is of sufficient importance or significance to deserve detailed coverage in a report.

(b) *Purpose:*

It covers what is the communicative intention in compiling the report (to describe, explain, examine, review, discuss etc.).

(c) *Scope:*

It includes which aspects of topic or subject matter does the report seek to highlight in fulfilling this purpose; often takes the form of an overview of the organization and structure of the report, i.e. the focus of the major sections; may mention aspects of the topic which have been intentionally omitted.

The above form of introduction differs from that of introductions to shorter scientific reports, in which a brief statement of the aim of the experiment or the hypothesis to be tested is all that is normally found.

The above three-part structure also distinguishes formal report introductions from essay introductions; the latter normally place more emphasis on the topic/field relationship through taking up a position (the *thesis* of the essay) in relation to the aspect of the topic highlighted in the title (often in the form of an arresting statement or thought provoking quotation).

Report introductions may—especially in the case of longer or more formal reports—refer in addition to the sources of the information incorporated within the document; this is done in terms of categories of sources (ie general statements about how and where you gathered your information: from books, articles, statistics, other reports, interviews and so forth).

A final point to note: in this form of introduction the focus should be on the particular report which is being introduced, rather than on the wider field or area to which it relates.

The length of the introduction will vary in proportion to that of the report.

Conclusions

Report conclusions, unlike introductions, cannot readily be analyzed in terms of characteristic structural features. Conclusions are distinguished more by function than by form. In general terms, the principal function of conclusions is to relate to the purpose and scope of the report, as stated in the Introduction. In other words, the conclusion should confirm for the reader that the communicative intention has been achieved, and that the previewed aspects of the topic have been covered.

This general function can be more specifically expressed in a number of ways, including

- to restate purpose and scope
- to review or synthesize the main sections or units of the discussion
- to reiterate the principal points or findings
- to affirm the validity of argument or judgment
- To assert the viability of approach or interpretation

Abstracts

The form and function of the abstract of a report include the following:

- definition, providing the essence of the report in a few words
- informative form, or
- descriptive form
- impersonal tone
- connected writing
- length 150-250 words (for longer reports, 1/2-1 page single-spaced)

The abstract is of utmost importance, for it is read by 10 to 500 times more people than the number of people who hear or read the entire article. It should not be a mere recital of the subjects covered. Expressions such as “is discussed” and “is described” should *never* be included! The abstract should be a condensation and concentration of the *essential information* in the paper.

Informative abstract

An informative abstract is usually written by the author(s) of a report. It appears in the same document as part of the complete text. This abstract describes the research or project and presents the main ideas of the report in a summarized form. Informative abstracts do not duplicate references or tables of results. To achieve economy of expression, the style of informative abstracts often omits terms which identify the particular report (such as `this paper' or `this report').

Descriptive abstract

A descriptive abstract is compiled by someone other than the author of the report to appear in another source, such as a data bank or library catalogue. A descriptive abstract describes the contents of a report but does not include interpretive statements, conclusions or recommendations. It is possible to base a descriptive abstract on the table of contents of a report. It is usually much briefer than an informative abstract.

Citations

When you write an assignment you must **cite** in your text references to all material you have used as sources for the content of your work. These citations must be made wherever and whenever you **quote**, **paraphrase** or **summarize** someone else's opinions, theories or data (in your text). Your references may be to books, periodicals, articles, newspapers, reports or personal communications. A **list of references**, in alphabetical order of authors' surnames, must be attached to the end of your report, giving complete details of all references actually used in the report.

For the citations in your text, only the author's surname, year of publication for the material cited, and page numbers, if required, should be listed. Page numbers for your references are necessary only when you quote or paraphrase particular passages, lists or figures from your sources.

References

The reference list is placed at the end of the report. It is arranged in alphabetical order of authors' surnames and chronologically for each author. The reference list includes only references cited in the text. The author's surname is placed first, immediately followed by the year of publication. This date is often placed in brackets. The title of the publication appears after the date followed by place of publication, then publisher (some sources say publisher first, then place of publication). There are many other minor differences in setting out references (e.g. use of commas, colons, full stops) depending upon personal preferences or house styles. The important thing is to check for any special requirements or, if there are none, to be consistent.
Some reports include only a reference list. Others include, in addition, a bibliography. While the reference list includes only those texts cited in the body of your report, a bibliography includes all material consulted in the preparation of your report.

Quotations

When the exact words of a writer are quoted, they must be reproduced exactly in all respects: wording, spelling, punctuation, capitalization and paragraphing. Quotations should be carefully selected and sparingly used, as too many quotations can lead to a poorly integrated argument. Use of a direct quotation is justified when:

- changes, through paraphrasing, may cause misinterpretation
- the original words are so concisely and convincingly expressed that they cannot be improved upon
- a major argument needs to be documented as evidence
- the student wishes to comment upon, refute or analyze the ideas expressed in another source.

Unless it is clearly stated otherwise, the citation of another's opinions or conclusions often signifies your acceptance of the point of view as your own. *The intention of the original text must not be altered.*

Chapter II
Conducting Effective Meetings

A. Introduction

Meeting management/conduction tends to be a set of skills often overlooked by leaders and managers. The following information is an assortment of meeting management suggestions. The reader might pick which suggestions best fits the particular culture of their own organization. Keep in mind that meetings are very expensive activities when one considers the cost of arranging meetings and how much can or cannot be achieved in them. So take meeting management very seriously.

The process used in a meeting depends on the kind of meeting you plan to have, e.g., staff meeting, planning meeting, problem solving meeting, etc. However, there are certain basics that are common to various types of meetings. These basics are described below.

(Note that there may seem to be a lot of suggestions listed below for something as apparently simple as having a meeting. However, any important activity would include a long list of suggestions. The list seems to become much smaller once you master how to conduct the activity.)

B. Selecting Participants

It is very important to decide about who is to attend the meeting and that, in turn, depends on what you want to accomplish in the meeting. This may seem too obvious to state, but it's surprising how many meetings occur without the right people there. Don't depend on your own judgment about who should come. Ask several other people for their opinion as well.

If possible, call each person to tell them about the meeting, it's overall purpose and why their attendance is important and follow-up your call with a meeting notice, including the purpose of the meeting, where it will be held and when, the list of participants and whom to contact if they have questions. Send out a copy of the proposed agenda along with the meeting notice.

You should have someone designated to coordinate the arrangements for the meeting.

C. Selection of Location

Selection of an appropriate location for the meeting is very important. Try and pick a location which has good road/rail/air connectivity, is comfortable and has the necessary layout to provide a good working atmosphere. Items such as seating, table space, lighting, etc., should be addressed properly. It is also important to have the meeting in an area where the participants will not be interrupted or otherwise disturbed. In the case of a one on one personnel discussion, privacy is imperative.

D. Developing Agenda

The single most important aspect of conducting a good meeting is to prepare an agenda. This agenda should be passed out to the participants in advance, allowing them enough time to prepare comments, questions, or contributions to the discussion. This is particularly important where the intention of a meeting is problem solving/quality control, where some thought prior to the session is vital to a productive meeting.

Develop the agenda together with key participants in the meeting. Think of what overall outcome you want from the meeting and what activities need to occur to reach that outcome. The agenda should be organized so that these activities are conducted during the meeting. In the agenda, state the overall outcome that you want from the meeting.

Design the agenda so that participants get involved early by having something for them to do right away and so they come on time. Keep the agenda posted at all times.

E. Opening Meetings

Always start the meeting on time. This respects those who showed up on time and reminds late-comers that the scheduling is serious. The meeting should never be held up for late arrivals. Welcome attendees and thank them for their time. To begin to recap the material which was previously discussed for the benefit of the late comers is at the expense of the people who made it their business to arrive on time! This is largely a judgment call, but if you really want to show the group that you mean business, do not even admit latecomers once the meeting has started. You will be surprised that the folks who arrived late will make it a point to arrive on time for the next meeting.

Once the meeting begins, the meeting leader should be aware that many people have negative impressions of meetings. The reason for this is that MOST meetings are not held in an informative, efficient matter. Once everyone is seated, it is a good idea for the person conducting the meeting to thank the participants for attending and stress that their contribution is necessary for the meeting's success. (Do this even though it was mandatory to attend!) Next, briefly review the agenda and explain what the goals and objectives of the meeting are.

Review the agenda at the beginning of each meeting, giving participants a chance to understand all proposed major topics. Even with an agenda, the purpose of the meeting may not be clear to all present. State the purpose at the beginning of the meeting and if any misunderstandings arise deal with them immediately.

F. Establishing Ground Rules for Meetings

You don't need to develop new ground rules each time you have a meeting. However, it pays to have a few basic ground rules that can be used for most of your meetings. These ground rules cultivate the basic ingredients needed for a successful meeting. Keep the ground rules posted at all times.

Some of these ground rules are:

Time Management

One of the most difficult facilitation tasks is time management -- time seems to run out before tasks are completed. Therefore, the biggest challenge is keeping momentum to keep the process moving. Make every portion of the meeting count. Start promptly and adjourn when the purpose is achieved. If there are more items to cover than time permits, work with the participants to prioritize items on the agenda or if the planned time on the agenda is getting out of hand, present it to the group and ask for their input as to a resolution. You might ask attendees to help you keep track of the time.

