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Subject: AECC English

TOPIC: Effective Communication: Listening and Speaking

7 Cs of Effective Communication

- It is thought that for effective communication there is a need to follow certain norms which are known as “7 Cs of Effective Communication.”
- These norms apply both in written as well as oral communication.
- The 7 Cs of communication are:
 1. **Completeness** - Any communication must be complete, in the sense that a message should convey all the facts required for the comprehension of the message.
 2. **Conciseness** – Conciseness refers to the fact that while communicating one should try to make a message as short as possible to make it effective. Conciseness in communication not only saves time but is also cost effective and highlights the message making it more appealing and comprehensible for the audience/reader.
 3. **Consideration** – Consideration in communication implies that the sender of message steps into the shoes of the audience/readers in terms of their viewpoints, background, mind-set, education level, etc. to ensure that the message sent is comprehended properly by the receiver(s).
 4. **Clarity** – Clarity in communication implies that the message should be as clutter free as possible and that it is easily understandable. To put a message across with clarity, one needs clarity of thought. And when one has clarity of thought one can use exact, appropriate and specific words to express oneself.
 5. **Concreteness** – Concreteness in communication implies being particular and clear rather than fuzzy and general. One should be specific in terms of quoting figures and

facts as it makes communication effective and trustworthy and there is less chance of the message being misinterpreted.

6. **Courtesy** - Courtesy in communication implies that the sender should respect the receiver/s in terms of being polite, judicious, reflective and enthusiastic. It creates a positive atmosphere for communication and leads to effective communication.
7. **Correctness** - Correctness in communication implies that there are no grammatical errors, no dubiousness in facts and figures. Correctness in communication builds up trust between the sender and the receiver and makes communication effective.

LISTENING

- Listening is very different from hearing: We hear numerous little sounds and noises during the day without registering most of them. Birds chirping, cars honking, kids playing, and people talking are examples of such sounds. We do not pay attention to these sounds because we are not interested in them or because these sounds are not meaningful to us.
- Listening is as important as talking: Good listening involves encouraging the other person (the speaker in this case) by being sensitive to the thoughts and emotions hidden in their expressions. We also need to be patient while listening because otherwise we will lose track of what is being said.
- Active versus Passive Listening: We often listen to various forms of communication in an unconscious manner. At dinner, we glance at the television while busy eating or talking to someone else. This is not active listening—either to the TV or to the person we are talking to. Improper listening is very harmful, as such communication is prone to distortion. It is also a waste of time. The responsibility of the listener is to show keenness

in the speaker's talk through expressions, alertness, and by asking questions about the speech, if required.

Different types of listening

- **Appreciative listening:** Appreciative listening is listening for deriving aesthetic pleasure, as we do when we listen to a comedian, musician, or entertainer.
- **Empathetic listening:** As we have learnt, empathy is very important in communication, particularly in listening. A good example of empathetic listening is that practiced by nurses. So much so that it gives a healing touch to the patient. For effective empathetic listening, one has to feel what the speaker is feeling. One has to appreciate the speaker's emotions, circumstance, mind-set, and perspective, and be able to provide emotional and moral support. When a psychiatrist listens to her subject, she employs empathetic listening. We must feel the person's nerves. This can be done through phrases like 'I can understand what you have gone through,' 'It must be difficult to face such a situation,' etc. Sometimes the situation is very sensitive and must be handled with caution.
- **Comprehensive listening:** This type of listening is needed in the classroom when students have to listen to the lecturer to understand and comprehend the message. Similarly, when someone is giving you directions to find the location of a place, comprehensive listening is required to receive and interpret the message.
- **Critical listening:** Also known as evaluative, judgemental, or interpretive listening, critical listening involves analysing, evaluating, and judging what is being said. Just as we formulate opinions about people before they speak based on their physical attributes, we also tend to get judgemental about the contents of their speech. We try to see if the person has said something based on facts or is simply beating about the bush. This type

of listening is applicable when the other person is trying to persuade. In such cases, we try to evaluate the tone, the non-verbal signals, and the underlying meaning of the words. We judge the argument based on our knowledge and experience. For example, listening to a salesperson before making a purchase or listening to politicians making their election campaign speech involves critical listening.

- Superficial listening: Superficial listening can be compared with hearing or passive listening. One pretends to be listening by giving fake expressions to avoid offending the speaker. However, not much is fed into the brain. This happens, for example, when one is forced to attend a guest lecture on an area that is not of one's interest.
- 'You' viewpoint: 'Seek first to understand, and then to be understood'. This is a subtle way of saying that we should put the other person before us. If we give the other person more importance and avoid forcing our opinion, we can listen better. Using this 'you' viewpoint, we boost the speaker's confidence, making him/her more open to communication. Another way of achieving this is to address the speaker by his/her name, which gives the impression that we are listening with full attention.

SPEAKING

- To grow in our academic or professional career, we must have the ability to stand in front of an audience and deliver a lecture or presentation on a certain topic. It should be convincing, supported with facts and examples, and be able to create an impact.
- We may have brilliant ideas, but it is very important to get them across to others for them to be appreciated. Similarly, in our personal or community life, we may have to meet people, talk to them about some matter, or persuade them to do something.

- We may have to speak in various situations, be it with colleagues at the workplace, friends and teachers in college, or others in our neighbourhood. The effectiveness with which we do it shapes the perception of us in others' minds.
- The three most important factors that contribute to effective speaking skills are: confidence, clarity and fluency.
- Vocal cues help us to give urgency to our voice and are an important aspect of effective speaking. Our voice is our trademark; it is that part of us that adds human touch to words.
- Writing does not have that immediacy because the words are static on a page. Voice gives extra life to our delivery. Therefore, it is useful to understand the characteristic nuances of voice, namely *quality, volume, rate, pitch, articulation, pronunciation, and pauses*.