

**Soft Skills**  
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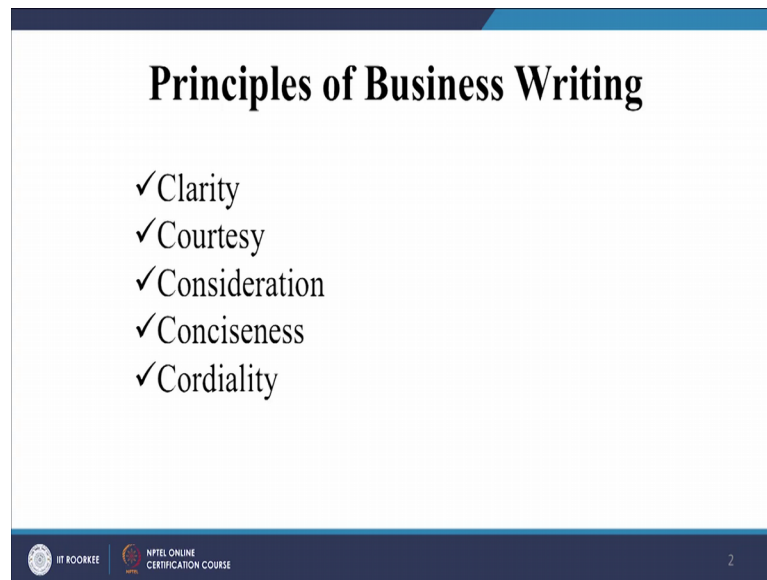
**Lecture – 24**  
**Principles of Business Writing**

Good morning, in the previous module we talked about advance writing skills. And we through light on the various facets of effective writing, which we required in our day to day life as well as while doing business transactions. We also emphasized on the various patterns that can be followed, when we start writing. We also realized how the background of the recipient or the receiver plays an important role and how keeping that into consideration we can draft our messages carefully. But apart from the patterns what is of utmost importance is to know the guiding principles behind business writing.

The writing that you do with your friends forms a part of your personal writing, but you are to sign forth in the days to come with your excellence in terms of business writing. And hence it becomes quite mandatory to know the various principles that actually guide our business writing. Because when you are writing you are actually writing for audiences or recipients who are varied. Varied as I said, in terms of their educational background, their age, sex, taste, faith, cultural beliefs and preferences. But then in order knowing well that writing is between a writer and his readers, it is moreover a sort of repo between the sender which is a writer and between the receiver who is the recipient.

Dear friends, there are certain Cs very important in terms of business writing. If you remember the 5 Cs of business writing and quite hopeful that your writing will carry a lot of weight in the days to come and you will become a force to reckon with in your organization. Now what are these 5 Cs? The first is clarity.

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I mean whatever you want to write it has to be clear. Of course, sometimes you become ambiguous, but as I have been saying ambiguity maybe a quality in terms of literature, in terms of our everyday gossip, but when it comes to writing especially for business ambiguity is quite an unwelcome guest. If your messages are ambiguous no action can be taken further. Hence you need to be clear moreover when you are writing you should also suppose you should also believe rather that you are writing for people.

Hence, whatever you write must have a sort of curtsy. I mean when your informing you are passing on information no doubt. Information may be at times dreidel morose, but then if you have because message has to be conveyed, if you have some concerned and curtsy for the person at the receiving end your messages can be taken seriously. Then comes the consideration, whenever we are writing we do not know who the reader will be. Sometimes it will be a young person sometimes it will be undealt sometimes it will be a person who is quite ripe in in terms of age. So, whatever you write may have some effect on them. And of course, you as a careful writer would not like anyone to be hurt because of your writing.

Hence the need for consideration arises and then comes conciseness. As in the previous lecture we have talked, how concise this matters. By concise this we mean sort by concise this we mean our messages has to be brief, but then at the cost to briefness, let us not try to put a message that becomes more abstruse, that becomes more difficult because

as I have been repeating time and again. No one sits with a dictionary or thesaurus while reading your message. While receiving your letter while reading the report hence you need to be concise. So, when we talk about conciseness it means be concise as much as you can, but then do not see that you are crossing the limits of specifications. You have to be specific no doubt, but at the same time you also have to ensure that your reader or the recipient understand the intention or understands the essence of your message.

