

**Soft Skills**  
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**Lecture - 08**  
**Telephonic Communications Part II**

Welcome to the 2nd part of the talk on Telephonic Communication Skills. In the first part, we discussed the various etiquettes, mannerisms of traditional telephonic systems and what as an employee or as a professional wants to do while receiving or sending messages and how important are the voice, how important is the message and what are the various techniques through which we can make a telephonic talk productive. In this 2nd part, we shall be discussing as all of you know we are living in an age where cell phones are the best way to communicate whether you are young or old, a small child or a common professional, all of us want to have a cell phone and if we ask the question who does not have a cell phone today, perhaps the question will be out of date because everyone has a cell phone and care has been taken that every individual in your country has the potential or has the capability of having cell phones.

This ensures the sort of importance we provide to communication. Everyone wants to communicate, everyone wants to send message, everyone wants to receive message and many more. Cell phones now it has a variety of features and they have variety of designs, variety of patterns with the sound facility and the camera facility. In majority of cell phones, it has become a toy in the hands of every individual who cannot think of leading a day without a mobile, without a cell phone and though we talked about the traditional telephones in the first part of the lecture, there are even many organizations where you will find that instead of having traditional phones, they have provided employees with the cellular phones because of the diversity of facilities available to them.

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**Voice mail**

- ❖ Substitute to short memos and phone calls.
- ❖ Solves time zone difficulties.
- ❖ Reduces excess of interoffice paperwork.
- ❖ Used for goodwill and positive messages.

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Before going to the cellular phones let us also talk something about voice mail facility because there are situations when we are calling a person or when we are being called and because of the multi-tasking on our desks, we are not able to be at the same place. Because of our responsibility of moving to different places, we are not found at our desk and hence, when we might be contacted by other person, it is better we leave some voice message, both as a receiver, both as a sender and voice mail. Now, while I said in the previous module that it is better to avoid giving a person a call unless or until so urgent.

Now, since we are thinking of a paperless office, it is not essential that every little bit of information be passed through papers. Hence, the voice mail facility is a facility which can substitute short memos and short phone calls. At the same time, it can also solve the time zone difficulties, some messages, very important, but at the same time it is not possible to reach a person. It is better you leave it in his mailbox. It also reduces excess of the paperwork that is being done and serious thinkers have started thinking of having a paperless office because many of them think that while we are making much use or misuse of papers, we are also causing some difficulty to the environment from which the paper he generated.

Voice mail is actually because of its storage device since information can be digitized, all the incoming information can be digitized and stored, it can also be considered to provide as a sort of goodwill and positive messages. In many organizations, you will find

that they have a sort of automated attendant menu through which a caller can seek, can get and can record messages. For example, if you want to have a complain, if you want to have some information say for example, about credit cards, then they have a sort of automated attendant where they say welcome to SBI credit card and then, they have the several options. All you need to do is to push the button and they will say for account balance press 1, for other services press 2.

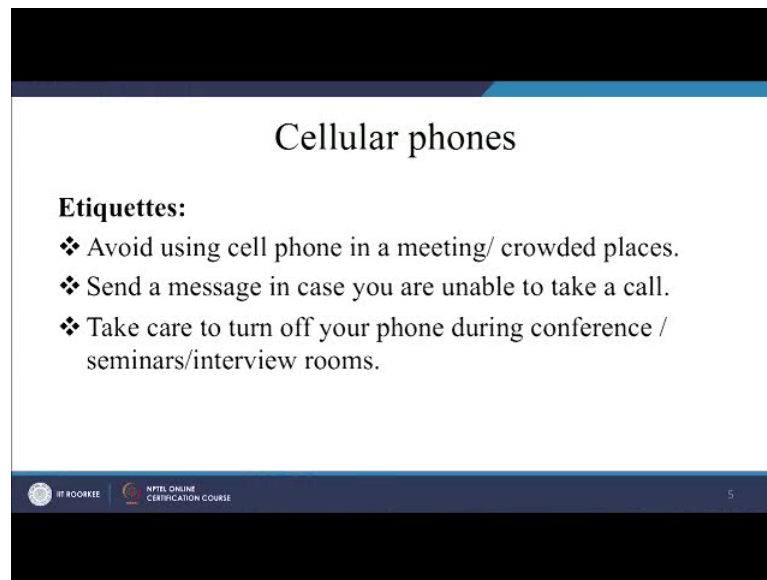
Now, in such a way this has of course become a facility, but at the same time what is lacking in this communicative process is the sort of feedback. You cannot have an immediate feedback and the response or the answer that is provided. That is quite general in nature. It cannot be specific. Of course while you are using voice mail, see to it that you focus on essentials without interrupting potential receivers. If you are making use of voice mail, once again it is very important to state your name clearly and without wasting much time because as I said it is a substitute to short memo. Please do mention the point of your message and because the other person if the exigency of the situation so require might be in need of contacting you. It is better to provide your number as well as the time and date when you will be available.

