

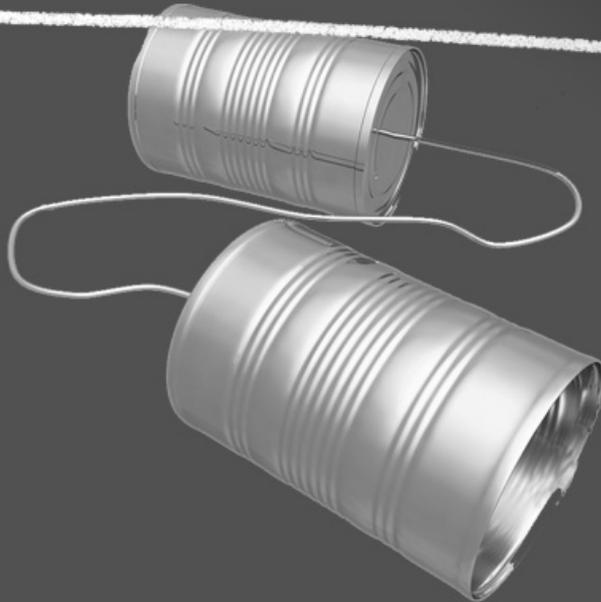


Small Scale Business Management

Module 9

Communication in Business

**coMMuniCaTion iN
BUSINESS**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This module is a product of many people who worked hard to see it ready for use by BOCODOL learners. BOCODOL wishes to acknowledge contributions of the following

Revision Team

Tebogo Moagi
Lobakeng Eric Setabo
Mompoloki Oitsile
Gaolatlhe Masire

Writing Team

Kwirirai Zvevhu
Eric Simukanga
Stanley Tichapondwa Modesto
Lobakeng Eric Setabo
Frances Combs
Annabel Catherine Dunn
Unobia Segokgo
Felicity Chitonho

© 2011 BOCODOL The 2006 Winner of the Commonwealth of Learning Award of Excellence for the Institutional Achievement in Distance Education



BOCODOL, 2011

This module is made available under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Licence (international): <http://creativecommons.org/licences/by-sa/3.0>.

First Edition Published 2003

Revised Edition Published 2011

Please direct correspondence to:

The Executive Director

BOCODOL

Private Bag BO 187

Tel: 3646100

Fax: 3181473

Gaborone, Botswana

ISBN 99912- 86 – 09 – 4

Contents

Page

Introduction to Module 8

i

Topic 1: Oral communication in the small business

1

Topic 2: Other types of communication

15

Introduction to Module 9

Communication in Business

The title of this module is Business Communication. It is divided in two topics, and these are: Topic 1: Oral Communication in the small business and Topic 2; Other types of communications.

To conduct and manage your business successfully, you need to communicate more effectively. Client of different kinds will interact with you. For that reason, you ought to develop good oral communication skills. In running a small business, we talk to customers most of the time. Topic 1 addresses that matter.

In Topic 2, you I am going to share with you the other types of communication you are likely to use in managing your business. These include letter-writing and the use of a telephone. You will be advised on how to use these more effectively.

Topic 1

Oral Communication in the Small Business

Introduction

The two main reasons for communicating in business are: to obtain information and to give information about a product or a service. Every business person will be familiar with these questions: How much does this cost? Do you have any other type of vegetables? Which biscuits will be good for children? Is it self service? The customer will be expecting answers before buying. In return, there are many answers to such questions. This interaction between customer and seller is known as oral communication. Apart from oral communication, there are other types such as the telephone, fax, letters, etc. Talking is regarded as one of the most important, and in this topic we shall examine it more closely.

Learning Objectives

After working through this topic you should be able to:

- explain the importance of communication in business management
- relate communication situations to your business
- suggest views about conflict prevention and conflict resolution
- define special terms relating to business communication
- illustrate how best to communicate with different types of customer.

