GEC 324: Technical Communication(2, 0, 0) 2 Units

Lecturer

ENGR. (Mrs) Awolusi T.F.

Contents

- Introduction to Communications:
  - Principles of effective communication in interpersonal and mass communication process. Verbal, graphical and numerical communications.
  - Written Communication: Principles of technical writing. Types of technical writing, referencing and citation. Styles of writing. Graphs; diagrams presentation.
  - Statistical information presentation. Macro level and micro-level.
  - Oral Communication: Public speaking skills, multi-media presentation skills.
- Facilitator and participant skills in meetings. Negotiating skills. Idea-generating skills. Speaking and presentation involving media and telecommunications.
- Reading skills: Effective reading skills: extracting main ideas and speed-reading, chunk/cluster-reading and word-attack techniques of technical reading materials.
- Equipment/Manual Writing and Presentation: Component diagrams, assembling, description, and multi-language presentation.
- Basic troubleshooting information, and technical support information.
- Marketing strategy.

Texts

- Technical Report writing by Olorunnisola A. O.
- Technical Report Writing by Ogedengbe M. O. et al
- The Elements of Academic Research edited by McCuen R. H.
- Research Methodology in the Behavioural Sciences by Asika N.
- Writing Skills Success in 20 minutes a day
- Writing for Science and Engineering by Heather Silyn-Roberts S.
- Read Better, Remember More by Elizabeth Chesla
- How to Study by Gail Wood
- The Evelyn Wood Seven-Day Speed Reading and Learning Program by Stanley D. Frank
- Effective Presentations by Fred Nickols
- The Seven Strategies of Master Presenters by Brad McRae and David Brooks
- Any book on Marketing

Assessment

- CA – 30%
  - Attendance
  - Impromptu Tests (Unannounced tests)
  - Announced Test
  - Assignments

- Exam – 70%

What is Communication?

- Communication is the activity or process of expressing ideas and feelings or of giving people information – Advanced Learner's Dictionary

- Speech is the fastest method of communication between people

- Methods of sending information
  - Telephones, Radio, Television, Computers, Roads, Railways

Methods of Communication Contd.

- Verbal Communication
- Graphical Communication
- Numerical communications

Technical Writing- Definition

- "Technical Writing is all formal writing which is in accordance with certain guiding rules and principles. It is characterised by use of words and expressions that are simple, concrete and familiar rather than flowery high-sounding ones. The style is decidedly impersonal and the tone is objective, with an absence of any attempt to arouse emotion." Ogedengbe et al, 2005

Common Writing Deficiencies

- **Surnames not distinguishable**: One practice very common among students at all levels is that when they write their names in full, the surnames are difficult to determine. On most forms to be filled, the place where the surname is to be placed is usually indicated. But when such guidance is not provided, all but the careful writers are prone to errors.

Common Writing Deficiencies

- Consider the following names as written and identify the surnames in each case:
  1. Abayomi Adegoke
  2. Abiodun Abayomi
  3. Ogunwande Adeleke
  4. Anderson Jack
  5. Musa Sheu
  6. Yusuf Emeka
  7. Olusegun John
  8. Obioha Ngozi

Common Writing Deficiencies

- Since a surname can be written first or last, and given the widespread confusion in the way individuals handle this simple task, one would only be guessing as to what was meant to be the surname in each case.

- One general guiding rule to solve this problem is, accept the first written name as the surname if it is followed by a comma, or if it is written in capital letters while the others are written in lower case or if it is underlined, otherwise accept the last-written as the surname.

Common Writing Deficiencies

- Examine the following
    1. Obioha, Ngozi
    2. ABAYOMI Abiodun
    3. ADELEKE, Ogunwande
    4. <u>Musa</u>, Sheu
    5. <u>Babalola</u> Afe
    6. <u>JOHN</u>, Olusegun
    7. Emeka Yusuf
    8. Jack Anderson

- The surnames are now easily identified, in 1 to 8 above, Obioha, Abayomi, Adeleke, Musa, Babalola,John, Yusuf and Anderson. However you notice that in 3, 4 and 6 the surnames may be said to be over-identified.

Common Writing Deficiencies

- This all seem to be too much ado about nothing. Numerous students had missed scholarship awards and other valuable opportunities because their surnames somehow, were treated as first and reduced to an initial for example, the name Abdul Olusegun Resheed was interpreted by the processing authority as A.O. Resheed, when in fact he is O. R. Abdul. He was checking his name under 'A' and not finding it decided that he did not succeed.

Common Writing Deficiencies

- Note also that in formal settings you should not truncate your name. If your first name is Olufunke, friends can call you Funke but you must write you name in full.

- Note that the name F. Anozie would not be accepted to be the same as O. Anozie when in fact it is Olufunke that has been written.

- Spelling errors

In hundred of term papers and laboratory reports submitted by students and in numerous professional reports written in the name of establishment, certain spelling errors are surprisingly common. Some of the most common in our experience are tittle (for title), litterature (for literature), proffession (for profession) beleive (for believe), been (for being) lenght (length), etc.

Fortunately they are facilities in the computer word processing packages to perform spelling checks. It remains for the writer to be sensitive to making the spelling checks with the computer or manually.

- Structurally deficient sentences

Another form in which writing incompetence is reflected is in wrong sentence structuring. A few example will illustrated

1. ' In response to the advertisement for tenders. I hereby indicate my interest.' Clearly the first full stop (.) should be replaced by a comma. This is a very common error. They is no verb in the first part therefore, it is not a sentence.

The sentence should be: ' In response to the advertisement for tenders, I hereby indicate my interest.'

2. ' Having listened to the network news we welcome you back to ABC radio.'

The question here is who did the listening and who did the welcoming back? Let's rearrange the sentence:

'We, having listened to the network news, welcome you back to ABC radio.'

When making sentence there need for proper subject verb relationship.

subjects and verbs agreement

1. When the subject of a sentence is composed of two or more nouns or pronouns connected by and, use a plural verb.

•She and her friends are at the fair.

2. When two or more singular nouns or pronouns are connected by or or nor, use a singular verb.

•The book or the pen is in the drawer.

3. When a compound subject contains both a singular and a plural noun or pronoun joined by or or nor, the verb should agree with the part of the subject that is nearer the verb.

The boy or his friends run every day.

His friends or the boy runs every day.

(Purdue OWL: online subjects/verb agreement)

- Miscellaneous others
- There are several other communication inadequacies. Examples of some common ones are provided hereunder:

1. 'I suppose to do it'. This is wrong. 'I am supposed to do it' is the correct way to say that. To be sure the word 'suppose' can also be used as a verb: ' I suppose he is a member of the team'. 'we all supposed him to be up to the task'. ' do you suppose it will rain?'

2. 'In response to your enquiry find attached ……'. This is not good enough. The word 'please' is needed: 'In response to your enquiry please find attached….'.

3. 'He spoke to Akin and I'. This is wrong. 'he spoke to Akin and me' is the correct form. 'Akin and I took part in the competition'. This is correct. This is really a simple matter of subject and object.

4. 'we tried to <u>advice</u> him but he seem unreceptive to <u>advise</u>'. This is incorrect; advice is the noun form , while 'advise' is the verb. Thus the two underlined word in the sentence should be interchanged.

Assignment

Write in support of, or against the statement : 'it is necessary to formally teach principles of technical report writing'.

Thank you for listening