When the meeting comes to a close the important issues will have been addressed.

Lead the Meeting

Give the participants an opportunity to speak and discuss without drifting off-course and out of control.

Keep on Topic /Staying on Track

Occasionally, you will find that there are people who continually will bring on unrelated subjects which will throw the meeting off the agenda. While some of the points they bring up can be useful, they may not be appropriate for this particular discussion. One of the methods, which can be used to handle this situation, is to acknowledge to the person that what they brought up to you is important, and ask them to discuss it with you on a break or after the meeting. You can also suggest that it be placed on the agenda of another meeting to give it the time and attention it warrants.

Listen carefully and keep your attention and those around you focused on the topic at hand. Use your agenda as a tool for screening out unnecessary conversation.

As topics are addressed, it is up to the meeting leader to keep the discussion on track and keep digression to an absolute minimum. It is worth noting that failure to stick to the meeting agenda leads to meetings, which exceed their projected completion time, and in many cases are largely unproductive. Avoid this situation at all costs!"

Manage Air Time

Make sure that each person in the room has the opportunity to be involved and speak. Involve everyone and keep those who have too much to say to a minimum time frame.

Gather Information

Probing questions will reveal valuable information about why participants have come to their conclusions. This will share the information with the rest of the group, as well as uncover fear and incomplete thought processes.

Compare Viewpoints

Compare the conflicting ideas of several participants, show how they are alike. Then encourage discussion to develop the alternatives best suited for the situation.

State a Conclusion and Test for a Decision

A lot of discussion can slow the decision making process. If this happens, test a possible conclusion integrating the various suggestions. The conclusion you suggest may not be the end result, but it will get one made.

Counter Loss of Attention

Watch for nonverbal signals of inattention from participants. If necessary make changes in the way the meeting is going, speak louder, speed up the process or take a break.

Model Supportive Behavior

Be careful to model supportive behavior especially in reaction to those voicing opinions or ideas. Thank each participant for their input even when you feel the suggestions fall short on quality.

Be Ready for Conflict

Bringing more than two people into a discussion presents many openings for disagreement and conflict. Help them work through their ideas and understand each other. If discussion becomes overheated, change the topic, tabling the debated subject for awhile.

Clearly Summarize

End the meeting with a summary of what was accomplished. Without this, participants can fail to recognize the benefits of a meeting.

Sleepers

During early morning or long meetings you may see people with the tendency to nod-off or actually fall asleep. In order to keep them alert, ask their opinion on a subject you just covered, or use some other method to keep them participating. It's tough to sleep when you're talking!

Talking in background

While you are making your presentation you may notice that certain people are constantly talking or whispering among themselves while you are talking. You can be sure that if you can hear them from the podium, that other people in the audience can also hear them as well. This obviously can be distracting to all participants. One method which can be effective is when these folks seem to be making the most noise, take a strategic pause, and hold it...... When the room becomes silent and that all everyone hears is the people talking, sometimes because they are standing out, they will cease. Another method is to ask one of the offending parties to share their thoughts with the rest of the group indicating that you appreciate their enthusiasm and are interested in what they have to say. A last resort would be to approach them on a break and in private, let them know that their voices are carrying and disturbing others. Even though you may think their behavior is rude; which it is; you, as the meeting leader must take the "high road" and try not to embarrass them in from of the group, even thought they are wrong.

Dominators

It never ceases to amaze that at almost every meeting, there is one person who seems determined to dominate a meeting and/or upstage and "show up" the leader or instructor. These individuals must be handled carefully as if they become embarrassed or discouraged, they can become disruptive or worse, non-participative. One of the ironies of life is that amid all the rhetoric these folks create are usually some good ideas! So how are we to handle this type of person, get the benefit of their ideas, and still harness their energy so they don't control the meeting and limit others from participating? One method is to create a "committee" and put this person in charge. They may have a need for attention and some latent leadership skills, which a position such as committee leader may bring out. In this situation, you get the best of both worlds. Also, if the person's real motive was to disrupt the meeting, this will gently discourage that type of behavior in the future.

G. Evaluations of Meeting Process

It's amazing how often people will complain about a meeting being a complete waste of time -- but they only say so after the meeting. Get their feedback during the meeting when you can improve the meeting process right away. Evaluating a meeting only at the end of the meeting is usually too late to do anything about participants' feedback. Every couple of hours, conduct 5-10 minutes "satisfaction checks".

In a round-table approach, quickly have each participant indicate how they think the meeting is going.

Evaluating the Overall Meeting

Leave 5-10 minutes at the end of the meeting to evaluate the meeting; don't skip this portion of the meeting. Have each member rank the meeting from 1-5, with 5 as the highest, and have each member explain their ranking

Have the chief executive rank the meeting last.

H. Closing Meetings

When all desired topics have been addressed, prior to the close of the meeting, it is a good idea to summarize what was discussed, and the goals and action steps agreed on. If there is to be another meeting, be sure that participants know date, time, AND agenda. Follow-up with a memorandum for clarification. Be sure to thank them for attending.

Always end meetings on time and attempt to end on a positive note. Clarify that meeting minutes and/or actions will be reported back to members in at most a week (this helps to keep momentum going).

I Checklist for Conducting Meetings

Scheduling Preparation

9. Schedule the meeting date and time.
   Arrange an accessible meeting location: Schedule the meeting in an *accessible* building and room
10. Notify participants of the scheduled meeting (date, time, and location).
11. Arrange accommodations requested
12. Arrange equipment needed:
    1. Microphone and sound system
    2. overhead projector
    3. slide projector
       tape recorder
    4. screen
    5. tv/vcr
13. Arrange refreshments, if provided:
14. Make "reminder calls" to participants two or three days before meeting. (This often helps).

J. Material Preparation

Prepare agenda

Write and make copies of a meeting agenda for participants. The agenda should list (in order) the meeting activities and/or topics that will be covered. It's good to allocate a time limit for each activity or topic. When possible, send or e-mail the agenda to participants in advance to help them prepare for the meeting.

Prepare handouts

Prepare handout or other materials for the meeting. Make copies for participants. (Make a few extras).

Gather resources

Collect materials you'll be using (or might need) at the meeting.

K. Leading the Meeting

i. Welcome and greet participants.
ii. Allow for personal introductions if it's a new group, or there are new participants.
iii. Honestly tell participants why you wanted the meeting, if it's a special meeting, for example.
iv. Let participants know what needs to be accomplished.
v. Distribute copies of the agenda.
vi. Stay focused; follow the agenda as closely as possible
vii. Facilitate discussions following these pointers:

Stick to the agenda and time schedule.

Don't be afraid to cut people off in a polite and tactful way if they go on and on about a subject. Kindly redirect them back to the agenda, or redirect their attention to the task at hand. If people go off the subject, redirect them back to the topic.

Encourage full participation; don’t allow one or two people to monopolize the discussion.

When disagreements arise, refocus the discussion on results you want to achieve.

Use humor as appropriate to:

break the ice
break tension
redirect the discussion
reframe the discussion cool down
a heated discussion
relax the group
build group cohesiveness
add fun!

L. Closing the Meeting

i. Summarize what was accomplished.
ii. Schedule the next meeting, if applicable.
iii. Review and remind participants of task assignments, if applicable.
iv. Thank participants for coming!

M. Types of Meetings and Purpose

Each type of meeting outlined below is used for a specific purpose and will be run differently.

1 *Information Meeting*

- Used strictly to pass on information, no question-and-answer period is conducted.
- Large attendance is common.
- The speaker is well prepared.

2 *Discussion Meeting*

- A specific topic is brought in and a clarifying of procedure, sharing of ideas, opinions, feelings and information takes place.
- Does not result in decision-making or action planning.
- A positive, supportive atmosphere is necessary.
- Limit meeting size to 12 people.

3 ***Problem-Solving Meeting***

- A number of approaches to a specific problem and • Information and knowledge of those present is drawn upon.
- Limit meeting size to seven people.

4 ***Decision-Making Meeting***

- Used when a decision will need the support of the group to be successfully carried out.
- Size of this meeting varies by who will be carrying out the decision.
- For groups of 10 or more, voting works best.

Chapter III
Time Management

A. Preamble: Time Is Money

Before you can start on time management strategies, you need an objective measure to gauge success. In business, time is measured by its value; so let's first consider the value of your time.

Time is an interesting resource, since we each receive an equal quantity every day; also, time is perishable. Once the day ends, it is gone forever. Obviously then, the people who use time wisely have an enormous competitive advantage over others.

The following two illustrations clarifies the importance of time:

How Valuable is your Time?

Annual Earnings (Rs.)	Each Hour Is Worth (Rs.)	Each Minute Is Worth (Rs.)	Annual Value Added (Rs.) *
30,000	16.48	0.28	728
50,000	27.47	0.46	1,196
75,000	41.21	0.69	1,794
100,000	54.96	0.92	2,392

* From only a 10-minute improvement per day!

Classically, time is measured in rupees. For instance, consider the table above. The first two columns simply take several levels of annual income divided by 52 weeks worked each year, divided by 35 hours worked each week to determine hourly pay rates. Then that dollar amount is divided by 60 to determine the per minute pay rate in column 3. The fourth column is the most revealing. It indicates how much value is added when only 10 previously wasted minutes a day are used effectively. Just 10 wasted minutes a day for someone earning Rs.50,000 a year costs the employer Rs.1,196 annually in wasted wages. Most of us, however, shrug at this and don't feel too sorry for our employer.