Contents List

1.1	The importance of communication	2
1.2	Conflicts in business	5
1.3	Conflict resolution	6
1.4	Oral communication as a form of advertising	9
1.5	What we have learnt	11
1.6	Glossary	12
1.7	Self-assessment exercise	12
1.8	Suggested answers to activities	12
1.9	Answers to the self-assessment exercise	14

1.1 The Importance of Communication

The business you are either running or intend to run is the result of a great deal of communication you have done in the past. The business also involves more and more communication as you run it. Remember all the steps you took to set up. You probably started by asking a number of questions before deciding on the type of business. You also might have asked questions about financing the business. You, most likely, asked who your customers were going to be. Now add more questions, which you asked, before setting up the business.

In all those situations it was essential to communicate. Every business, no matter how small, involves oral communication. A good business manager needs to know when to communicate and why, how to communicate and with whom. To explore this, we look at a business situation.

Situation 1

Gagolelwe runs a Kiosk in her community. She is married and has 4 children. The husband works in a local supermarket. Gagolelwe's Kiosk is well located by the roadside. She started all by herself, and today her children help her after school and during weekends. She started by selling groceries which were ordered from Sefalana Wholesalers. When she went to make orders, she had to close shop for two or more hours every day. That way, she lost customers. She then decided to employ an assistant.

As time went by, she introduced take-aways and lunch, but somebody had to do the cooking. This also meant she had to spend more time getting goods for sale from different suppliers this time. The assistant, on the other hand, had to sell groceries, do the cooking, pack the take-aways, then wash dishes. Customers started complaining about the poor service because work had become too much for one person. At times, the assistant also failed to account for missing stock, and this worried Gagolelwe. She then decided to employ a second assistant who would cook and wash dishes. The two assistants occasionally quarrelled with each other mainly about one of them doing easier work than the other.

Customers were happy when the owner of the business, Gagolelwe, was there. Then, utensils would be cleaned properly and the food well - prepared. Also, assistants worked better. Unfortunately she was not there all the time as she had to do orders. The performance of the workers was cause for concern. Her husband advised her to closedown the shop, but the children thought it was good to keep it running. The non-governmental organisation which had given her a loan was quite happy about the profit made by the business.

Please, read this situation the second time, then work on the activity that follows.

Activity 1A

List the six people with whom Gagolelwe must communicate.

Below each person state what the communication should be about

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

(iv) _____

(v) _____

(vi) _____

It will be clear that managing the Kiosk is difficult if Gagolelwe does not communicate with these people. For example, if she does not communicate with suppliers, she will not have information about where to obtain goods at a lower cost. Check the responses given on at the end of the topic.

Communicating with the people you listed affects the business either directly or indirectly. For example, communicating with children encourages Gagolelwe to keep on trying. We say the effect this has is indirect. An example of direct effect is communication with suppliers. Without it, she will have problems getting goods to sell. Activity 1B below is based on Situation 1.

Activity 1B

Talking with the husband is an example of communication which has an indirect effect. Talking to the two assistants bears a direct effect on the business. For either of these, suggest why Gagolelwe should communicate.

(i) Communicating with the husband

(ii) Communicating with the workers

You may notice that I expected for more reasons in (ii). This is because workers affect the business more directly. The workers are not doing their job properly, customers are complaining; the assistants only work better when the manager is there; and they also quarrel. If Gagolelwe does not talk to them the sales are likely to be affected badly. Check suggested answers at the end of the topic.

1.2 Conflicts in Business

Have you ever heard somebody saying, "this business is causing me a headache"? If you haven't, let me remind you that there is no business without headaches. An entrepreneur should know that when things get difficult, he/she must fight on. Effective communication is essential to overcome the difficulties such as conflicts. A conflict is a disagreement which can either be serious or less so. It may be a difference of opinions or wishes. In many cases it is recognised as a difference in the way two people see the same thing. In the situation cited above, it will be between Gagolelwe and those with whom she has to communicate. The next activity is also based on Situation 1.

