

Importance Of English Communication For Engineering Students From Rural Areas And Its Remedies

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ABSTRACT

Communication is the life blood of all the organizations. Getting the work done in effective manner has become more important than having the most knowledge. Employers give considerable value to graduates acquiring a diverse set of skills in different work environment. Besides analytical and problem solving skills, subject specific knowledge, research and improved decision making ability, management skills, understanding of other culture, confidence and competence to work in international environment are considered the most essential qualities for engineers. However, at the bottom of these lies an effective communication skill. If students fail to see the broader scenario of the corporate world and ignore the communication skills, it can endanger a shallow level of understanding. The growing importance placed on oral communication skills by employers has been echoed internationally in these two three decades. Knowledge and technical know how are clearly important, but these requires to be presented with excellence. Effective communication re-enforce positive impression of the engineer. Lack of serviceable communication skills contributes to the low profile of engineering in general public. A more proactive and accessible style of communication can be more engaging for the people. Indeed oral skills, presentation skills are considered one of the best career enhancers and to the single biggest factor in determining a student's career success or failure.

1. INTRODUCTION

The IT revolution and globalization of business have brought technical communication to the forefront of academia and industry. With the whole world becoming the global market and businesses becoming diverse and result –oriented, professionals and technocrats are facing new challenges in communications every day. A success in this competitive environment depends not just on acquiring knowledge and hard skills, but also on developing effective technical communication skills. This paper aims at making aware the engineering students of rural area and encourages them to improve their communication skills.

2. IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH

English is the most important language in the world. The spread of British Empire introduced English in India, Africa, south Asia, Australia, New Zealand and America. It came to these countries as the language of business, travel and exploration and then become the sole medium of instruction. Now it is the official language of international business, air traffic control, shipping, United Nations Diplomacy, world banking, science and technology, academic research, space travel and global computing. It is the major medium of education, publishing and international negotiation. It is perhaps the most flexible of all languages. Therefore, people belonging different parts of the world widely use English. It is the lingua franca of the world.

The world is developing in field of science and technology. Scientific inventions in Germany, France, and Russia cannot reach India through any language other than English. Therefore, a scientific invention in Germany or Russia will have become outdated and old by the time it reaches to Indian scientists through translation.

Education has multiplied the role of English language, because universities worldwide often use English as the common mode of learning and communication. English is an international language of the Constitution, the Supreme Court, the High Court, and official departments. English is firmly rooted in the soil of India. A person in Tamil does not speak Hindi, however he can understand English. Thus, English is a link language. Different people can communicate with one another with the help of English. English is a confidence builder language. It will get you anywhere. If you are good speaker in English means good in all. Therefore, engineers have to communicate in English.

3. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

The word communication in English is making a charisma in these days. It has the power to make the whole world revolve around it. It is central to all activities. Everybody has realized the importance of communication and therefore, they want to be a better communicator. It has left no field untouched: be it a medical, or engineering, Arts or Law, or even Sports or Music. In commerce or Business it has become a must. In academics if you ignore communication you will literally ruin. It won't be an exaggeration if I say you won't survive

without communication. If you want to earn bread and butter, you will have to learn communication. If you want to give voice to your requirements, you will have to learn communication. If you want to get a good job, learn to tell that you are fit and capable for it. If you want to get promotion, impress your boss with your effective communication. If you want your work get done learn to persuade and please others by talk.

Gone are the days when work was got done under the force of power and pressure of authority. People were helpless and lacking self respect. The fast growing technology and spread of knowledge has made people aware of their rights and status. The relationships between subordinates and superiors are growing tensed. Personal opinions, attitudes and beliefs often act as strong barriers to effective communication. It is obviously difficult to communicate with the people effectively if they have quite rigid views, fixed opinions and strong prejudices. It disrupts the interrelationship and poses a challenge to management. Therefore, the organizations have changed master- servant relationship into partnership relationship.

The changing scenario has given birth to a concept of team work. It shows us the necessity of developing team spirit, proceeding with joining hands. You have to respect other's perspectives. We have to stay in tune with our own emotions, as well as emotions of others. You have to offer your personal view points clearly and honestly to avoid confusion. You have to encourage others, praise others, make people valued and appreciated in you communication. If you let others know that they are valued they are likely to give their best.

Getting the work done in effective manner has become more important than having the most knowledge. Employers give considerable value to graduates acquiring a diverse set of skills in different work environment. Besides analytical and problem solving skills, subject specific knowledge, research and improved decision making ability, management skills, understanding of other culture, confidence and competence to work in international environment are considered the most essential qualities for engineers. However, at the bottom of these lies an effective communication skill.

If students fail to see the broader scenario of the corporate world and ignore the communication skills, it can endanger a shallow level of understanding. The growing importance placed on oral communication skills by employers has been echoed internationally in these two three decades. Knowledge and technical know how are clearly important, but these requires to be presented with excellence. Effective communication re-enforces positive impression of the engineer. Lack of serviceable communication skills contributes to the low profile of engineering in general public. A more proactive and accessible style of communication can be more engaging for the people. Indeed oral skills, presentation skills are considered one of the best career enhancers and to the single biggest factor in determining a student's career success or failure.

4. NATURE OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

We may define technical communication as a transmission of scientific and technical information form one individual or group to another. This exchange of professional information may include simple definitions of tools, complex descriptions of machines and process, or sophisticated explanation and interpretation of scientific principals. Effective technical communication is a dynamic interchange that may involve a systematic understanding of scientific and technical subjects.