Then comes cordiality. We stand (Refer Time: 06:47) when we give examples on all these. Actually many people often falling with the fact that when we are dealing in business, we are actually dealing with people. It is not only that you are simply carrying out the business, but then you are also carrying out with people. Hence the goal of business writing is to express and not to impress. And you here I will rather give some emphasis on the difference between expressing and impressing. At times you get impressed by somebody who has dressed beautifully, but then at times you are impressed by somebody who may not have dressed. So, beautifully, but then the way he or she spoke that actually impressed you a lot.

But remember the fact that when you are dealing in business your major function is your major aim is to express.

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**Aim of Business Writing**

- ✓ The goal of business writing is to express and not to impress.
- ✓ A good writing is such that is clear, concise and plain.

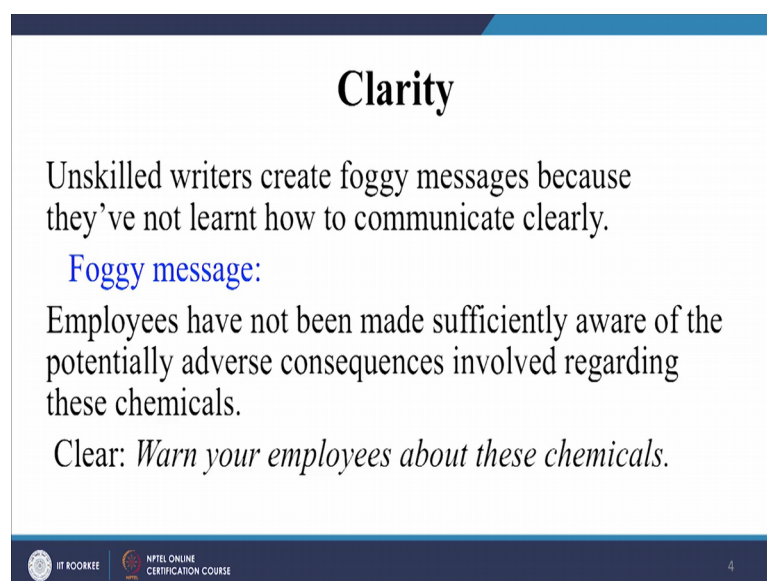
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You have to tell people what it is actually do you want because as a boss you are to give an instruction and if the instruction itself is not clear naturally no action will be taken. Likewise, when you are trying to say something and you are actually trying to be very impressive what you do is you are actually putting lot of words, you are making use of words which are very difficult, but remember that cannot impress, unless people on stand us, how can we be impressed or how can they be impressed.

So, the need is to make them understand and so when we say impressed you can impress people by your simplicity. You can I impress people by your clarity a good flower impresses, you a good flower impresses you because it is so simple it is not closed in so many words likewise when you are right in a message let it be very clear let the content me very clear.

A good writing does is very important. And it should be clear concise and plain what I actually do you mean by plain, I mean dear friends. You come across different sort of words and at times you also have a fancy for these words, but what use are these words if they are not understood by people for whom you have written. It hence it has been watched that unskilled writers, those who are not having a lot of exposure those who are inexperienced, they often try to create a message or create a content that is foggy, that is actually clouded that is not clear.

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**Clarity**

Unskilled writers create foggy messages because they've not learnt how to communicate clearly.

**Foggy message:**  
Employees have not been made sufficiently aware of the potentially adverse consequences involved regarding these chemicals.

**Clear:** *Warn your employees about these chemicals.*

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So, we can say that unskilled writers they create foggy messages because they have not learnt the hard to communicate effectively and clearly. You can come across several examples where the writer drafts his message in such a manner that a particular word at a particular word you will find the sender suddenly stops.

Because he does not know either the meaning of the word or in the context it is not suitable. Say for example, if we say employees have not been made sufficiently aware of the potentially adverse consequences involved regarding these chemicals. Now look at this sentence. The sentence actually not is not only long, but it actually has used words which are going to try remind of the reader, but if you said to be the dictionary and find the meaning of all these words, the essence of the meaning that you will come across is very clear. But for this sort of clarity audience cannot have the patience the audience cannot have that much of time. So, ambiguous and unclear messages are actually a constant to your time to your energy and to your understanding. So, the same sentence can be written very clearly if we say warn your employees about these chemicals.