Activity 1 C

1. There are conflicts in Gagolelwe's business

Yes/no _____

2. How many possible conflicts can you identify?

These conflicts are concerned with differences of opinion between

(i) _____ and _____

(ii) _____ and _____

(iii) _____ and _____

(iv) _____ and _____

3. To me, the most serious conflicts are the one between

_____ and _____

_____ and _____

4. I think this is the most serious one because of the following reasons that affect the management of the Kiosk

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

When you give these responses, think of your own business. Spend time discussing with friends then turn to the feedback given on at the end of the topic.

1.3 Conflict Resolution

A business which experiences too many conflicts is likely to have management problems. I am sure Gagolelwe would find it very difficult to run the business when workers are not doing their work properly. The question we may ask ourselves would be how best could Gagolelwe resolve conflicts?

Conflict resolution means, finding ways of settling any differences that may exist. Conflicts that remain unresolved prevent you from achieving the goals spelt out in your business plan. Let us look at the following situation; a worker steals goods from your shop. How do you resolve this conflict? Write your suggestion here.

Do you realise that this involves some form of communication? How well do you think you have communicated your resolution? Now, examine the following suggestions you could use to resolve the conflict in this above case.

- warn the worker not to repeat that
- inform the worker that he/she will have money deducted from the wages
- ask the worker to work the number of hours equivalent to the price of the item
- ask him/her to decide what he thinks is the most suitable form of punishment
- tell the worker you are terminating his/her services.

Here we assume that the worker has admitted that he/she is guilty. Discuss with a colleague the advantages and disadvantages of each point. Remember there are many reasons why conflicts arise in business. For example, the two people involved may understand the situation differently. Also, conflict may arise because of what we call bias. This refers to the negative attitude that one person may have towards the other.

There are different ways of resolving conflict one could use. All of them are based on communication. Before reading on, suggest any one approach you have used to resolve a conflict in your business.

(i) _____

Now, add the following to the one you gave.

- (ii) Do not attempt to resolve a conflict when emotions are still high. Allow time to pass before you sit down to discuss. There is the real danger of disturbing business activities if you try to resolve the problem when still angry.
- (iii) In a situation where emotions remain high, and the two of you cannot face each other, it is advisable to get a third person to listen to your conflict. Since he/she may not be emotionally involve, it is likely this person will not be biased when assisting you to resolve the conflict. This person is known as a mediator.

- (iv) When neither the two of you, nor the mediator and the two of you cannot resolve the conflict, it is advisable to take the matter up with the law.

Activity 1D

Study each conflict situation listed below. Briefly explain how you would resolve it. Suggest one reason why you would resolve it that way.

Situation 2

You run a butchery in the village. Selebano sells six goats to you. He bought the goats from Seapei, but had only paid half the agreed amount. Before you slaughter them, Seapei comes and drives away the goats from you. You had already paid Selebano the full amount he had charged you. List, in point form, how you would resolve this conflict.

Situation 3

You run a liquor outlet, and there are two similar small businesses in the neighbourhood. Recently, your business is getting more customers, and the sales for other businesses are going down. The owners have concluded that business is going down for them because you are saying negative things about them. They no longer want to talk to you, and go about persuading customers not to buy from your shop. However, the reason for getting more customers is that beer is cheaper because you have identified a cheap supplier. How would you resolve this conflict?

Compare your answers with those at the end of the topic. The steps taken by a business manager to prevent conflicts are referred to as conflict prevention.

In Gagoelwe’s case where two assistants quarrel with each other about one of them doing easier work than the other, he should; in case where other. He should;

- speak to the two assistants and explain his expectations from each of them

- show how the differences in responsibility are reflected in the wages
- get the assistants to confirm that they have understood you, and invite any questions from them.

Activity 1E

Situation 4

A spouse who has been running a small business is now coming home two hours later than usual. The partner is unhappy about this new development. What should the spouse have said to prevent this conflict?

Situation 5

The small business you run brings in a lot of cash, but the greater percentage goes into restocking, wages, and transport costs. Your net profit is very little. However, your salesperson thinks she is underpaid, arguing that although she brings quantities of money in the business she gets 'peanuts'. You pay her the minimum wage expected by the law. She believes you are stingy, and she no longer works hard. Is there any communication you could have communicated to prevent this conflict? Make three suggestions.