Most of the time because people when they do not find the other person on their desk, they leave the message. So, there is also a chance of having great congestion. So, it is better that once you receive the message, it is better that you reply quickly when you are going to do so because there is a facility involved in it. You can listen to the message time and again. So, listen to the message and then, write your response before you are returning the call. That will actually save a lot of your time and make you very specific.

So, voice mail facility is easy and of course, it intels less cost. All employees in organization should be aware of that facility because when you are not able to meet a person or not able to contact a person and if the need be very die, it is better to leave the message through voice mail.

Now, we come to the cellular phones. As I was talking about traditional phones have etiquettes, but because of the profusion of cell phones and because of the facility because when you have a cell phone, it is yours and you feel you actually become so possessive that sometimes other you do not care for the other part, each facility or suitability to receive calls.

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The slide is titled "Cellular phones" and lists three etiquettes for using a cell phone in professional settings. The slide has a white background with a blue header and footer. The footer contains logos for IIT ROORKEE and NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE, along with the number 5.

## Cellular phones

**Etiquettes:**

- ❖ Avoid using cell phone in a meeting/ crowded places.
- ❖ Send a message in case you are unable to take a call.
- ❖ Take care to turn off your phone during conference / seminars/interview rooms.

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Sometimes I say people have perhaps forgotten the basic cordialities and at times you may be bombarded with certain fake calls even at odd hours. Dear friends, it has really become very essential. It is actually become more than essential rather to maintain a sort of dignity while you are calling somebody because you do not know numbers overlap sometimes and nowadays the callers being tempted by their cell phones, sometimes while they are dialing the numbers, they dial the wrong numbers and irritate a person who was actually not meant for the call.

Now, because of all this, it has become quite compulsory to maintain certain etiquettes when or how you should make use of your cell phones. Let me tell you a very small incident that I came across. I boarded a daily bound bus last month. The bus was of course very cozy and the passengers were all good, but then as the bus started just after now I could see somebody calling and receiving phones and what actually surprised me much and to my dissatisfaction and to the discomfort of others, the gentleman continued to give all his instructions from his cell phone.

Perhaps he was maintaining his own office, instructing, allocating, complaining, growling at times, fuming with fire at some of his employees and you know the entire journey became very harass. All eyes were on him. My dear friends, the gentleman was so loud while he was talking over his mobile that all the other passengers who sometimes got half asleep could not enjoy the journey. You also might have come across several

such situations and it has of course become a common sight while you either attending a lecture or you are delivering a classroom lecture, you are in the midst of a conference, you are in the midst of a theater, you are in the midst of a cinema, you are in the midst of a talk, you will find several mobile phones ringing at the same time providing beautiful music and making the entire talk and musical.