Looking at this another way, a simple 30-minute improvement in time use each day adds up to nearly 19, 7-hour days a year. Measured as vacation time and quality time with loved ones slipping through your fingers, those 30 minutes a day have new relevance to your life!

The Bank Account of Life

Imagine, there is a bank which credits our account, each morning with Rs. 86,400 and it carries over no balance from day to day. Every "Evening" the Bank cancels whatever part of the balance we failed to use during the day.

What do we do? Draw out every cent, of course!

Each one of us has such a" Bank". It's name is **Time.**

Every morning, it credits us with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever of this we have failed to invest to a good purpose. It carries over no balance and allows no overdraft. If we fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is ours. There is no going back. There is no drawing against "tomorrow"

We must live in the present on today's deposits and must invest it so as to get from it the utmost in health, happiness and success! The clock is running and we must make the most of today.

To realize the value of ONE YEAR... Let us ask a student who failed in his examination

To realize the value of ONE MONTH... Let us ask a mother who has given birth to a premature baby

To realize the value of ONE WEEK... Let us ask an editor of a weekly newspaper

To realize the value of ONE SECOND... Let us ask a person who has survived an accident.

To realize the value of ONE MILILLI SECOND...Let us ask the person who won a silver medal in the Olympics.
Let us treasure every moment that we have and remember "Time waits for no one"

The greatest gift we can give some one is our time. As and when we give someone our time we are giving them a portion of our life.

The above two illustrations show us the value/importance of time and requires practicing time management.

B. Time management

Time management includes tools or techniques for planning and scheduling time, usually with the aim to increase the effectiveness and/or efficiency of personal and corporate time use. These are embodied in a number of books, seminars and courses, which may offer conflicting advice. The common denominators of these strategies are a to-do-list, setting priorities and goal management.

Time management for personal use is a type of self-management. In a corporate setting, time management software can satisfy the need to control employees, make it easier to coordinate work and increases accountability of individual employees.

Planning time and writing to-do-lists also consumes time and needs to be scheduled. This is one of the major criticisms of time management.

The four generations of time management

Stephen R. Covey offers a categorization scheme for the hundreds of time management approaches that are on the market today.

First generation: reminders

The time managers of this approach limit their time management efforts to keeping lists and notes. They see these papers as reminders. Items that are not done by the end of the day are transferred to the next day's list in the evening. Covey also calls this type of style the "Far Eastern, Go with the Flow".

Second generation: planning and preparation

People in the second generation use calendars and appointment books. They will note where meetings are held and identify deadlines; this is sometimes even done on a computer. As opposed to the first generation, the second generation plans and prepares, schedules future **appointments and set goals.**

Third generation: planning, prioritizing, controlling

Third generation time managers prioritize their activities on a daily basis. They tend to use detailed forms of daily planning on a computer or on a paper-based organizer. This approach implies spending some time in clarifying values and priorities.

Fourth generation: being efficient and proactive

Stephen R. Covey in First Things First refers to his approach as the so-called 4th generation time management. For the fourth generation, he emphasizes the difference between urgency and importance in planning. For example: some people may go their entire lives completely missing out on important things (like spending time with their children before they have grown up) because it was never "urgent." The point is not to ignore urgent things, but to embrace important things without waiting for them to become urgent.

Urgency can be deceptive. It can make some unimportant things appear to be important. Also, making time for important things may require spending less time on unimportant things, regardless of their urgency.

Criticisms of the Fourth generation

However some critics of time management methods consider that the whole concept of prioritizing by importance is flawed since once a project has been taken on all the work relating to it needs to be done. Questions of importance or non-importance are irrelevant. An illustrative example would be the building of an automobile, where the engine and wheels may be more important than the rear-view mirror and the carpets, but nevertheless a complete automobile would need the rear-view mirror and the carpets just as much as the engine and wheels. The critics would say that Covey correctly notes that, if you always action things on the basis of urgency, non-urgent things are never going to get done. But he fails to note that exactly the same applies to importance - if you always action things on the basis of importance then when do the non-important things get done? If trivial things are allowed to build up, they will gum up the works so effectively that the important work won't get done either.

Once an item that is characterized as unimportant is perceived to be necessary to an important objective, however, its priority should be adjusted to a higher level. Planning cannot be static. It is said, "Planning is everything. Plans are nothing."

C. Keys To Time Management

Three keys to time management are: remembering, setting priorities, and motivation.

Time Management: Remembering ...

It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking "I won't forget that." But the important thing is not just to remember it, but to remember it at the right time -- a time when you can take the first step in doing it.

Your thoughts are valuable. Write them down, whether they're ideas on how to save the world or reminders to wash the frying pan. Then figure out some way for the messages to get to you at a time when you can do the things.

Use calendars and lists. Have lists of things that can be done at home, lists of things that can be done when the stores are open, lists of things to do before going to work in the morning, etc. By looking at the appropriate list, You can forget about everything else and concentrate on the work appropriate for that moment.

Time Management: Setting Priorities ...

If you write a list of things to do this evening, it probably contains many more things than you can actually accomplish. That's fine. The list is valuable. By looking over it, you can choose the most important things and do them first. The rest can be transferred to other lists.

Some people say they don't need to spend time planning. That may be true. If you have a list of things to do that are all about equally important, and if you're sure that the most important things are on the list, then you don't need to spend any time comparing them. Just start doing one of them, it doesn't matter which one.

But for most people most of the time, some of the things are more important than others, so it's worthwhile taking a few minutes to read over the list and choose the most important to do first.

It's good to have a pen handy all the time to write down ideas. That way you can catch thoughts about important things that you might have forgotten to add to your lists.

Time Management: Motivation ...

You've set goals, written lists, chosen priorities, and identified what's important to do right now, but you don't feel like doing it.

Here are some ideas to help with motivation.

It is not necessary to "feel like" doing something in order to do it. You can just start. Usually, once you've started, you begin feeling more motivated to continue doing it.

Plan rewards and celebrations for yourself, such as special snacks after getting certain things done. Just taking a few seconds to admire the finished work, such as a tidy table or pile of clean laundry, is an excellent reward. Smile and tell yourself what a good job you did.

Even if you're in a hurry, you can plan rewards that take a few seconds, like standing up and stretching, looking out the window for 10 seconds, or tossing a pen in the air and catching it. If you plan them as rewards, they feel like rewards, and give you time to congratulate yourself on getting something done.

Time Management: "How much" and "When" ...

In Greek there are two words for time. "How much" means amounts of time, like "20 minutes" or "two days". "When" means the time when something occurs, like "at two o'clock" or "next Sunday".

We can think of time like money and budget it. We can decide to "spend" an hour on one thing or another. This is valid, but there's a big difference between time and money.

With money, you don't usually ask "should I spend this rupee, or that rupee?" All the rupees are the same. But two different hours are never the same. Different stuff is happening. You're at a different level of tiredness and hunger, and the level of daylight is different. Certain people or businesses are available by phone during one hour but not during another.

So if you're going to do something, it does matter which bit of time you select to do it in.

It can be confusing to try to figure out what's the most important thing to do at a given time. It works out better if you think more in terms of "When". Rather than "which of these things will I do now?", look at one of them and ask "What's a good time to do that?" and then schedule it.

Examples: A good time to phone someone is on their birthday. A good time to play with the children is when it's daylight outside. The best time to pay the phone bill is the first time you see it.

Steps In time Management

Observing the habits of those professionals who use their time more effectively than most of us reveals five key steps that can easily be emulated. Perhaps one of these can make a difference in your life.

One: Establish Personal and Practice Goals

Highly successful practitioners live their lives on purpose. They have written specific goals for the practice, as well as for their personal lives. Unlike workaholics, they keep their lives in balance by spending their personal time on the things that really matter to them, like their health and family. The difference between these goals and the standard New Year's resolution is that these goals are reviewed and updated at regular intervals so that the practitioner remains focused and moving in the right direction.

Two: Establish Priorities Based On High-Payoff Activities

Perhaps the most difficult task for most of us is to determine what is really important in terms of the "stuff" we need to do each day. So often we feel, "It's all important. I can't drop any of it!" Highly successful professionals have learned to distinguish various levels of tasks that are more worth their time than others. For instance, in a medical office, the tasks might be distinguished as follows:

Most Important/Highest Payoff/Immediate
Emergency surgery and procedures
Critical analysis/diagnosis
Critical history taking
Critical physical exams
Critical treatment
High-impact patient education

Important/High Payoff/Timely
Routine history
Routine diagnosis/laboratory testing
Minor acute care
Patient education and counseling
Patient follow-up for chronic illness
Preventive medicine

Must Be Done On Time/Medium Payoff/Routine
Prepare treatment room/supplies
Monitor vital signs
Conduct weigh-ins

Sterilize instruments
Clean up

Less Important/Lower Payoff/Delegate
Banking
Bookkeeping and payroll
Ordering supplies
Scheduling appointments
Writing letters
Controlling accounts receivable
Patient reception and handling
Answering telephone
Dictation and typing
Copying

Least Important/Low Payoff/Systematize
Preparing Medicare or third party payer forms
Processing mail
Pulling and filing charts
Miscellaneous filing
Copying/typing

Of course, this same technique applies to your personal life.