These situations, or case studies, as they are sometimes called, are drawn from real life experiences by businessmen and women like you. In every case, communication is important. It is how carefully you communicate that you will be able to develop better understanding in conflict situations. Compare your answers with those at the end of the topic.

1.4 Oral Communication as a Form of Advertising

Advertising the business refers to the steps you take so that customers get to know who you are, where you are operating from, what you sell, and why you think they should buy from you. Did you know that talking to customers is one way of advertising? Are there any other ways you use to advertise your business? List them before reading on.



You probably listed posters as one of the means of advertising. Here we spend some time on oral communication. This simply means talking to people in a way that is likely to attracting customers thereby improving your sales. Ask yourself these questions before reading on: How do I talk to people about my business? Do I make them understand what I am doing? If your answers to these questions show that you are not talking well enough, then what follows will be very useful to you. In the next activity, you are given a number of suggestions. Study each one closely, then give your own views about it in the space provided.

Activity 1F

<p>1. Use persuasive words to influence customers to like your products or service. This makes buyers change their attitudes, beliefs, or opinions. Suggest one example of words you use in your business to influence customers.</p>
<p>2. Appeal to the customers' instincts so that they want to buy a particular product or service. Give one example of a statement you have used to appeal to the customer.</p>

3. Speak out welcoming words to customers who will be approaching, or those who may be passing by. Why do you think this is useful communication in business?

4. Learn a few expressions used in different languages to welcome or relax customers who can speak neither Setswana nor English. With the help of this idea, name two languages spoken by foreign customers in your community. For each language, give one expression, then give its meaning in English and Setswana.

A. Language _____
 Expression _____
 Meaning in Setswana _____
 Meaning English _____

B. Language _____
 Expression _____
 Meaning in Setswana _____
 Meaning in English _____

1.5 What we Have Learnt

In this topic we focused on oral communication as an important means of communication in managing the small business. The main reasons for communicating are to obtain information and to give information. In doing that we looked at the following:

- the importance of communication in business
- situations commonly found in the small business
- how our personal experiences can be linked to these situations
- Conflicts in the small business and how they can affect sales.
- Ways of preventing and resolving conflicts.

1.6 Glossary

Advertise:	When you advertise something you describe it publicly in order to persuade people to buy. For example, you advertise a product or a service.
Assistant:	This is the person you hire in order to help you in business e.g. a sales assistant.
Communication:	This is the activity of exchanging information about the business through language.
Conflict:	This refers to a difference of opinion or disagreement over a business matter.
Conflict prevention:	This refers to the steps you take to prevent any disagreement before it happens.
Conflict resolution:	This refers to the situation when people who disagree over something come to some understanding through communication.

1.7 Self-assessment Exercise

Answer True or False

1. Communication done in the past influences management of business today.
2. Oral communication is the only means of communication in business
3. Conflict prevention means taking steps to avoid problems.
4. It is not necessary to communicate with family members in business.
5. Conflict refers to a misunderstanding between two parties
6. It is always necessary to have a mediator when resolving conflicts.
7. Talking is important in resolving conflicts.
8. You must always win the argument in a conflict.
9. When you talk about a business, that is a way of advertising it.
10. The suspicious customer is the one who is always in a hurry.

1.8 Suggested Answers to Activities

Activity 1A

- (i) The children: about ways they can help.
- (ii) The husband : seeking advice on business matters.
- (iii) Customers: about the type of service required.
- (iv) The suppliers : to order goods
- (v) First assistant: about job expectations.
- (vi) Non-governmental organisations: about funding.

Activity 1B

- (i) To inform him about progress in the business.
To seek advice.
- (ii) To give job description.
To train them.
To resolve conflicts that may arise.
To inform them about customer needs.