Now, this is the essence of this message, but in order to make it very cumbersome very difficult they have said employees have not been made sufficiently out of the potentially adverse consequences involved regarding these chemicals. So, has it had the writer been clear, in his purpose of follower whom he is writing naturally he could have said word your employees about these chemicals. Dear friends when we talk about clarity it should always be taken into consideration that unclear words should be deleted.

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**Contd.**

- **Remove**
  - ✓ Unclear words
  - ✓ Unfamiliar with familiar
- **Exemplify**
- **Quantify meaningfully**

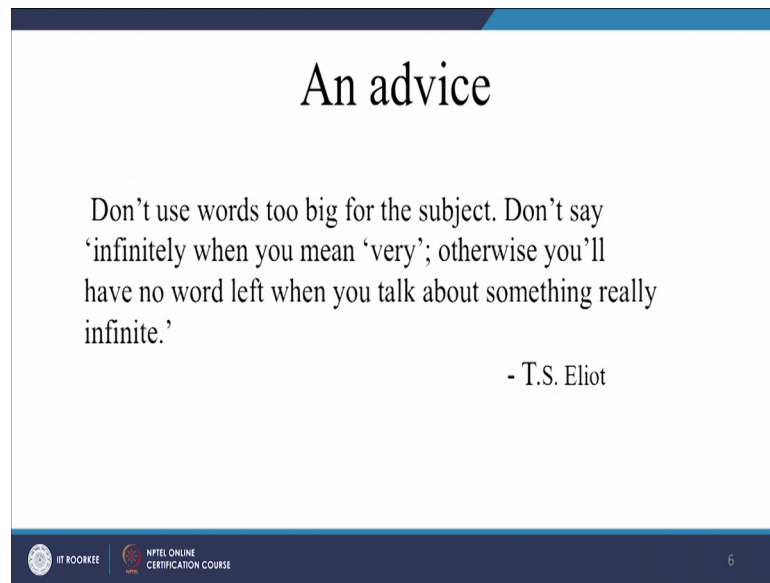
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You know as you are going to be experienced in the days to come you will realize from your own experiences, that if another word could have been used in that place. If another sentence could have used in that place that could perhaps been more forceful more effective.

So, it is always advisable that unfamiliar words should be substituted by should be changed by familiar words. Then only you can have a sort of impression that your reader or your recipient will understand. In order to make it clear it is not necessary that you have to make it sort and in order to make it sort you are going to make it difficult. So, it is always better to give examples, sometimes you may have to use some more words, but it is always better to use some more words then to use less words and be difficult. So, the piece of advice here is used words as per their need. And many people do not understand the need. Even if they understand the need they actually block the reader's thoughts by making it very cumbersome. I mean you receive a lot of letters, you receive lots of mails you might receive lots of assignments, but when you look at them you will find they are having a lot of quantity, but then there is no quality.

So, try to make it qualitative by adding meaning. And in order to add meaning remember the advice that TS Eliot had given.

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An advice

Don't use words too big for the subject. Don't say 'infinitely' when you mean 'very'; otherwise you'll have no word left when you talk about something really infinite.'

- T.S. Eliot

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You know what Eliot said still holds true he had said do not use big words, too big for the subject. Meaning thereby when you are writing for an audience let us not use too big words. And do not say infinitely when you mean very. You know sometimes people use one to mean very, but they use a word like infinite. What is the point of using infinite when the word very can serve the purpose? And what Eliot's said is otherwise you will have no word left when you talk about something really infinite. My dear young friends you will realize that words have actually their significance in a context. And you will find even though we say word search words have got synonyms, but synonym is only a synonym it cannot replace the real word.

Hence the need is to go for certain words go for words which are appropriate and not simply in order to be impressive use big words, but tired the mind of the readers. Hence it becomes quite pertinent to know through certain examples. Let me give you another example where you will also feel that why this sentence has become so long where it could have been short. Let us take an example as in this sentence, this is actually a part of a letter which was written by a customer.

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**Contd.**

- ❑ We grew hot and cold when the customers complained about the malfunctioning of the high priced ACs supplied by your firm.
- ❑ Will you let me know what should I do to recover my money for the ACs bought at an exorbitant price from one of your distributors notorious for supplying the branded ones? I may kindly be returned the amount incurred on buying your product.

