

Oral Communication - Meaning, Advantages and Limitations

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

Advantages of Oral Communication

- There is high level of understanding and transparency in oral communication as it is interpersonal.
- There is no element of rigidity in oral communication. There is flexibility for allowing changes in the decisions previously taken.
- The feedback is spontaneous in case of oral communication. Thus, decisions can be made quickly without any delay.
- Oral communication is not only time saving, but it also saves upon money and efforts.
- Oral communication is best in case of problem resolution. The conflicts, disputes and many issues/differences can be put to an end by talking them over.
- Oral communication is an essential for teamwork and group energy.
- Oral communication promotes a receptive and encouraging morale among organizational employees.
- Oral communication can be best used to transfer private and confidential information/matter.

Disadvantages/Limitations of Oral Communication

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

- Oral communication is less authentic than written communication as they are informal and not as organized as written communication.
- Oral communication is time-saving as far as daily interactions are concerned, but in case of meetings, long speeches consume lot of time and are unproductive at times.
- Oral communications are not easy to maintain and thus they are unsteady.
- There may be misunderstandings as the information is not complete and may lack essentials.
- It requires attentiveness and great receptivity on part of the receivers/audience.
- Oral communication (such as speeches) is not frequently used as legal records except in investigation work.

Written Communication - Meaning, Advantages and Disadvantages

- Written communication has great significance in today's business world. It is an innovative activity of the mind. Effective written communication is essential for preparing worthy promotional materials for business development. Speech came before writing. But writing is more unique and formal than speech. Effective writing involves careful choice of words, their organization in correct order in sentences formation as well as cohesive composition of sentences. Also, writing is more valid and reliable than speech. But while speech is spontaneous, writing causes delay and takes time as feedback is not immediate.

- **Advantages of Written Communication**

Written communication helps in laying down apparent principles, policies and rules for running of an organization.

- ✓ It is a permanent means of communication. Thus, it is useful where record maintenance is required.
- ✓ It assists in proper delegation of responsibilities. While in case of oral communication, it is impossible to fix and delegate responsibilities on the grounds of speech as it can be taken back by the speaker or he may refuse to acknowledge.
- ✓ Written communication is more precise and explicit.

- ✓ Effective written communication develops and enhances an organization's image.
- ✓ It provides ready records and references.
- ✓ Legal defenses can depend upon written communication as it provides valid records.

- **Disadvantages of Written Communication**

- ✓ Written communication does not save upon the costs. It costs huge in terms of stationery and the manpower employed in writing/typing and delivering letters.
- ✓ Also, if the receivers of the written message are separated by distance and if they need to clear their doubts, the response is not spontaneous.
- ✓ Written communication is time-consuming as the feedback is not immediate. The encoding and sending of message takes time.
- ✓ Effective written communication requires great skills and competencies in language and vocabulary use. Poor writing skills and quality have a negative impact on organization's reputation.
- ✓ Too much paper work and e-mails burden is involved.