Activity 1C

1. yes
2. Four possible conflicts
 - (i) Gagolelwe and the husband
 - (ii) First assistant and second assistant
 - (iii) Gagolelwe and first assistant
 - (iv) Customers and Gagolelwe
3. Gagolelwe and first assistant
4. (a) Stealing goods affects profit
(b) If customers are unhappy, they go to other businesses
(c) Failure to work with supervision lowers sales

Activity 1 D

Situation 2

If Selebano fails to give back your money, it is advisable to report the matter to the police. They are likely to handle it better than the two of you would.

Situation 3

It might be better to approach a mediator to approach the business persons on your behalf.

Activity 1 E

Situation 4

- Inform the spouse of changes in advance.
- Assure the spouse that the changes are for the better.

Situation 5

- Show him how to calculate income and expenditure.
- Involve him in stocking and stock-taking.
- Teach him the difference between gross and net profit

Activity 1 F

1. Welcome, madam. Come and see the best dinner sets in town.
2. This bag is for executives like you. It costs only P50.
3. You make them relax and feel like buying.

4. A. Language: Indian

Expression: Namaste

Meaning in Setswana: Dumela Rra/Mma

Meaning English: Morning Sir/Madam

B. Language: Kenyan

Expression: Karibu

Meaning in Setswana: O amogelesegile

Meaning in English: You are welcome

1.9 Answer to the Self-assessment Exercise

- | | |
|---------|-----------|
| 1. True | 2. False |
| 3. True | 4. False |
| 5. True | 6. False |
| 7. True | 8. False |
| 9. True | 10. False |

Topic 2

Other Ways of Communication

Introduction

Oral communication, which we discussed in topic 1, is not the only means of communication in business. In this topic, we examine some of those means at your disposal. In addition, we try to answer questions which many businessmen and women ask. For example, why does communication fail in certain situations, what communication demands does a business make on the manager as it grows; can a person run a business successfully by communicating from a distance? As you answer these questions, follow the activities closely. This will help you develop the much needed communication skills in running the business.

Learning Objectives

After working through this topic, you should be able to:

- explain the importance of different ways of communication in running a business
 - identify situations where communication could fail
 - give reasons why communication sometimes fails
 - suggest how you can adjust to communication needs of the business as it grows.
- Explain the different types of communications
- raise and support your points to show the advantages and disadvantages of running the business from afar.

Contents List

2.1	The other ways of Communication	16
2.2	Communicating by telephone	17
2.3	Communicating business letter	18
2.4	What makes communication fail?	22
2.5	Communication in the growing business	23
2.6	Types of communication	25
2.7	Communicating with business from a distance	26
2.8	What we have learnt	28
2.9	Glossary	28
2.10	Self-assessment exercise	28
2.11	Suggested answers to activities	29
2.12	Answers to the self-assessment exercise	32

2.1 The Other Ways of Communication

Today, there are many changes taking place regarding means of communication in the business world. How much of that do you know? To reflect on that, look at the picture below and then turn to the Activity 2A.



Activity 2A

1. Besides talking to people, do you use any other means of communication in running your business? Yes/No

2. List some of the four means you use.

3. Out of these four, which one do you use most?

Well, I suppose you have now looked at your situation more closely. Some small businesses use the telephone or the cellular phone (cellphone) very frequently. Some businesspersons use business letters more than they use telephone. On the other hand, others use the more modern means of communication such as the Fax or even the E-mail. We shall examine the telephone / cellphone and the business letter more closely. These will be familiar to every businessman or woman. Specific feedback to the questions is also suggested at the end of the topic.

2.2 Communicating by Telephone

Telephoning is one of the best means of communication as long as it is used correctly. For example, if you want to order new stock, it takes a shorter time. However, it can also be quite expensive. This is especially true when you use the cellphone. In your business, when would you telephone somebody? Suggest any three reasons.

- (i) _____

- (ii) _____

- (ii) _____

In what ways has that helped in business management? Give any two points.

Entrepreneurs who use this means of communication say that telephone cuts down on transport costs. You do not have to travel long distances and spend time away from the business. However, business managers have also noted that this has disadvantages. Give this further thought by working on the next activity. Make use of your personal experience as you respond.