Now, all of us since we are human beings, we actually want some sort of privacy and it is always better that we are concern and we be considerate to others, while you are using your phone, do you take the care that you will speak in low tones, why are you speaking in such loud tones to make others awake and to make others feel distracted. It is always better to understand the etiquettes, then why do not you avoid the use of cell phones when you are at a place where there are others also and since as I said in the beginning, many companies have also allowed the use of mobile phones and they are also providing the facility to them and in turn what many of us do, we actually make our private calls also over them and while doing so, we forget the common formalities and the common etiquettes in crowded places, in temples, in church, in conferences. Why cannot we switch off our mobile phones? Why every now and then we are being announced please switch off your cell phones or keep it on silent mode.

Now, these are the cursers that we need to generate within ourselves. Of course, sometimes when you feel that some call is very urgent and you are not able to take no, please send a message. Many phones have given the facility. They have actually certain one liners in a theatre and a cinema and a meeting. So, you can do that. It is better not to take a call when you are surrounded by several people. It is always better there to turn off your cell phone, fine. If you are in the midst of a conference, it actually becomes very embarrassing when a speaker is giving a talk and suddenly the phone rings. Of course, tempted that we are by beautiful mobiles, most of the time many of us do not know all the facilities involved in it and the entire talk may be mild because of the music that continues to ring through the mobile of the export talker.

So, what becomes urgent is sometimes or the other you need to be considerate and you have to be considerate dear friends because sometimes even though the call is very urgent, the signals are not good, the signals are not proper.

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Contd.

- ❖ It's better not to talk when signal is poor.
- ❖ Avoid multi-tasking while on phone.
- ❖ Avoid cell-yell.
- ❖ Be polite and professional in a low-modulated voice.

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So, it is better not to talk when there are poor signals and we have seen you also might have seen many people having busy with multitasking. He is actually working at his laptop and at the same time taking a call also and at the same time giving instructions also. You actually need to categorize my dear friend.

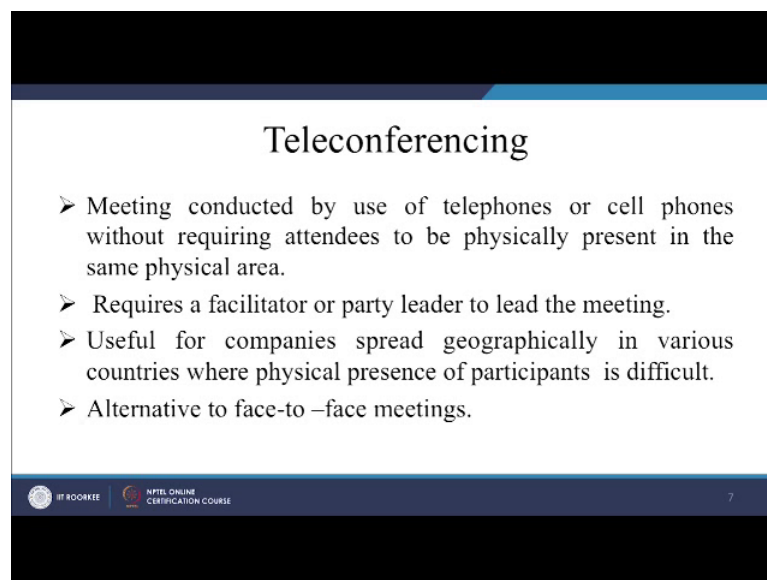
Now, phones are so sensitive, I sometimes say they are more sensitive than human beings. So, they are so sensitive that whatever you talk, whatever you do can be conveyed to the other party. Where is the question of privacy? Sometimes when there is a case of poor signal and you are not able to or the other party is not able to listen, what you do is you start a cell, yell. Why are you so loud? Why cannot you suspend this call for some time? Why cannot you resume it later? It is always better while responding over telephone. All cell phone speak in a low tone that is the curse which should come from you and from your within.