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We grew hot and cold when the customer's complaint about the malfunctioning of the high priced ACs supplied by your firm. Now look at this sentence. The way this sentence has been planned we grew hot and cold and in the expression is very flowery growing hot and cold actually; that means, angry, but why to use hot and cold. And then again you are saying when the customer's complaint about the malfunctioning of the high priced ACs supplied by your firm. I mean one such a sentence comes you can make it short. Try to understand what is the meaning and since you are writing it to a person who will respond to your letter, why cannot you be clear and why cannot we say it in a different manner. Look at the suggestion that I am going to give you.

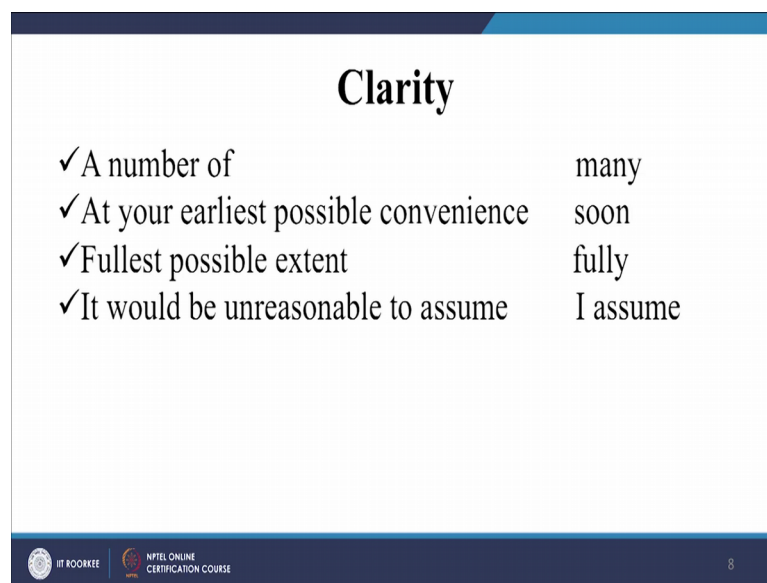
Suppose we could have said very directly we have received complaints about the ACs we shall look forward to your suggestion please. I mean, I am saying the same thing, but the way I am saying I am actually the main thing is that you are you want to say about the complaints received by the customers. And you want that something should be done. So, why cannot we write it in a very polite manner by saying, we have received several complaints about the ACs supplied by us. We would look forward to know what can be done. I mean this appears it is not only a sort of approach; we can call the you approach I am in the audience approach rather this actually makes the situation a little better. Sometimes because you know when you order for some goods and you receive them, but not in the right manner you become angry no doubt, but then why to carry further your anger to the other end.



You only want that you are grievances that your needs be fulfilled and that can be fulfilled even by a nice reply also. Look at another sentence if you say will you let me know what should I do to recover my money for the ACs bought at an exorbitant price from one of your distributors notorious for supplying the branded ones. I may kindly be returned the amount incurred on buying your product. I mean again this is the pain of an angry customer, but then the customer had he been a bit polite, he could have said we had bought branded ACs from you. Kindly let me know what can be done to get matters sort it out. I mean this also search the same purpose, but the language that has been used there is not only polite it is actually seen from the point of view of the receiver.

So, my advice to all of you is whenever you write something please think yourself as the receiver. In the place of the receiver and then perhaps you will be able to be in a better situation and you will write things better. In order to be clear in order to be more candid there are certain things that you can practice. First is reduce the number of words sometimes you will feel.

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**Clarity**

✓A number of	many
✓At your earliest possible convenience	soon
✓Fullest possible extent	fully
✓It would be unreasonable to assume	I assume

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That instead of 4 words you can use even one. Instead of 3 words you can use one. Instead of putting a big phrase you can simply right one word. Instead of putting a big clause you can put even a small fridge. Now how can we have that? There are several examples and I can only give you some examples the rest you can think and sense you

are all intelligent guys; you will all be in a position to be careful when you are going to use them as per the need of the situation.