Three: Create Your Own Work Environment

Often we think we have no control over our work environment. In truth, we most often do not have absolute control, but we certainly have some influence.

Highly successful practitioners share specific behaviors. They routinely eliminate, simplify, and delegate low-payoff activities that are not worth their time. They also communicate their own priorities to the people with whom they work. This allows others to support these practitioners in their quest for effectiveness.

Time-efficient practitioners tend to keep their work space uncluttered and organized. When they are away from their work space, others can find things without assistance, saving everyone time and bother.

Four: Handle Interruptions

Finally, highly effective practitioners are excellent communicators. This does not necessarily mean that they are outgoing. Instead, it means that they take a moment to listen to people and understand the heart of the matter. Then, when they speak, they get to the point and speak in easily understood terms. They stay focused on the issue, and avoid interpersonal squabbles that distract everyone from accomplishing more with less.

They have learned to say "no" so gracefully that people are not offended. After all, it's impossible to stay focused and effective when you are constantly Interruptions are a fact of life. We cannot make them disappear. Time-wise practitioners, however, have fewer of them (because they plan better), and manage the remaining ones smoothly.

Such practitioners also invest time in training their support staff to handle all the routine issues that come up. In effect, they use training as another means of planning. This is excellent for the morale and effectiveness of the support staff, and also improves the efficiency of the entire office.

Importantly, highly successful practitioners delegate both responsibility and authority. Obviously the receptionist cannot do what the boss can do, but he or she can manage the calendar and return many calls, if properly trained and entrusted to do so.

Five: Enhance Your Communication Ability And Style taking care of everyone else's priorities!

Take Action

The key to implementing these five steps successfully is to move step by step; don't try to revamp your entire system in a single, massive "reorganization." Look for one idea that could save you 30 minutes a day. Then integrate it into your daily routine and monitor its repeated use (i.e., do you really use it each day?). Knowing that you just added 3 weeks to your year should keep you motivated. Then next year, pick one more idea...

D. Time Management Tips

- **Use a daily planner.** This is the most basic of time management tips. Whether paper or electronic use a planner that gives you at least one page per day.
- **Throw away your to-do-list.** Do not continue using this most ancient of stressful and frustrating time management tips. Before you throw your to do list away, however, ask yourself a simple question about each item on the list. "When am I going to do this?" Then transfer each item off the list to a specific day you will do it. This relieves stress and gets important items completed in a much more timely fashion.
- **Keep your planner with you at all times** so you can immediately write down commitments. These types of key time management techniques keep your promises from falling through the cracks.
- **Group phone calls and email.** Pick a specific time each day to return both. Early morning gives the other person the balance of the day to get back to you.
- **Leave detailed voice messages.** Encourage the other person to leave the information you need on your voice mail, if you are not available.
- **Do Not Multi-Task** when in a phone or face-to-face conversation. Focus on the other person and the conversation. This speeds up the communication and makes sure key information is conveyed, reducing time delays in the future. Multi-tasking is a counterproductive time management technique when dealing with people. People are not tasks and resent being treated as such.

Techniques for setting priorities

ABC analysis

A technique that has been used in business management for a long time is the categorization of large data into groups. These groups are often marked A, B, and C—hence the name. Activities that are perceived as having highest priority are assigned an A, those with lowest priority are labeled C. ABC analysis can incorporate more than three groups. ABC analysis is frequently combined with Pareto analysis.

Pareto analysis

This is the idea that 80% of tasks can be completed in 20% of the disposable time. The remaining 20% of tasks will take up 80% of the time. This principle is used to sort tasks into two parts. According to this form of Pareto analysis it is recommended that tasks that fall into the first category be assigned a higher priority.

The 80-20-rule can also be applied to increase productivity: it is assumed that 80% of the productivity can be achieved by doing 20% of the tasks. If productivity is the aim of time management, then these tasks should be prioritized higher.

Pareto Principle for a further discussion of the Pareto Principle.

Time

Different people may judge identical lengths of time quite differently. Time can "fly"; that is, a long period of time can seem to go by very quickly. Likewise, time can seem to "drag," as in when one performs a boring task.

In explaining his theory of relativity, Albert Einstein is often quoted as saying that although sitting next to a pretty girl for an hour feels like a minute, placing one's hand on a hot stove for a minute feels like an hour.

Management is the process of getting activities completed efficiently and effectively with and through other people.

Management is "working with and through other people to accomplish the objectives of both the organization and its members." This definition places a greater emphasis on human beings in the organization; focus is on results to be accomplished (objectives), rather than just activities and adds the concept that personal objectives should be integrated with organizational objectives.

Chapter IV
Consensus Building

A. Introduction

People generally value their independence. Yet, no one accomplishes much alone. Top performance demands the joint effort of many people, working together toward a common goal. When an individual works together with others, effectiveness grows, creating greater productivity for everyone involved. Together, employees can do more than the collective efforts of each individual working alone.

B. Group decision Making

A great deal of time is spent in meetings formulating problems, arriving at solutions, and determining the means for implementation. Thus, it is important to know when decisions should be made with groups, and when individuals should make them. If there is one individual who is an expert and can solve the problem, an individual should make the decision. Individual decisions can be made quickly, and responsibility can be clearly assigned.

However, if there isn't an expert, a group decision should be made. Groups can identify more alternatives than an individual. A group brings a diversity of experience and perspectives to a decision process that an individual acting alone cannot. If the people affected by a solution take part in its creation, they are likely to facilitate implementation and contribute to its success. Thus, group decisions are more accurate, creative, and readily accepted.

Yet, group decision making can be ineffective. The assigning of responsibility is clear in an individual decision. In a group process, individual responsibility is diluted. The group decision takes more time than the individual decision. Members differ in rank, experience and knowledge, and a minority may dominate the group. Social pressures can create groupthink, which undermines critical thinking and harms the quality of the decision.

Groupthink is a term describing a type of thinking that leads to poor decisions. Groupthink is defined as a model of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' striving for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action. Groupthink refers to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing and moral judgment that results from in-group processes.

Group Conflict

Some conflict is necessary for a group to perform effectively. **Conflict**, the perceived incompatible differences that result in interference or opposition, is natural and inevitable in any group. During the course of performing its tasks, conflicts inevitably arise. The supervisor wants **functional conflict** to support group goals, rather than **dysfunctional conflict**, which prevents a group from achieving its goals. It is important to remember that not all conflict is dysfunctional. Supervisors might want to stimulate conflict to increase the group's performance or to address several questions (Are subordinates afraid to question you? Do subordinates always answer "Yes"? Are subordinates afraid to admit ignorance and uncertainties to you? Is there a lack of new ideas?)

The goal is to create an environment where conflict is healthy, regarding the methods for achieving goals. The supervisor manages group conflict by helping to identify the source of conflict and the issues and parties involved. He or she must stem the tide of disruptions and help generate options. Conflict can be stimulated by bringing in outsiders, restructuring the organization, appointing a devil's advocate, changing the organization's culture, and using communication. The supervisor must choose the conflict resolution tool that is best suited for the situation and the supervisor's ability to use a method.

Avoidance, or just withdrawing from suppressing conflict is preferred when the conflict is trivial, or emotions are running.

Accommodation, placing another's needs above one's own, is a viable option when the issue under dispute isn't more important to one group than another. This helps create harmony and build 'credits' for a later time when an issue may be more important.

Forcing, satisfying one's own needs at the expense of another's, works well when a quick resolution is needed, or when an unpopular action needs to be taken.

Compromise requires each party to give something of value. This strategy is best when there are equal parties involved such as labor management contract negotiations.

Collaboration, a win-win solution, occurs when all parties seek to satisfy their interests. It is possible when there are few time constraints, when the parties involved want a win-win solution, and when the issue is too important to compromise. Collaboration is the preferred method for resolving conflict since the parties in the conflict can satisfy their own needs while simultaneously meeting the needs of the other members, a win-win solution. All members are viewed as people who can amplify each other's abilities. In other words, participants collaborate with others in the expectation that the benefits will outweigh the costs. This method works successfully if both parties are interested in resolving the conflict and the parties in conflict are able to communicate actively and easily.

Techniques for Improving Group Participation

The use of participating groups is not the same as **democratic decision-making** -- one person with one vote and the majority rules. Voting tends to polarize the group's members into winners and losers. Having people feel like losers produces problems in decision implementation that are not present when consensus is reached. Consensus is a form of participative decision making in which the entire team is consulted and all members accept a decision, a win-win situation for the group.

Group participation depends on free association and social facilitation. **Free association** is a process of producing ideas in rapid succession with a minimum of inhibiting or restraining action. The supervisor presents the original stimulus word or idea to the group. The free association it produces stimulates a chain reaction of additional ideas. **Social facilitation** is a process in which the productivity of each individual is increased by the stimulation provided by other group members.

Increasingly, organizations are recognizing that **collaborative relationships** - those defined by mutual learning and shared creation - are at the core of innovation. Ideas are not just exchanged, they are jointly discussed, debated and created. There is no one best technique for improving group participation since situation and decision-makers differ greatly. The supervisor should choose the technique that best fits the situation and the group membership.