Cell phones of course since it is with you and you become tempted and at times so fascinated that you want to call somebody even at an odd hour. Even if you call your friend at an odd hour, maybe every now and then he may not welcome it. Do not call people at odd hours unless and until it becomes so urgent. Of course, when things are bad you will have to call, but please do remember that you should try to stop yourself from making calls at odd hours. Now, it is with several facilities provided by several telecompanies, people are talking throughout and you also might be aware of the various

difficulties that many people are going to have in the days to come. I think it is the days are not far when people will have problems of hearing, problems of visualizing because imagination is becoming the last thing actually because in many forms there is a facility and several, you know several providers have made call rates so easier that people do not think much before either they call or before they send the message and then, you always see the problems that are being generated.

Hence, try to be polite as polite as you can and be professional by speaking in a low modulated voice. Apart from cell phones, there are other facilities also, other electronic facilities where you can make proper use if you really know how to do that and one such is teleconferencing.

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**Teleconferencing**

- Meeting conducted by use of telephones or cell phones without requiring attendees to be physically present in the same physical area.
- Requires a facilitator or party leader to lead the meeting.
- Useful for companies spread geographically in various countries where physical presence of participants is difficult.
- Alternative to face-to-face meetings.

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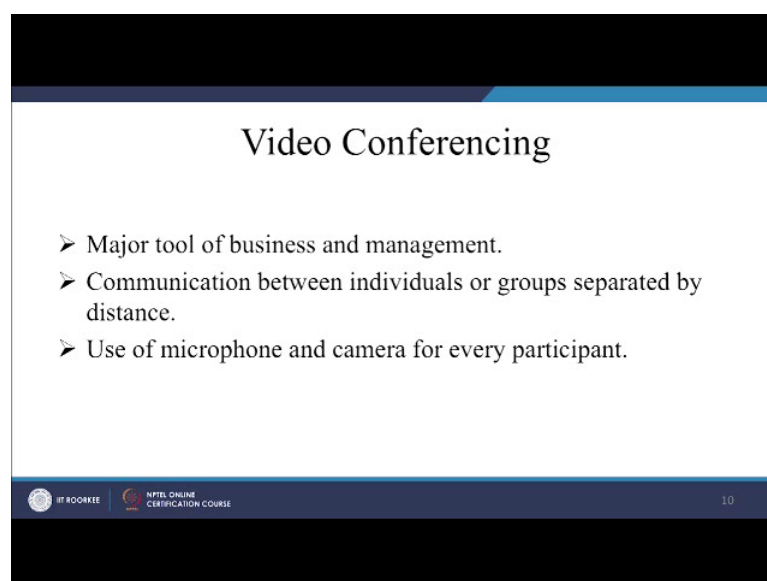
Teleconferencing is again a telephonic meeting with more than two people and since it is not possible because of people having several responsibilities and spread out different places, hence you can always go for a teleconferencing and this teleconferencing can allow people with forms to connect to other persons and have a discussion. When we talk about teleconferencing, of course we require a leader or a facilitator companies which have its branches spread out at several places depending upon the exigency of the situation and the need. They actually try to connect people and have discussion through teleconferences. Of course, it may appear as if it is a face to face meeting, but then it is not. It is simply a sort of alternative to a face to face meeting.

Teleconferencing can be both audio conferencing as well as video conferencing. When we talk about teleconferencing, of course it is a facility, but then it appears as an alternative, but you cannot take a decision based on that since you are not able to read the facial reactions of the people and hence, it becomes very ineffective when we talk about negotiations and all. There is also a very limited scope for secondary conversation since it is very spontaneous. As I said earlier, there is not much time and not much scope for orientation and sometimes because of poor signals, the aim for teleconferencing can be defeated. Hence, try to see that everything is right while you are making a teleconference.

Teleconferencing can either be audio or it can be video as well whereas in a audio, you can talk and you do not have the facility of looking at the persons reactions, gestures and all, but then you can always connect audio link if you have a conference room and there are several speakers available, several microphones available. I think the facility or the sound quality can be better, but at the same time what is of utmost importance is that in a teleconference is that it can be arranged at a very short notice.

Next we come to video conferencing. In a video conferencing, it is not only the audio, but the video also and with the help of the audio and video communication appears to be a sort of face to face communication.