Say when somebody writes the word like a number of I mean there are 3 words and which he can simply substituted by saying many. So, this many is one word. So, instead of using 3 words let us use one word and that also serves the purpose. Sometimes people also used at your earliest possible convenience and in see 4 words have been used and see the essence. The essence is that you want to say that it should be done soon. So, why not you soon in comparison with using at your earliest possible convenience. So, strike the word which actually is not only a specific, but at the same time salted. Sometimes we also come across the use of words like fullest possible extent. And in fullest possible extent actually means fully. So, right fully and not right fullest possible extent then sometimes we have seen people using expressions like it would be unreasonable to assume, I mean actually you are assuming.

But then you then you say you try to be neutral and then in order to be neutral you actually become. So, cumbersome that you used it would be unreasonable to assume let us say I assume and that will serve the matter right. Actually what is of utmost importance is people do not see it from the point of view of the receiver if they see it from the point of the view of receiver, I think they will start writing simple plain effective and they will also start writing in a very subtle manner, but then it does not mean, but that we cannot tied over such situations or we cannot improve. We can improve as I said writing is a matter of practice. And somebody has rightly said practice makes a man perfect. Imagine yourself as an intranet in an organization and you have been given lots of loads and these loads carry writing loads you sometimes gets flabbergasted, but there is nothing to be flabbergasted or to be confused rather you need to learn and you can learn by practice.

Actually many people sacrifice the quality of being courteous. I mean the world comprises people who are very courteous also. And if you were the receiver you would expect other people to be courteous when they are writing. Because you know people at times get very touchy, you when you are writing you do not see the mood of the person to whom you are writing. Hence the need is to maintain the curtsy because on the other side also there are people and all business today depends upon the sort of relationship as we have been saying, and relationships can be maintained only when the communication

is courteous. How can you be courteous that actually requires a little bit of a skill a little bit of intelligence?

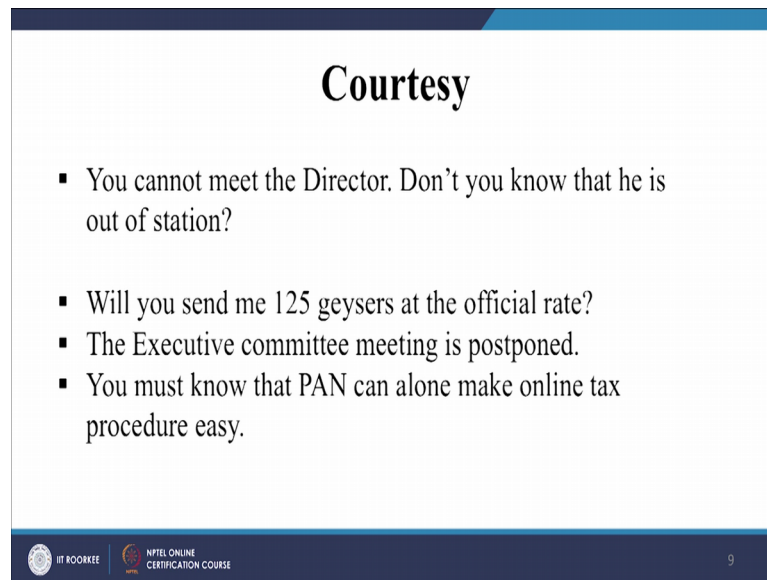
Say sometimes you go to an organization or an institute and you are in a great hurry, you want to meet the director, but suppose the reception is simply telling you call me the director do not you know that he is out of station. I mean this could have been said even nicely why is the need to say you cannot meet the director, do not you know he is out of station.

I mean if we could have revised it and saying, thanks for your interest thanks for the interest to meet a director, but today is out of station. We will give your call the moment he comes. I mean you are actually speaking, you are actually speaking in such a manner that the other person does not feel hurt, but then if you are simply putting a placard there, having these words you cannot meet the director, do not you know that he is out of station that actually maybe hurting. Like that sometimes you also come across expressions like will you send me 125 geysers at the official rate. I mean you are direct no doubt, but then you are having a sort of business transaction.

Why cannot you say it in a different manner we required 125 geysers. We expect you would supply us these at the official rate. Or you can also say we would like to know about the rates as we want to buy 125 geysers. I mean it does not cost much, but it actually pays a lot.

Sometimes you may also come across some such expressions as the executive committee meeting is postponed. I mean you when there for a meeting and suddenly are you come across at the display the executive committee meeting is postponed. I mean this could have been set in a different manner, and the writing could have been different.