Activity 2B

1. Suggest a situation when you thought it would have been better to write a letter than telephone.

2. List any four disadvantages of telephoning. You may want to give two for the landline telephone and two for the cellphone.

Check at the end of the topic for responses given on this activity.

Now, let us suppose an employee is in charge of receiving telephone messages, how do you ensure that this is done properly? There are certain procedures and certain behaviour expected from a telephone attendant. Firstly, the person should be polite at all times. Secondly, messages should be recorded accurately. It is best to write messages down on a memo pad. Many things could go wrong if messages are incorrectly recorded. Thirdly, any outstanding calls should be returned within a reasonable space of time. Clients take their business to those businesses that respond to their requirements soon.

2.3 Communicating by Business Letter

The business letter remains a very effective and popular means of communication. To appreciate this, it is necessary to think of the different reasons why that is so. To help you understand more about the business letter attempt activity 2C.

Activity 2C

1. Suggest three reasons why the business letter still remains popular. The first one has been given for you.

(a) It is a cheap means of communication.

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____

2. Suggest three situations when you could use the letter in running a business. The first one has been done for you.

(a) to inform people about your business.

(b) _____

(c) _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
(d) _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Compare your answers with those suggested at the end of the topic

A business letter has certain features, and I am sure you are familiar with them. Let me repeat them here so that we can focus our discussion properly.

- name and address of the business
- the date on which you wrote the letter
- the receiver's name and address
- greetings
- the subject
- the body of the letter
- closing the letter
- signature
- your name in capitals
- your position in the business.

Now, read the following letter. Mrs Magang ordered some cold drinks, but when she was unpacking she discovered that two cans of Appletiser were missing. Here is the letter.

Tsena Reje Kiosk
P/Bag 0084
Otse

31 January 2002

The Despatch Manager
Lobatse Wholesalers
P.O.Box 125
Lobatse

Dear Sir,

Missing Appletiser Cans

I refer to the above matter. On 28 January I ordered 10 cases of soft drinks (Invoice number 002441).

When I was unpacking, I found that in one case two cans of Appletiser were missing.

I trust you will be able to replace them soon.

Yours sincerely

MARIA MAGANG (MS)
(Manager)

After reading the letter, do you think there are any differences between it and the friendly letter?

Activity 2D

Write a business letter offering somebody a job as a Sales Assistant. That person is one of several who had applied in response to your advertisement in one of the local newspapers.

Do you think after this experience you are now in a position to use these two types of communication more effectively? However, it is surprising that even when we have a good knowledge on how to use these means, there are times when communication fails. Refer to the suggested answer at the end of the topic.

2.4 What Makes Communication Fail?

Knowledge about, and ability to use means of communication is no guarantee that you will succeed every time you try to communicate. Even when you try your best, somehow communication fails. For example you telephone somebody to place an order, only to get a rude response. To make matters worse, the person who answers your call takes down incorrect information, and you end up with wrong items being delivered to you. As a direct result you lose customers.

In another incident, you address employees on an issue. After talking to them, they tell you they have understood what you were saying. However, next time you find them doing exactly the opposite. Why? There are many possible reasons. It could be out of jealousy because they see you as a success. In general, as one entrepreneur said to me, people generally dislike those who engage in business. They might therefore behave in a strange way. We can refer to this as an attitude problem which can interfere with communication. The same person I discussed with expressed the opinion that it is not easy to satisfy a worker. His argument, whether right or wrong, was that workers tend to see the employer as an oppressor who is also stingy and underpays them. For this and other reasons, they tend to be less productive during your absence.

What has been said above serves as a good example why workers might not take your instructions in the right way. We now do an activity in which we examine some of the causes of communication failure.

Activity 2E

In the last section, we examined bad attitude as one cause of communication breakdown, and illustrated it with an example. Some causes are given below. Explain in what way each one can result in communication failure.

(a) Language differences

(b) Employing relatives

(c) Lack of knowledge about how to answer the phone.