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## Video Conferencing

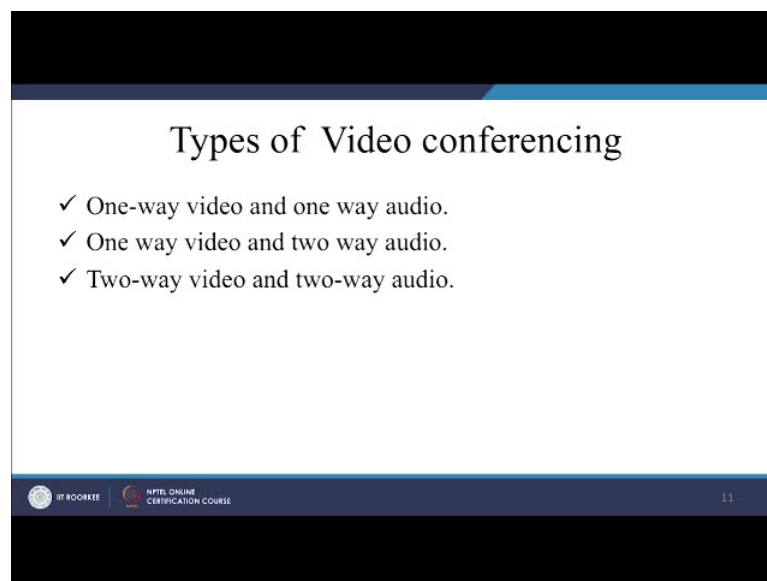
- Major tool of business and management.
- Communication between individuals or groups separated by distance.
- Use of microphone and camera for every participant.

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It is emerging as a major tool of business as well as of management individuals who are separated because of time and distance and cannot afford to make frequent journeys. They can be connected and they can give a talk, they can have a discussion over on video conferencing, but then there are certain things which are of utmost importance and that is the use of microphone and camera. Of course, it may become a costly affair, but then sometime or the other it is less costlier than the journeys that you undertake and the rigors of the journey.

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When we talk about video conferencing, there are three types of video conferencing. It may be one-way video and one-way audio where one audio and video from one side can be connected to the other sides and then, there can be communication. In the second instance, the two way audio and video is when people on the both sides can talk whereas, others can see the video themselves. There is a facility of two way video nowadays and two way audio and all of you are aware of how we are making a communication over Skype.

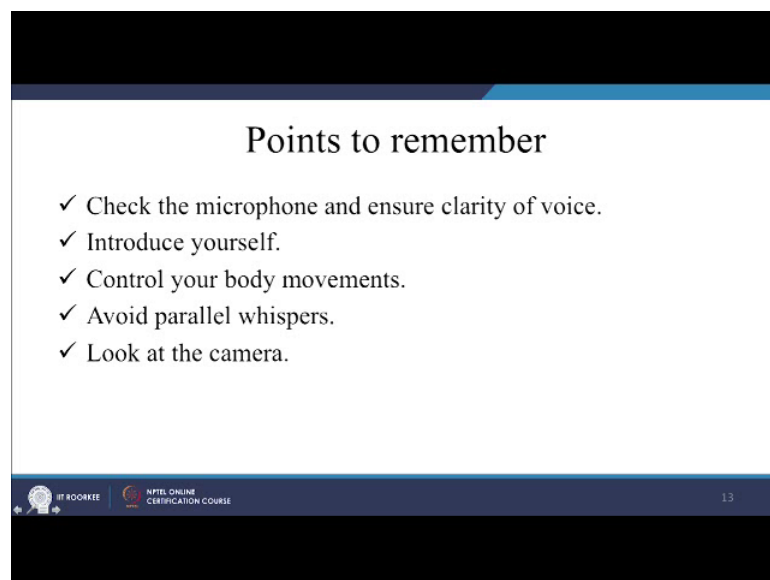
Though because of the shortage of time and because of the rigors of journey, people at times have also taken and given interviews on Skype's and the best example of video conferencing is on new channels when the anchor connects with several people at different locations and then, the discussion follows. Here there is a facility of listening to all of them and of course, there is a slight chance of having the feedback also, but on

major occasions since it is a costly affair, we cannot have all the audience members cannot participate in a two way process and cannot raise their questions and get answers at the same time, but then such a conferencing is helpful in making a decision because people who are at lofty posts and top slots in major organizations, they do not have time and they cannot afford every now and then for making journeys. Hence, they can with the help of video conferencing and with the help of discussion over it, they can make a decision.