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## Courtesy

- You cannot meet the Director. Don't you know that he is out of station?
- Will you send me 125 geysers at the official rate?
- The Executive committee meeting is postponed.
- You must know that PAN can alone make online tax procedure easy.

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We regret the inconvenienced caused to people since the meeting has been postponed because of some unavoidable reasons. I mean if this is the approach people will feel better, they will feel that they have been considered. Sometimes you also receive a writing or an information like this you must know that time alone can make online tax procedure easy. I mean this language also can be improved and we can say we will appreciate if you can send us or give us your pan number.

It will make the tax procedure is here or smooth. I mean you will find that whenever you find this sentence appears to be abstruse, it can be split it can be divided into 2 short sentences and the choice of words there has to be soft, the choice of words there has to be having some sort of curtsy. Otherwise people will feel that they actually are there just to receive such comments. And since you do not want to hurt others let us try to be courteous. Sometimes or rather on many occasions you will find you have applied for a post somewhere and you received some messages you received a letter. Sometimes it is it comes to you by post also, but since you are going to write it, I think you need to practice this sort of consideration. You are too so, consideration for people on the other side. And this consideration is nothing, but simply the choice of your words simply the arrangement of your sentences.

Say for example, you had applied for a project. And then came a response in in the words which are the following, your project is being returned since there are no more funds this

year send it next year. I mean the messages very clear that your project has not been approved, but at the same time please do remember that you did not want to hurt others of the people who had submitted their projects. So, it could have been better had you said it in a different manner like, thanks for submitting a project to us we are sorry to tell you that we are lacking in funds this year; however, will let you know soon once we get more funds.

I mean you are not going to give people some amount of despair. Dear friends if you cannot give anything to others let us try to give them some hope. And that is how when we said when we are talking about a negative messages see that the negative message is put in the middle and the last sentence that is there should have some positivity as I said you would soon let you know about our decisions once we have sufficient funds. I mean the hope never dies hope is always alive and let us as writers try to sustain this hope for our recipients or readers. We can have another example where this consideration has been sacrificed. Please explain why you are not making adjustments for the cracks developed in the dvd players bought from your firm last month. I mean once again your so your outburst of emotions and you are showing your anger in a very different manner.

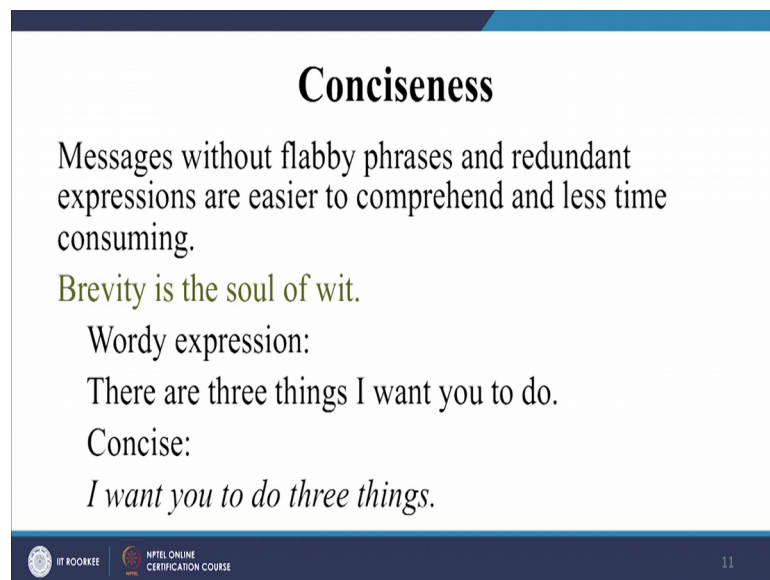
But it could have been said it could have been expressed in a more polite considerate manner had we said we had bought dvd players from you of late it has developed some cracks, would like to know how it can be adjusted. Would you like to know the adjustments I mean here you will find that even though you have a split the sentence, but the approach is you the approach is considerate and we are actually trying for such a sort of consideration. I mean business transactions as I have been repeating. Whatever form bit either in the form of complain or in the form of grievance or in the form of reply let us see that we show our consideration, we show our admiration for the recipient. And once this is done I mean business transactions will become smooth. We have also to see as a writer that our message is concise. As I said earlier concise this actually means being brief being short.