(d) Misinterpreting information given in a letter

(e) A deliberate intention to disturb the business

Please note that these points apply to different situations, and may not necessarily affect you. The whole idea is to make you aware what to expect, especially when the business is doing well in the eyes of the world. Check suggested answers to the activity at the end of the topic.

2.5 Communication in the Growing Business

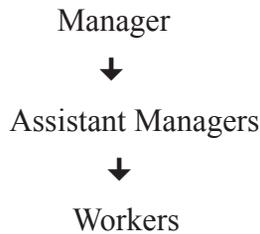
A business that is well managed is expected to grow. When that happens, new communication needs arise. In the case of Gagolelwe's business (already discussed), there is a clear pattern of growth. The venture starts off as a one- person affair. An assistant is then engaged. Later another employee is hired. At that stage there are already more demands for communication than the case was at the very beginning. Let us suppose she opens up a new Kiosk, do you realise that there are even more communication needs? Gagolelwe will be the manager of both outlets. How do you think she should reorganise her channels of communication? A channel of communication is the system by which information about the business is passed on from one person to another. Remember that she now has to spend more time away making orders for items to be sold at the businesses. How does she ensure that there is order in running the business? The following activity will help you to answer this question.

Activity 2F

Taking into account Gagolelwe’s circumstances as described above, I want you to suggest a communication structure for this business. Present your suggestions in point form.

What communication structure did you come up with? If that is what you would have for your business, give reasons. Suggested answers for this activity are given on the end of the topic.

When Gagolelwe puts in place the new structure, there are set rules to be followed. When that happens, we say the business communication is now formal. For example, she might appoint one worker at each Kiosk as assistant manager. That employee will be accountable to the manager, and also be in charge of other workers who may be working at the Kiosk. We now see the business as a formal organisation with an arrangement of positions and responsibilities. For Gagolelwe’s business the structure will look something like this.



Look at this again. How is your own business organised? Reflect on the above discussion by doing the following activity.

Activity 2G

Draw the structure of your own business.

Compare your answers with the suggestion at the end of the topic.

You have now made it clear to yourself how you are organised, or if you intend to start a business, the diagram helps you design a system in which communication will be carried out. A communication structure should meet the required communication needs. If you find that the way you are organised now is unsatisfactory, it is necessary to plan a more effective structure. More ideas on business structure are found in the discussions that follow.

2.6 Types of Communication

There are two types of communication that are commonly used in organisations. These are: Upward Communication and Downward Communication. What, in your opinion, is meant by each one? In figuring that out, remember that in a business, people who perform linked activities must often share information about what happens at the different levels of business. The two types of communication we have mentioned, function differently.

(a) Downward communication

When managing the business following the downward communication approach, the supervisor at the top communicates information to those below him/her. The manager gives directives and job instructions. Those below the manager do the same to the workers below. Some business people say that by the time information reaches the last person it could be distorted. Other business people, however, think there are advantages in following this approach. For example, the manager knows clearly what information he/she passes on.

(b) Upward communication

In this style of management, the manager gets information from those below him/her. This happens through assistant managers and any other people in position of responsibility. The manager then makes decisions using that feedback. Some business managers say that the disadvantage of upward communication is that the people below the manager can deliberately pass inaccurate information. They may tell the manager what they think he/she wants to hear. However, there is the advantage that when people are allowed to give their views on the way the business is run, the problems they face, how best to improve the business, etc., it is likely that the manager will make better decisions.

It is important that you examine these two approaches closely, and decide which one you think works for you better. Alternatively, you may want to combine them and decide when to use either. By combining, you will be taking the advantages from each one. I encourage you to take more time to think about them.

Now do the activity below.

Activity 2H

<p>1. Downward communication</p> <p>(a) To me, the advantages of this approach are:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>(b) The disadvantages are:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>2. Upward communication</p> <p>(a) To me, the advantages of this approach are:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>(b) The disadvantages are:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

What you have written in response to this activity is very useful information. Examine it closely and see how best you can use it for more effective communication. Also check answers at the end of the topic.