Brainstorming, developed by Alexander F. Osborn, is one of the oldest and best-known techniques to use social facilitation to stimulate creative problem solving. The supervisor promotes an atmosphere conducive to free association and encourages freewheeling, uninhibited thinking. Brainstorming encourages unrestrained and spontaneous participation by group members. Quantity of ideas is important. Members are encouraged to generate alternatives without the threat of criticism. All responses are recorded for later discussion and analysis.

In a team meeting, a supervisor can use the brainstorming process to encourage open, honest communication and the free flow of ideas. For example, the supervisor might say:

1. This is a safe zone. Anything said here will not be held against you.

2. No personal accusations allowed. We cannot change someone else's personality, but we can affect his or her behavior.

3. Give any idea expressed here a fair hearing.

4. We are here to improve our work, so focus on the work. If there is anything I'm doing that is keeping you from your work, I want to know about it. If there are any resources that you need to do your job better, tell me. Look at the person sitting next to you and say, "It would help me in my job if you . . ."

The supervisor troubleshoots problems, provides assistance when requested, and asks probing questions to get the team to talk through problems. **Delphi technique** is a form of group decision-making in which members never meet face to face and equal participation is structured by the use of written questionnaires. A problem is identified and members are asked to anonymously provide their solutions through a carefully structured questionnaire. Each member receives a copy of the results and is again asked for solutions. This process continues until consensus is reached.

Synectics utilize a carefully selected creativity team and an experienced leader whose task it is to structure situations that force participants to deviate from their usual modes of thinking. It focuses on the act of mentally taking things apart and putting them back together as a means of furnishing new insights. The term synectics comes from the Greek word *synectikos*, which means "bringing forth together" or "bringing different things into unified connection." Synectic theory uses trigger mechanisms to catalyze new thoughts. One of these synectic triggers is empathizing, which involves putting yourself in place of the subject. In order to arrive at creative solutions, existing thought patterns are inverted, transposed, distorted, and modified by role-playing and fantasy exercises.

Chapter V
Community Capacity Building

A. What is 'community capacity building'?

The term 'community capacity building' means different things to different people. It is understood as developing the capacity and skills of the members of a community in such a way that they are better able to identify, and help meet, their needs and to participate more fully in society.

Community capacity building is therefore concerned with

1. providing opportunities for people to learn through experience - opportunities that would not otherwise be available to them; and
2. involving people in **collective** effort so that they gain confidence in their own abilities and their ability to influence decisions that affect them.

Thus individual involvement and collective activity go hand in hand: the aim is to encourage people in a community to join together with others so as to provide through collective effort what the community needs, but in such a way that those taking part also develop their own potential as members of society.

B. What is 'Community'?

Community means a group of people who share a position of social and economic disadvantage or social disadvantage only. They may share that disadvantage by virtue of living in the same geographical area (a 'geographical community'). Or they may share it because they have something else in common, such as a disability or membership of a particular ethnic group (a 'community of interest').

C. What is 'Capacity Building'?

Capacity building mean making a positive difference to the capacity and skills of the members of the community in question because they participate with other members of that community in activities directed towards meeting their needs in some way. Sometimes this process is described as 'empowerment'.

In more specific terms, this is likely to involve:

- equipping people with skills and competencies which they would not otherwise have;
- realising existing skills and developing potential;
- promoting people's increased self-confidence;
- promoting people's ability to take responsibility for identifying and meeting their own, and other people's, needs; and
- in consequence encouraging people to become involved in their community and wider society in a fuller way.

Two Paths Of Community Building

The community building work can be attempted or taken up in two ways or rather there are two approaches to community building programmes The first begins by focusing on a community's needs, deficiencies and problems and is still by far the most traveled, and commands the vast majority of our financial and human resources. The second path insists on beginning with a clear commitment to discovering a community's capacities and assets and then building them further.

The Traditional Path--A Needs-driven Dead End

In India there are many communities having overwhelmingly negative images. They are images of crime and violence, of joblessness and welfare dependency, of gangs and drugs and homelessness, of vacant and abandoned land and buildings. They are images of needy and problematic and deficient neighborhoods populated by needy and problematic and deficient people.

These negative images, which can be conceived as a kind of mental "map" of the neighborhood often convey part of the truth about the actual conditions of a troubled community. But they are not regarded as part of the truth; they are regarded as the whole truth.

Once accepted as the whole truth about troubled neighborhoods, this "needs" map determines how problems are to be addressed, through deficiency-oriented policies and programs. Public, private and nonprofit human service systems, translate the programs into local activities that teach people the nature and extent of their problems, and the value of services as the answer to their problems. As a result, many lower income urban neighborhoods are now environments of service where behaviors are affected because residents come to believe that their well-being depends upon being a client. They begin to see themselves as people with special needs that can only be met by outsiders. They become consumers of services, with no incentive to be producers. Consumers of services focus vast amounts of creativity and intelligence on the survival-motivated challenge of outwitting the "system," or on finding ways--in the informal or even illegal economy--to bypass the system entirely.

The fact that the deficiency orientation represented by the needs map constitutes our only guide to lower income neighborhoods has devastating consequences for residents. They think of themselves and their neighbors as fundamentally deficient, victims incapable of taking charge of their lives and of their community's future. But other consequences flow as well from the power of the needs map. For example:

7. Viewing a community as a nearly endless list of problems and needs leads directly to the much lamented fragmentation of efforts to provide solutions. It also denies the basic community wisdom which regards problems as tightly intertwined, as symptoms in fact of the breakdown of a community's own problem -solving capacities.
8. Targeting resources based on the needs map directs funding not to residents but to service providers, a consequence not always either planned for or effective.
9. Making resources available on the basis of the needs map can have negative effects on the nature of local community leadership. If, for example, one measure of effective leadership is the ability to attract

resources, then local leaders are, in effect, being forced to denigrate their neighbors and their community by highlighting their problems and deficiencies, and by ignoring their capacities and strengths.

10. Providing resources on the basis of the needs map underlines the perception that only outside experts can provide real help. Therefore, the relationships that count most for local residents are no longer those inside the community, those neighbor-to-neighbor links of mutual support and problem solving. Rather, the most important relationships are those that involve the expert, the social worker, the health provider, the funder. Once again, the glue that binds communities together is weakened.
11. Reliance on the needs map as the exclusive guide to resource gathering virtually ensures the inevitable deepening of the cycle of dependence: problems must always be worse than last year, or more intractable than other communities, if funding is to be renewed.
12. At best, reliance on the needs maps as the sole policy guide will ensure a maintenance and survival strategy targeted at isolated individual clients, not a development plan that can involve the energies of an entire community.
13. Because the needs-based strategy can guarantee only survival, and can never lead to serious change or community development, this orientation must be regarded as one of the major causes of the sense of hopelessness that pervades discussions about the future of low income neighborhoods. The Alternative Path: Capacity-Focused Development

The Alternative Path: Capacity focused Development

If even some of these negative consequences follow from our total reliance upon the needs map, an alternative approach becomes imperative. That alternative path, very simply, leads toward the development of policies and activities based on the capacities, skills and assets of lower income people and their neighborhoods.;

In addition to the problems associated with the dominant deficiency model, at least two more factors argue for shifting to a capacity-oriented emphasis. First, all the historic evidence indicates that significant community development takes place only when local community people are committed to investing themselves and their resources in the effort. This observation explains why communities are never built from the top down, or from the outside in.

The second reason for emphasizing the development of the internal assets of local urban neighborhoods is that the prospect for outside help is bleak indeed. It is increasingly futile to wait for significant help to arrive from outside the community. The hard truth is that development must start from within the community and, in most of our urban neighborhoods, there is no other choice.

Creative neighborhood leaders across the country have begun to recognize this hard truth, and have shifted their practices accordingly. They are discovering that wherever there are effective community development efforts, those efforts are based upon an understanding, or map, of the community's assets, capacities and abilities. For it is clear that even the poorest neighborhood is a place where individuals and organizations represent resources upon which to rebuild. The key to neighborhood regeneration, then, is to locate all of the available local assets, to begin connecting them with one another in ways that multiply their power and effectiveness, and to begin harnessing those local institutions that are not yet available for local development purposes.

This entire process begins with the construction of a new "map". Once this guide to capacities has replaced the old one containing only needs and deficiencies, the regenerating community can begin to assemble its strengths into new combinations, new structures of opportunity, new sources of income and control, and new possibilities for production.

The Assets of a Community: Individuals, Associations, Institutions

Each community boasts a unique combination of assets upon which to build its future. A thorough map of those assets would begin with an inventory of the gifts, skills and capacities of the community's residents. Household by household, building by building, block by block, the capacity mapmakers will discover a vast and often surprising array of individual talents and productive skills, few of which are being mobilized for community-building purposes. This basic truth about the "giftedness" of every individual is particularly important to apply to persons who often find themselves marginalized by communities. It is essential to recognize the capacities, for example, of those who have been labeled mentally handicapped or disabled, or of those who are marginalized because they are too old, or too young, or too poor. In a community whose assets are being fully recognized and mobilized, these people too will be part of the action, not as clients or recipients of aid, but as full contributors to the community-building process.