So, in order to ensure conciseness, what should we do? Let us try to remove the flabby frejus. Sometimes you will find if you if you have a revision as I said when you are writing the last task in the revision last task in the writing is revision before finally, you are writing is sent further. So, when you are revising see to it that can we delete a particular clause or a particular word or a particular presage in order to be more effective

or in order to be more concise. Sometimes you will find that there are some words which actually appear there as burdensome. They are not adding to the meaning rather they are blocking. The meaning we call them needless repetitions or redundant expressions. Such enable expressions and needless repetitions can be sacrificed in order to be concise. Dear friends all of you have been hearing since your childhood your teachers might have been saying brevity is the soul of wit.

But how to be brief? In order to be brief you actually have to kick sometimes excess of noun habit, some sometimes excessive pompous words and sometimes lengthy expressions. Suppose let us take a very simple example if I say

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**Conciseness**

Messages without flabby phrases and redundant expressions are easier to comprehend and less time consuming.

*Brevity is the soul of wit.*

Wordy expression:  
There are three things I want you to do.

Concise:  
*I want you to do three things.*

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There 3 things I want you to do, is a very simple sentence all the words are you know having clearer meaning, but even this sentence can be made shorter. We can always say I want you to do 3 things. I mean what did it cost? It did not cost much rather it simply sacrifice certain words which were not useful which were rather a sort of burden. Sometimes you will find that this unnecessary burdening of words makes sentences tried and they actually make meanings chocked.

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**Contd.**

- ❑ Improper verification procedure in the Quality Control Division has brought a sea of complaints from our customers and hence, needs an investigation without any loss of time.
- ❑ You are not the only person to have problems as regards deadlines. You should not ignore the official instructions and should submit the report in no time.

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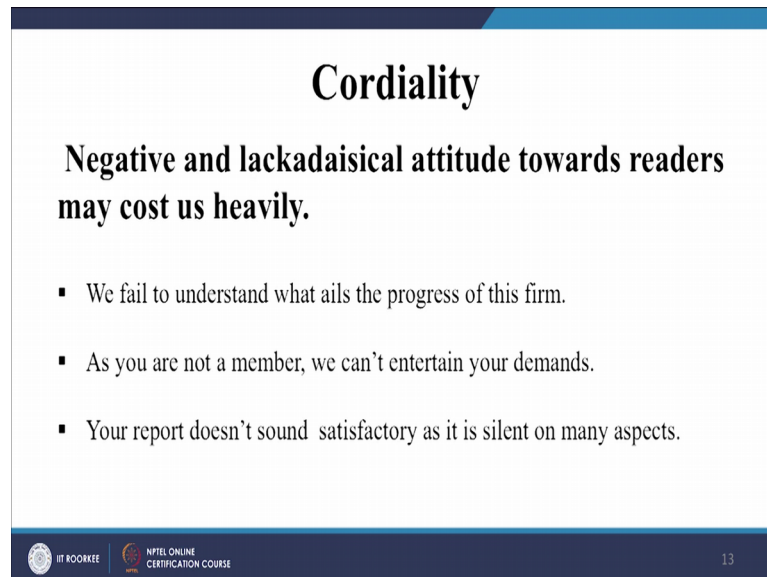
Say for example, if I say improper verification procedure in quality control division has bought a sea of complaints from our customers and hence needs an investigation without any loss of time. You see the sentence appears beautiful, but yet the sentence is a burden for the readers. I mean we can simply say we have received complaints from quality control division and investigation is needed. I mean here what we do it we actually said the same thing, but in a very different manner in a very easy manner.

Sometimes I mean we must always try to see problems of these sort of confusion in meaning in terms of receiver as I say put yourself in the place of the receiver, and you will have all the answers. You are not the only person to have problems as he got deadlines. You should not ignore the official instructions and should submit the report in no time. I mean this is a sort of warning this is a sort of caution formal organization, but then the weight has been written you are not the only person to have problems as he got deadlines I mean this can be the language of a member. We can all that say all of us follow the official timing. The official timing is Friday for submission of reports.

I mean when you say like this or for example, if you say all of us have problems all of us have constraints with time, or we say we expect timely submission of reports. I mean the need is to have a concern curtsy consideration for others keeping into mind not the sacrifice of conciseness simply for the sake of conciseness. As I said use words as many as you need use words as few as you can. Moreover, while applying all this things one

has also to be careful that cordiality is not lost. All communication is a blend of cordiality and cooperation whether it is a spoken or written. And in written since there is no person pleasant or no writer pleasant it becomes more challenging.