The three important requirements of effective technical communication are:

- 4.1 Subject competence,
- 4.2 Linguistic competence, and
- 4.3 Organizational competence.

4.1 Subject Competence

Subject competence is the first requirement of technical communication. It is the possession of appropriate knowledge of a particular technical subject matter as well as the possession of highly sophisticated technical or professional skills. An inadequate background in the subject or lack of information might lead to incomplete and ineffective communication.

4.2 Linguistic Competence

Linguistic competence, on the other hand, is the possession of appropriate language skills and the ability to present scientific facts or information clearly and objectively. As technical communication involves technical presentation of data in reports, proposals, research papers, technical bulletins, manuals, and handbooks, linguistic competence includes several functional skills. Lack of these skills may lead to ineffective or incomplete communication. These skills include the ability to

- 4.2.1 Analyze facts or information for clear presentation,
- 4.2.2 Use appropriate rhetorical devices to present scientific data,
- 4.2.3 Use graphs, charts, and diagrams systematically.

4.3 Organizational Competence

Since technical communication is a systematic and structured presentation of information, it involves a process of logical and thematic organization. Organizational competence is the ability to organize technical information in a logical and structured way. It includes several skills such as the ability to sequence thoughts in a sentence, organize a paragraph according to the needs of the reader and the topic, use appropriate logical ordering, and provide thematic coherence to expression.

The fast growth of technical knowledge coupled with the development of information technology has changed the way we communicate in professional situations. We prefer fast, interactive, and result oriented forms of communication such as voice mail, email, video transmission, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, intranet transmission, and so on to the traditional and slow forms of communication such as letter, memos, newsletter, and so forth.

5. IMPORTANCE AND NEED FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

The functional importance of technical communication for an individual of an organization cannot be overemphasized. Whether you are an executive working in a multinational company, an engineer working at the shop floor level, a scientist working in a premier scientific lab, or a technical student of a professional institution, you need effective technical communication skills in order to be successful.

With the information revolution and socio-economic changes in the new millennium, the importance of effective technical communication skills has increased, the whole world has become a global market and the transfer of technical information is playing a key role in economic growth and transformation. As the professional world becomes more diverse, competitive, and result-oriented, the importance of technical communication skills continues to increase.

Revolution in information technology is having a profound impact on technical communication task, and new kinds of communications task or skills will be required in the changed technological environment. These skills include ability to understand and explain complex technical information in a simple and familiar style, ability to understand and explain quantitative data, cultural awareness, capability, and ability to analyze and priorities information.

The changes that have taken place in the field of science and technology reflect several developments in the way technical communication skills are viewed. In fact, there has been a shift in perspective, so that communication skills take priority over technical and professional skills. There is no doubt that good writing and speaking skills are essential to job success. It is also true that some technical skills are as important as communication skills but knowledge of technical or professional skills will be useless if one does not know how to communicate the information and elicit that result from the use and application of these technical and professional skills.

6. REMEDIES

6.1 Development of Inner Urge

It is the general observation that the engineering students value technical subjects and underestimate the subject Communication skills. Students neglect it. Considering the scenario of corporate world if they feel that they should develop their communication skills they will make progress.

6.2 Need to Enrich Vocabulary and Sentence Construction

Language consists of words and sentence structures. Each day they must learn at least five new words and try to use them in their own sentences. The old method of displaying charts of difficult words, phrases and their applications on the walls and daily observance of them will help a lot.

6.3 Listening

Students must develop a habit of careful listening of English news, lectures, and explanations during tutorials, practical sessions, seminars, technical presentations, academic discussions, and academic interactions and so on. The modern Language Labs cater all their needs. They must make most of it. One cannot be an effective communicator unless one becomes an effective listener.

6.4 Speaking

Speaking skills are very important for a person's professional survival and growth. It gives practice of articulating words and boosts confidence in speaking. The students of rural area must be encouraged to ask questions in order to remove their fear, as they hesitate to ask questions considering that they may commit error or go wrong. Opportunities must be given to them to voice their opinions, agreements, disagreements, and suggestions, the credits should be given for participating discussions, making presentations of project, product, graphs, tables, charts plans, maps. They must be ensured that speaking skills are the single most important criteria in hiring professionals.

6.5 Reading

Like listening and speaking, reading is crucial to effective communication. Students need to read technical and business documents: reports, proposals, magazine articles, letters, and instruction manuals. It is hard to imagine any academic professional or business work that does not require efficient reading skills.

6.6 Writing

It is said that “Reading maketh a complete man, speaking maketh a ready man and writing maketh a perfect man”. Writing is very important for students and professionals in all fields. They should practice writing projects reports lab reports, summary, synopsis, abstracts, and subject notes. As they go higher on the ladder of their career they will have to handle the correspondence independently. They will require writing business letters memos, email messages, proposals, minutes, notes reports, professional summaries and so on. Both professional and students need excellent writing skills to survive and excel in their pursuits as there is hardly any academic or professional activity that does not require writing skills.

7. CONCLUSION

Students must keep in mind that, ‘Where there is a will there is a way’, and ‘Success often comes to those who try’. They may come across the hindrances in their path but they are not to discourage them but to improve their quality of excellence. The excellence is never a chance but it is a result of hard and sincere efforts. In this modern era the advance technology is at their disposal. If they do not take benefit of it who are at fault?

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