In addition to mapping the gifts and skills of individuals, and of households and families, the committed community builder will compile an inventory of citizens' associations. These associations, less formal and much less dependent upon paid staff than are formal institutions, are the vehicles through which it is preferable to solve problems, or to share common interests and activities. It is usually the case that the depth and extent of associational life in any community is vastly underestimated. This is particularly true of lower income communities. In fact, however, though some parts of associational life may have dwindled in very low income neighborhoods, most communities continue to harbor significant numbers of associations with religious, cultural, athletic, recreational and other purposes. Community builders soon recognize that these groups are indispensable tools for development, and that many of them can in fact be stretched beyond their original purposes and intentions to become full contributors to the development process.

Beyond the individuals and local associations that make up the asset base of communities are the more formal institutions which are located in the community. Private businesses; public institutions such as schools, libraries, parks, police and fire stations; nonprofit institutions such as hospitals and social service agencies--these organizations make up the most visible and formal part of a community's fabric. Accounting for them in full, and enlisting them in the process of community development, is essential to the success of the process. For community builders, the process of mapping the institutional assets of the community will often be much simpler than that of making an inventory involving individuals and associations. But establishing within each institution a sense of responsibility for the health of the local community, along with mechanisms that allow communities to influence and even control some aspects of the institution's relationships with its local neighborhood, can prove much more difficult. Nevertheless, a community that has located and mobilized its entire base of assets will clearly feature heavily involved and invested local institutions.

Individuals, associations and institutions--these three major categories contain within them much of the asset base of every community. They will also provide the framework for organizing this guide.

An Alternative Community Development Path: Asset-Based, Internally Focused, Relationship Driven

Two major qualifications in this approach are stated as under:

First, focusing on the assets of lower income communities does not imply that these communities do not need additional resources from the outside. Rather, this approach simply suggests that outside resources will be much more effectively used if the local community is itself fully mobilized and invested, and if it can define the agendas for which additional resources must be obtained. The assets within lower income communities, in other words, are absolutely necessary but usually not sufficient to meet the huge development challenges ahead.

Second, the discussion of asset-based community development is intended to affirm, and to build upon the remarkable work already going on in neighborhoods across the country. Asset-based community development acknowledges and embraces particularly the strong neighborhood-rooted traditions of community organizing, community economic development and neighborhood planning. In fact, experienced leaders in these three areas have been among our most valuable sources of inspiration and guidance. The approach outlined here is intended to complement, and sometimes to precede, their efforts--not to substitute for them.

These caveats understood, then, "asset-based community development" deserves a little more introduction and definition. As will become apparent in more detail in the chapters that follow, this process can be defined by three simple, interrelated characteristics:

14. Obviously enough, the first principle that defines this process is that it is "asset-based." That is, this community development strategy starts with what is present in the community, the capacities of its residents and workers, the associational and institutional base of the area--not with what is absent, or with what is problematic, or with what the community needs.
15. Because this community development process is asset-based, it is by necessity "internally focused." That is, the development strategy concentrates first of all upon the agenda building and problem-solving capacities of local residents, local associations and local institutions. Again, this intense and self-conscious internal focus is not intended to minimize either the role external forces have played in helping to create the desperate conditions of lower income neighborhoods, nor the need to attract additional resources to these communities. Rather this strong internal focus is intended simply to stress the primacy of local definition, investment, creativity, hope and control.
16. If a community development process is to be asset-based and internally focused, then it will be in very important ways "relationship driven." Thus, one of the central challenges for asset-based community developers is to constantly build and rebuild the relationships between and among local residents, local associations and local institutions.

Skilled community organizers and effective community developers already recognize the importance of relationship building. For it is clear that the strong ties which form the basis for community-based problem solving have been under attack. The forces driving people apart are many and frequently cited as increasing mobility rates, the age and not least from the point of view of lower income communities, increasing dependence upon outside, professionalized helpers.

Because of these factors, the sense of efficacy based on interdependence, the idea that people can count on their neighbors and neighborhood resources for support and strength has weakened. For community builders who are focused on assets, rebuilding these local relationships offers the most promising route toward successful community development. This route will stress the importance of relationship building for every person and group in the community, and will underline the necessity of basing those relationships always upon the strengths and capacities of the parties involved, never on their weaknesses and needs.

Comparing the two approaches of community building described above, the community-building path which is asset-based, internally focused and relationship driven is more desirable.

Chapter VI
Pubic Speaking

A. Introduction

In today's world, the ability to present effectively is an essential skill. While on the one hand great speakers are highly revered and respected, on the other a poor presenter can lose respect, credibility and business.

For most people any form of public speaking, from formally addressing an audience to just proposing a vote of thank, is nerve-wracking. In fact the fear of speaking in public is known as glossophobia. The fear to speak in public is thus not uncommon.

But what many people don't realize is that public speaking is a skill rather than a gift. That means anybody can develop the skill once he understands the "tricks of the trade". Public speaking is an art which can be mastered over a period of time.

B. Elements of public speaking

The art of public speaking comprises of a number of elements. One needs to take care of a number of aspects as under:

Audience Awareness

Successful public speaking means gratifying the ears, eyes, and minds of the public rather tan the ego of the speaker. If at the end of your speech you hope to see a sea of satisfied customers beaming up at you, you have got to give them satisfaction. And to give them satisfaction you have got to know what they want.

Assess size of the Room

Assess the room in which you are going to speak. Is it so large and cavernous that you are going to need all your powers of projection to be heard at all? Is it so small and intimate that your style needs to be conversational rather than oratorical? Is it so long and narrow that you have to keep turning from one side to the other – like an umpire at Wimbledon – to be sure to include all your audience as you speak? Is it so hot and smoke-filled that you need to remember to have a full glass of water at your side before you start the speech rather than having to ask for one halfway through your public coughing fit? The time to take up your mind as to the approach you sense the room requires is before you get up to speak in it.

Assess the Audience

A sensible public speaker finds out as much as he can about his audience before he prepares his speech. A wise public speaker then reassesses his audience when he comes actually face to face with it.

Assess the Mood of Occasion

Assess the mood of the occasion. Inevitably different occasions call for different kinds of speech. Addressing a sales conference when the company concerned has just announced record profits is a very different matter from addressing a sales conference when the company has just announced the closure of one of its factories with consequent massive redundancies. Adopting the tone to match the mood of your audience is really a matter of tact on a grand scale. I think it is probably impossible to please everybody all the time, but you should at least try.

Cutting Your Coat

When preparing your speech, it is clearly vital to consider the material you are going to use with all the care that you can.

Suit Your Style

Decide what your style might be. Don't attempt great flights of oratorical fluency if you know you are most at home with very few words and simple ones at that. Do not attempt complicated shaggy dog stories if they do not make you laugh and you are liable to forget the punch line anyway. Don't say anything with which you do not feel "at home" or with which, in your heart of hearts, you don't agree.

Don't forget the Reason

Never forget the reason or your being asked to give a speech. Behind every speech there is supposed to be a purpose – to say thank you, to say "cheers", to say good-bye, to mark an anniversary, to offer congratulations, to sell a product – and the speech, however, superficially dazzling, will have failed if, in the course of it, its fundamental purpose has been obscured.

Use of Gadgets

Wherever you are going to speak, enquire beforehand if a microphone is to be provided and if it is then test it in advance. It won't enhance the start of your speech if you have to open with the words "Testing…..Testing…..One, Two, Three, Four…………..".

In my experience, every microphone is a law into itself. Some you need to stand close to. Some you need to have at chest height. Some are multi-directional and allow you a little freedom of movement. Others need to be constantly three inches from your mouth if you are to be heard at all. If possible, get to know the microphone you will be using well before you have to use it. Unless you are a would-be night-club comic, don't hold it. Make sure it has a stand and one that is both adjusted to your height and doesn't wobble. If you are provided with a neck microphone – one that is either clipped to your clothes or hangs around your neck – do your best to avoid banging it as you speak. Some microphones have on/off switches. Make sure yours is on before you launch into your speech, but don't have it on too soon.

If your microphone squeaks, squeals and screams at you, make one joke about it and carry on. If the electronic noise persists, switch off the microphone and make do without.

Element of depth

People want to be entertained by a speaker, but that doesn't mean that he's got to have them rolling in the aisles from start to finish. Whatever you do, give your audience a good time, but try as well to give them something more. All too many speeches are a mixture of old jokes and even older platitudes. If your speeches are free from clichés, congratulations. If your speeches are both fresh and funny, bravo! If your speeches always contain something the audience can take a way with them, you have made it! Yours is the speech they will remember.

What "food for thought" you choose to offer depends, of course, on the type of audience you are addressing and the reason you have been invited to speak to them. However, whatever the context of your speech, a moment of seriousness – which doe s not mean solemnity – in which you can put over a sincerely held belief or a well-thought-out idea, or some relevant, new and perhaps even exclusive information, will add an element of depth to your speech that will almost certainly enhance it.

Good Looks

No I am not going to suggest that all successful public speakers need nose-jobs and face-lifts. Physical beauty is not a prerequisite as far as public speaking is concerned. As a public speaker you don't need good looks, but you do need to look good.

Suiting the occasion and audience

When you are performing in public you are putting yourself on show and you owe it to your audience, as much as to yourself, to look your best. Whether we like it or not, people judge by appearances, so that how you look when you get up to speak will affect the way your audience receives you. As a rule, dress as would be expected of you.