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**Cordiality**

**Negative and lackadaisical attitude towards readers may cost us heavily.**

- We fail to understand what ails the progress of this firm.
- As you are not a member, we can't entertain your demands.
- Your report doesn't sound satisfactory as it is silent on many aspects.

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Hence see to it that you do not make your messages negative or lackadaisical, I mean an interesting.

Towards readers because otherwise it may cost us heavily. You know bad deal between a customer and an organization may cause the organization heavily. That is why you are making use of language. While you are making use of your writing see to it that this cordiality is not lost. We can have some examples as we fail to understand what ails the progress of this firm. I mean this is a language which can be reduced which can be revised in some less words, and we can say we are anxious about the progress of our firm. Another sentence we can also say as you are not a member we cannot entertain your demands. This may affect others. So, in order even if you want to be direct you can always say this is for members, we expect you to be entertained once you have the membership. Or you can also say that we entertain our members.

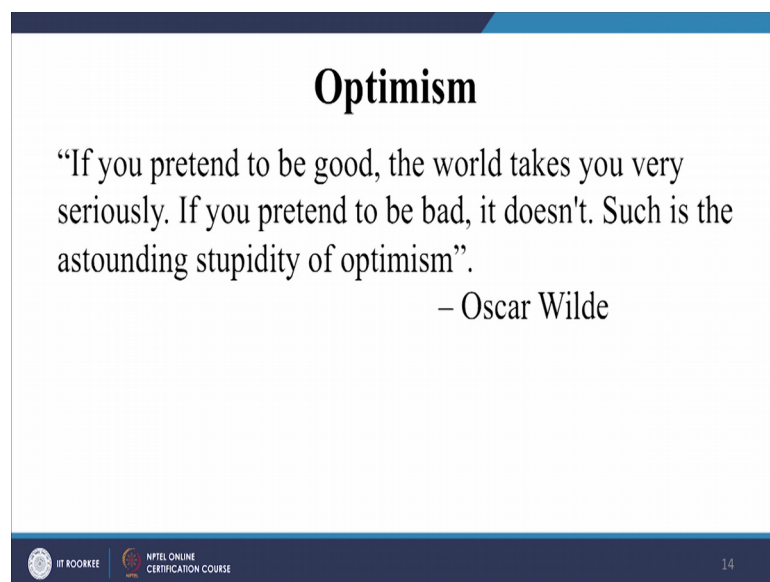
We expect you to join us as members. I think that is more cordial way of saying rather than saying it as you are not a member, I mean what you should do is do not put negative words phrases in the beginning. Say for example, you submitted a report and then came the reaction your report does not sound satisfactory as it is silent on many aspects. Again



you are becoming negative rather you could say we appreciate a detailed report. Dear friends the world is very harsh, but then we need to be tender and we need to show our tenderness through our communication whether it is written or spoken.

Since all of us are human beings we can understand the sentiments and emotions of the other person, who is sitting on the other side and who will be reading our messages. Hence the need is to be optimistic because you never know when the tables turned. Sometimes you may be in the receiver's position and somebody else maybe the writer and you will also come across the same sort of reaction that you had when you had a letter which will (Refer Time: 39:58) which was biting.

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**Optimism**

“If you pretend to be good, the world takes you very seriously. If you pretend to be bad, it doesn't. Such is the astounding stupidity of optimism”.

– Oscar Wilde

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Hence let us not give them hurts give them people burns. Rather let us try our level best to give them some amount of optimism as Oscar Wilde says if you pretend to be good the world takes you very seriously. I mean we are living in a world where we want that others should be good. Of course, when you pretend to be good people take you seriously, but if you pretend to be bad do not know no fast want to be bad, if you pretend to be bad it does not such is the astounding stupidity of optimism, but then even then you know in business dealings let us try to keep the hope alive let us try that the both the relationship should continue, the rivers are there and the winds are also there the rivers maybe turbulent yet the sailor knows how he can drive better how he can drove better. And as a communicator as a writer you also will know how to write better how to make

the journey smooth, how to make our relationship with our customers better and that is all we need to practice in the days to come.

Thank you very much.