Of course, it may be costly at times, but then it is easier because it does not have the rigors of travels and you cannot go and meet every individual and at the same time make discussions. Hence, it has become very common and organizations are also looking forward to majority of organizations. They are investing a lot, so that they can have a video conference and save time energy and at the same time, they can also save people from the rigors of the journey.

While you are going for a video conferencing, there are certain cautions to be made. There are certain points that we should keep into consideration.

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**Points to remember**

- ✓ Check the microphone and ensure clarity of voice.
- ✓ Introduce yourself.
- ✓ Control your body movements.
- ✓ Avoid parallel whispers.
- ✓ Look at the camera.

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First is please see that the microphones are working well. When people from a distant place, people from a remote place, people from different locations of the world are talking, what is of utmost importance is the clarity of voice. So, please ensure that the gadgets are working well and voice comes very clear. Sometimes we have experienced

that in the midst of the talk suddenly either because of the poor signal system, all because of certain disruption, the talk has to be left incomplete. If you are a part of the video conferencing, please see that you have to introduce yourself, tell your name and your affiliation as well and then, if you are at a post you also need to mention the post and then, let the discussion follow and all the members have to do like this.

Here people can see your body movements because it is a video audio facility. Hence, see that you control your body movements. As I said earlier in teleconferencing, it is difficult to come to a negotiation because there is no facility of looking at the body movements of the non-verbal cues or the facial reactions of the people. Here this facility is there, but then it is always better you maintain a proper decorum by avoiding parallel whispers or parallel talks in order to have a proper impact of the video and in order that you maintain the dignity. Please see that you should look continuously at the camera because whatever you do or whatever you say is being recorded. Friends we are living in an age where we are only the slaves, slaves of technology, but remember who made the technology; it is only the humans.

So, while you are using technology, please try to understand that technology should not become the master rather man should become the master. Technology should be treated as a slave as an orderly, it is up to you how you make use of technology. Proper use of technology may help you, may help others even to come to a fruitful discussion and to a fruitful negotiation. Please see to it that even though technology has certain qualities, for example even if your voice is not good, with the help of technology your voice will be magnified, but at the same time if your voice is garbled, you should do not know how to pronounce a particular word or if you are unaware of certain interrations that is your problem.

Hence, what is of utmost importance is that man is the master and since you are the master, you have the controlling authority. When you are participating either in a video conferencing or in some of the discussion, see to it that only because of the temptation of being recorded or being caught by the camera, you do not wear distracting clothes or dressed as distracts. Also see that you do not move excessively in your chair while you are a part of the discussion. So, in the two modules that we have discussed today, we have discussed various points, points of etiquette that we should maintain because as men we have a rational technology is only technology. A machine is a machine, a man is

a man and man should become the master of the machine rather machine should not master man.

Of course, all sorts of communication which we exchange is between humans among humans and with humans, it is better to have a human concern and think that you are not only participating in a discussion rather you are leading the discussion and things may be different if you are placed in a different manner. Hence, the need of the hour is to be sensitive to other people's reactions, their emotions, their cultures, their time their energy and above all their consideration. Think the way you can be offended if somebody uses a bad word or somebody shows a bad gesture. Hence, in order to maintain cordiality and in order to maintain a cooperative attitude at the work place, please see you communicate well. Communication is a linking device and the linking device works well when you are considerate, when you are clear, when you are courteous, when you are full of conviction and commitment.

Thank you very much.