Since you are going to be the centre of attention, you can make yourself look a little bit special.

Duration

No one is likely to complain if you speak for less time than was expected, whereas the converse is not necessarily so. However, many minutes you may have spoken for, when members of your audience start looking at their watches, you have gone on too long. And when they start tapping them in disbelief, whatever you do, sit down.

Preparation

Your speech will be a success because of the effort you have put into preparing it and the skill you are putting in to delivering it. The same time, however well prepared you are, you must leave yourself some room for maneuver. Among several reasons for only speaking from notes and never reading a speech word for word, is that the read speech will sound wooden because it is wooden. An element of flexibility is important because it will make your speech come to life here and now. When a tray of dishes crashes in the kitchen halfway through your speech, you must respond, however briefly, to what has happened. If you carry on doggedly with what you were saying, it will be unnatural and will make your audience feel uncomfortable.

Giving a speech is not like action in a play where you have an author's lines to speak and you deliver them in the same way every night. Speech making is much more like cabaret: you know what you are going to say, but the way you way it – and whether or not you add or subtract anything from what you planned to say or modify the way in which you planned to say it – depends on what happens while you are saying it.

All your speeches will call for preparatory perspiration. Not all of them, especially in the early days, will be acclaimed as works of genius, but even as a novice speaker, always leave room for inspiration.

Humour

Humour is essential in most public speaking, but, unless totally relevant and original “funny stores” as such tend to make the individual using them sound like a poor stand-up comedian rather than a entertaining and thought-provoking public speaker.

Know the Subject

Whatever type of speech you are going to make, make sure you know your subject. With certain kinds of speech-making – lectures, political speeches, television interviews – your audience may be given an opportunity to ask awkward questions, and with all kinds of speck-making the audience will be able to ask questions in their heads.

Don’t speak “authoritatively” on a subject unless you really are an authority. Since we are all of us authorities on “life” this shouldn’t limit your scope but simply prevent you from inadvertently wading into too deep water,

Professional Pubic Speaking

When you have been speaking in public for a few years, when you have been enjoying it and when your audience seem to have been enjoying it too, you may be tempted to turn “ professional” and earn yourself some money by doing for profit what you have been doing for pleasure.

The trouble with speaking for money is that it obliges you to give value for money. When you are speaking out of the kindness of your heart, to oblige an old friend or just to boost your ego, you want to do well, of course, but it is not the end of the world if you arrive late, have a streaming cold and make a speech that falls a little flat. When you are being paid to perform, on the other hand, you have got to be good. You have got to be on time too. What is more, you have got to seem to be in the best of spirits and the best of health.

More is expected of the professional than the amateur and you will find that once you have accepted payment for making a speech the responsibility lies fairly heavily on your shoulders.

If you are going to give a lecture you need to pick a topic your really can master or have a story to tell that really is unique. You should have several versions of your speech, one lasting thirty minutes, one forth and one fifty, so that you can give whoever books you exactly the length of talk they require. You should also, of course, be ready to tackle any questions that may be thrown at you and, what is more, be prepared for an extra, apparently impromptu, “wind-up” lasting five minutes or so for the occasions when question time is announced but the eagerly anticipated questions aren’t forthcoming.

To be successful on the lecture circuit you will need to be either famous or unique, or good and different. Assuming you are not yet a household name and have not been around the world on roller-skates you will need to be different as well as good only because there are already plenty of good speakers lecturing on all the obvious topics. To be a sought-after lecturer in today’s competitive market-place you need a speciality that has general appeal and yet manages to be definitely out of the ordinary.

Novelty

As an acid test and a devastating exercise in self-discipline, when you have finished preparing your speech, look through it carefully and make sure it contains at least one element – an idea, a piece of information, a story, a way of presentation – that is genuinely new. If it’s all been said before, then do you really need to say it again? But if you’ve got something new to offer – and it doesn’t need to be much – then your effort is worth while.

Change

On the whole, I think speechmakers who practice in front of mirrors tend to become self-conscious and overly aware of personal mannerisms. If you are too self-conscious you won’t be natural.

Obviously you may need to be a little larger than life when you speak in public, but avoid the over-theatrical and melodramatic. On radio an television, on the other hand, you would be well advised to be a little "smaller than life", while not becoming so subdued as to seem somnolent.

Pubic speakers are like conjurors: to get their effects right they need to practice, practice, practice. But, unlike conjurors, the best practice for public speakers is that done before an audience. Without any doubt, the more often you speak the better you will get.

Variation in speed and intonation

Variety is not only the spice of life it is also the essence of good public speaking. Whatever the length and purpose of your speech, vary the pace and vary the tone.

Come what may, don't rush. Novice speakers and nervous speakers have a tendency to dash desperately through their speeches, no doubt hoping to get the ordeal over with as quickly as possible. This is a mistake. Always begin calmly and in an unhurried way. Make sure your audience has settled down before you start. If chairs are being adjusted or coffee cups cleared away, wait for the scraping and the clinking to stop before you begin. When you do speak, be unhurried but never ponderous. Include some faster moments and some slower ones, bring in light and shade, be amusing and serious. In the course of the best kind of speech you should be able to hear uproarious laughter at one moment and a pin drop the next.

Ignore Interruptions

Generally speaking the best way to handle hecklers is to ignore them. If you answer them back, there is a danger that your banter may encourage them. Most seasoned speakers have one or two put-downs up their sleeves that can be produced instantly to deal with any rude interruptions, but if you find your first riposte doesn't have the desired effect don't go on. I shall not quickly forget the night at the Piccadilly Hotel in London when my devastating quips, far from felling the drunken interrupter, emboldened him to stagger to his feet and walk over to the top table. There he stood mouthing drunken abuse literally six inches away from me while I struggled on with my speech. Nothing I could say would deter him and since he was apparently the chairman's oldest friend there was nothing that anyone else could do to deter him either!

Don't worry: this sort of thing doesn't happen very often, but when speaking after dinner, if you have a choice in the matter, choose to speak sooner rather than later. If your audience has drunk too much before you get to your feet, they may be literally "too tired" to be able to concentrate or too merry to want to. I once spoke at a hospital where one of the young doctors at the tope table rose to his feet and threw up just as I was rising to begin my address. On another occasions at a dinner in the City of London, I was obliged to stop speaking almost as soon as I had started, because a group of guests had poured brandy over their table-cloth and set fire to it.

Unless you're fully prepared for your speech to become a double act, ignore obstreperous interrupters. Remember the old maxim: silence is the unbearable repartee.

Unique Experience

A unique experience – that's what you want your audience to feel they've had when they have heard you speak. You will manager to do this if, as well as being fresh and original and actually aware of your audience, you also throw in one or two relevant and well-observed local references. Your listeners will then feel this speech has been designed specially for them. Add one or two topical references and they will know that you are speaking to them here, tonight, now – not just dusting off the tired old notes you always sue for golfing dinners.

Vulnerability

Every public speaker is nervous underneath, and to show a little of your nervousness won't harm you. It may even work in your favour. If you are too self-assured, too confident, too much in command, you may appear arrogant. A modicum of vulnerability can be an asset.

Waterworks

Before you speak, do go to the loo. This will enable you to smarten yourself up, take a last minute look at your notes and speak with your mind on the matter in hand and not on your nagging bladder. Needing to go to the lavatory just before you speak is largely a matter of nerves, but if you feel a call of nature prior to speaking, don't ignore it – or the consequences may be unfortunate.

Censorship

Self-censorship in the particular case of public speaking is essential. As a rule avoid anything that any reasonable remember of your audience would regard as offensive. One should never use harsh language in a speech or make remarks that could be construed as a racist or slanderous.

Zest

The quality I believe the public speaker needs almost above all others is energy. If you have never spoken in public before when you do you will be amazed by what an exhausting experience it can be. When you sit down after even a fairly brief speech you may well find yourself completely drained.

Public speaking calls for considerable reserves of energy –physical, mental and nervous. The night before you are due to give an important speech, you'd be better advised to get to bed early than burn the midnight oil polishing your speech which, if it isn't ready then, never will be. To give an effective speech you need to feel fresh, you need to be ready for anything. To be at your best, you need zest.

C. Speaking on Television and Radio

As a public speaker the widest audience you will ever encounter will be if you appear on televisions or radio. Daily, hundreds of people are interviewed on chat shows, news programmes and in documentaries, and with the advent of breakfast television the opportunities for speakers of all sorts to air their views have been even greater.

It may be as an expert in a particular field that you are called upon to speak; you may be involved in a controversial issue which will put you in demand, have an important cause you want to champion. Whatever the reason, you are certain to find that broadcasting is a totally different form of public speaking. New set of techniques will need to be learnt, and since it may well be that you appear or radio or television only once it has to be right first time.

Television Interviews

If you are to appear on television for the first time, it can be a worrying prospect. Interviewers can be ruthless, and quick-thinking on your part is essential – one mistake and you could be the laughing stock of the nation! Preparation and concentration is essential.

Remember that what viewers see is as important as what they hear. Consider this when you choose your clothes for the occasion. What kind of image do you wish to project? Looking relaxed is difficult but necessary. Sit still and do not fidget.

A television interview is the most usual method of communication on television. Before you go for an interview there are some points for you to consider.

(a) What type of programme will the interview be used in?
(b) Is it going to be live or recorded?
(c) What are the reasons for the interview?
(d) Will other people be there to debate with you, or put their view to?
(e) Will the interview be edited?
(f) Who will the interviewer be?
(g) What line of questioning will he or she take?
(h) When will it be transmitted? (Make sure it is not months later when it could be too late to do you any good).

Remember that if you are interviewed it is unlikely to be for more than a very few minutes, so you have to pack as much as you can into that time. Do not make needless repetitions and give short, simple answers. If an interviewer says: "Have you discussed this with the

Minister of Health" don't reply, "yes I have discussed this with the Minister of Health". Say simply, 'Yes'.

Before you are interviewed decide what you hope to get out of it and who you hope to appeal to the most. Think of three main points that you want to put over, and how you can say them as simply and as effectively as you can e.g.:

- Amount of money needed
- Where it will come from
- On what it will be spent

In the Studio

Once you have made it to the studio you should not be idle and sit and wait until you are on the air. You have much more important things to do.

First, as you are shown into the presenter's rest room there are nearly always copies of the script lying around. If there aren't then ask to see one. This will tell you the order in which you are appearing and with whom, and what approach the interviewer is going to take. The manner in which he plans to introduce you will give you a clue.

If you are appearing because of your own cause, all should be well and you will be given an opportunity to express your opinions, but if you happen to be involved in a more controversial issue you will need to check the script to see who else is being interviewed and whether or not a biased angle is to be taken. You will then have time to prepare yourself for attack if necessary.

Ask the person interviewing you what line he intends to take. This is important to know from both sides so that you are both on the same track and the interviewer knows you will not dry up. Be prepared, however, for tricky questions.

Obviously you will know beforehand which programme you will be appearing on, so watch it first and get to know the type of questions the interviewers usually ask.

Try to relax before you take your position in the studio. See the set first, where you will have to walk and where you will actually sit, so that you are able to get your bearings. The heat from studio lights, the electric atmosphere, the unusual circumstances, all serve to increase the tension. Keep a clear head, and be sure to visit the lavatory before the interview. The more comfortable you are, the more relaxed you will appear to be when the time comes.

Remember, at this stage you are a very important person. You will have cost the television company money already, and they now need you to do this interview, so if there is something that you are uncertain about or unhappy with don't be afraid to ask and have it put right. The last thing they want is for you to refuse to do the interview, so relax.

On the Air

Once the interview has begun there is no turning back. It is now that your technique is essential.

(i) Sit comfortably, but do not slouch.

(ii) Avoid mannerisms. Speaking from a platform you may say 'yes' or 'no', nodding or shaking your head violently at the same time, but on television this can look somewhat eccentric. Try to keep your head fairly still. Keep your arms still too. If you wave them about it looks clumsy on the small screen and you are liable to knock microphones over if you are not careful.

Although your face should not be expressionless, attempt to keep eyebrow-waving and eye-fluttering to a minimum, as even the smallest facial gestures can appear exaggerated.

(iii) Keep your sentences short and simple. A majority of your audience may know nothing about the issue in question, they may never have seen you before in their lives, and to hold their interest you must talk on such a level that everyone can understands.

(iv) Don't move your head around too much. Some speakers seem to gaze at the studio ceiling, at the walls, the floor, above the camera, which becomes irritating. It often helps just to concentrate on the face of the persons interviewing you, and look occasionally at the camera yourself as you speak so as to include the viewers at home.

Concentrate on the interviewer all the time he or she is speaking – the camera is sure to be on the interviewer anyway, and that will ensure that you will understand the questions.

The following rules for speaking on television apply to radio as well.

- Show you know your facts by using positive short statements. Not "Well….er… I think there might be about five hundred people involved. May be six hundred, I am not too sure". Be able to say instead: "Some five hundred people will be involved".

- Watch your voice. Speak in a normal conversational way and take care not to pick up the tone of the interviewer. First-time television performers, due to nerves, tend unconsciously to talk in the same tone as the interviewer, which sounds like mockery, or else they speak in a flat unvaried monotone.

- Don't appear arrogant or a known-all. Be seen to be in command of the facts, but try not to seem pushy, presumptuous or patronizing.

(v) Before you go into the studio think to yourself of the worst possible question that you would hate to be asked, and think of an answer for it. That way you will be prepared for the worst. Be alert and confident. Weak and insignificant characters have varnished from the viewers' minds by the next commercial break, but one with authority will make him or herself noticed. Do not be afraid to challenge the interviewer if you feel that he is creating the wrong impression.

Interviewers will sometimes say: 'It has been said that…' Do not be afraid to ask who said it. The viewers appreciate it. On the other hand, if you agree with a statement then feel free to say, "yes", certainly….'

If the interviewer does not ask the very question you would like, there is nothing to stop you getting your point over by saying:

“That is a valid question, but first may I point out….’

‘Yes, I’ll answer that question in a second, but may I just say…’
I’m sorry, that question is totally irrelevant, the main issue is….”

And bring the discussions back to your views. It is after all your interview.

How you finish is very important. On television you are very unlikely to be able to state-manage your own finale. It is almost certain that the interviewer will end the interview himself as and when time dictates – you could even be in mind-flow: ‘I am sorry, Mr. Patel, but I shall have to stop you there. Thank you very much. ‘In Saurashtra Coast today the fishermen…’ and a completely different topic will be on the screens before you realize it.

The most effective way of learning is to watch television interviews yourself. Listen to what people say, how interviewees react, and which people hold your attention most and why. You will be able to see where others go wrong and how you can avoid their mistakes.

Radio

With radio, speech is your only form of communication – appearance, expressions and gestures are useless. Everything that you wish to communicate must be done with the voice alone. A good speaker will engage the interest of the listeners immediately, and can even attract listeners.

Some people will switch on while you are speaking, but whether they stay with you or not will depend on what you are saying and how you are saying it.

Listen to the way professional radio persons speak – their pace, their nuances, style and vocabulary. The later is important because you can manipulate it to make even the most complex of subjects sound simple. Fluency is essential too – here more than in any other medium of communication the 'um' ad 'er' are strictly a taboo.

Practice listening to people in queues, restaurants and the underground, without looking at them. See how much is conveyed about that person through their voice alone. How much is lost by not seeing gestures and expressions? How can this be compensated for, in the tone of voice? Try to draw a mental picture of that person in your mind, and then turn to look at them… you may have been completely wrong!

By listening to voices on the radio and in situations as above you will begin to notice the variety of voices and the difference that pitch, articulation, rhythm, and speed of speech make, and that all important pause.

Radio Interviews

Speaking on radio does have advantages over television, especially for the first-time speaker, in that if your interview is to be recorded it can be done several times if you make a real hash of it, and you can have written notes in front of you to assist your memory.

There are special points to note:

i) Keep your answers concise and easily understandable. It is even harder to concentrate on a radio voice than on a television picture if you use long sentences, so be brief.
ii) Speak directly into the microphone, which will be on the table or hanging just in front of you.
iii) Don't rustle your notes, sniff, clear your throat, cough, play with a pencil, or make any noises that will be picked by the microphone.
iv) Don't interrupt the interviewer when he speaks. This can be done to a certain extent on television, but not on radio as this blurs the two voices together and makes you both

incomprehensible. By all means make a sign to the interviewer that you wish to speak, but say nothing until he has finished. Remember that on radio you cannot see who is speaking or which voice belongs to whom, so this must be made clear.

v) Always remain calm and friendly even if the interviewer rattles you. He is probably on the radio daily and is the listeners' friend, so do not upset him or be rude to him, or the switchboard will be jammed with complaints about you. However, hostile he may be about your cause try to remain calm. He may deliberately attempt to relay on you. Don't let him. If you turn out to be a good speaker, someone who handles questions well and who gets on with the interviewer, there is a chance that you will be asked back again.

vi) Project yourself as a friendly person, even if you are talking about a serious subject. If it is local then, mention local factories and business that people know. If you have the facilities to cope with the administration, do not be frightened of saying: 'If listeners would like to know more about this, they can always write to me an I will be delighted to deal with any questions…" This makes you less remote and within easy reach of the pubic.

Being a phone-in Guest

Phone-in radio programmes are very popular, and if you are a member of parliament, in local government, a trade union leader, or a public figure or any kind you may be asked to do such a programme.

The difficulty here is that you can have no previous knowledge of what questions you will be asked by callers, so you must be well prepared.

The procedure is slightly different from that of a normal radio interview. As well as sitting in front of a microphone you will be given a set of earphones through which you will be able to hear the questions. Listen carefully and jot the question down for reference.

While answering, see that the listener's question is repeated. This makes certain that everyone at home is sure of the question, and by repeating it to the listener she will have contradicted you if you have heard it wrongly, and it gives you a few seconds to think of an answer.

Always be polite to listeners even if they themselves become offensive. Flatter the caller by saying, ‘I am very glad you raised that point….’ Or ‘What an excellent question…..’. Keep your answers short. Refute any arguments with concrete evidence and your own point of view. If the worst comes to the worst you can always say; ‘I do hope that answers your question. Next caller please….’ before they have an opportunity to contradict you.

Speaking on radio can be great fun, and it is an ideal method of reaching a mass audience in a matter that would otherwise be impossible.