2.7 Communicating with Business From a Distance

Have you ever heard somebody saying, “When you are not there, things don’t move”? The person may be referring to your business run by somebody, For example, a shop assistant in your absence. The business could be in Kasane while you are working in Gaborone. As general advice, for a business to succeed, you the owner must be close. After all you are the one who originated the idea, looked for the finance to set up, and so forth. You know why you took that decision, and it is quite unreasonable for you to expect an assistant to have the same business aims as you. Asking somebody to handle cash for long periods of time while you are away is to put that worker into great temptation. Many entrepreneurs have regretted the move when it was too late. This manner of communication from a distance is also known as remote control in business.

Some entrepreneurs, however, argue that not all businesses require you to be there every time. They believe that remote control is possible in some businesses. They could well be right, and in case you intend to start a business which you will control from a distance, think about that by doing this activity.

Activity 2I

1. Below are two columns. In column A list five businesses you think can not be run by remote control. In column B list five businesses you think can be managed by remote control.

Column A

Column B

2. Choose any one business from Column A and suggest why you cannot manage it by remote control.

3. Choose any one business from Column B and suggest how you can manage it by remote control.

It is difficult to give answers that apply to everyone. Individuals will have different ideas. Share these before turning to the end of the topic or feedback.

2.8 What we Have Learnt

Business communication is a broad area, and there are many ideas that have been raised about it. Many books have been written, and courses are run. At this level, we can do no more than highlight a few basic ideas in the field of business communication. In this part we covered the following:

- a description of the different types of communication a discussion of the telephone and business letter as means of communication in business
- an explanation of advantages and disadvantages of using the telephone and business letter
- an examination of causes of communication failure in selected situations
- a distinction between downward and upward communication
- an explanation of remote control in business management.

2.9 Glossary

Attitude:	A person's attitude is the way he/she thinks about something or somebody.
Communication breakdown:	When there is a misunderstanding and information no longer flows smoothly between people, we say there is a breakdown of communication.
Communication structure:	In a business, communication structure refers to the system of passing information from one section of the business to the other.
Invest:	To invest capital is to spend money on the business in order to make a profit.
Procedures:	These are certain ways of doing things in a business e.g. telephone procedures refer to acceptable ways of handling telephone calls.
Remote control:	Managing a business being far away from where the business is situated.
Venture:	This is the other word used to refer to a business, and involves investing capital.

2.10 Self-assessment Exercise

Answer True or False

1. The telephone is the cheapest means of communication.
2. A letter of complaint is also a business letter
3. A business letter should contain detailed explanations
4. Once you know how to use the telephone correctly, communication never fails.
5. Language problems can lead to poor communication.
6. In Upward Communication information flows from the lowest worker to the manager.
4. Downward communication means that the manager gets feedback from the assistant manager.

8. It is possible to run a business from a distance.
9. In most cases, workers share your aims in business.
10. The computer can also be used in business for communication.

2.11 Suggested Answers to Activities

Activity 2A

1. Yes
2. The telephone
Posters
Business letters
E-mail
Fax
3. This depends on the individual (email, telephone)

Activity 2B

1. When the telephone continues to be cut, and when you eventually get hold of the person, she is not in the office. Although she gets your message, she does not return the call. This pushes up your bill.
2. For the landline, people may also not return your call, and the message may not be recorded accurately. The cell phone is more expensive than the landline. There are areas where there is no cell phone network so you cannot make a call to or from those areas

Activity 2C

1. (a) It serves as a permanent record .
(b) It gives you time to think before replying.
(c) It can be used to do business where there are no telephones.
2. (a) To apply for funds.
(b) To enquire about something.
(c) To express an opinion.
(d) To apply for a job.

Activity 2D

In your response, make sure that the features listed about the business letter are present.

In step Marketing
P. O. Box 22
Gaborone

31 January 2002

P.O.Box 125
Lobatse

Dear Mr Kagiso Kebaitse,

Offer of Employment

This serves to notify you that you have been given an offer as a Sales Representative starting from 25 November 2010. Please respond to this letter in writing by 30 November 2010.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely

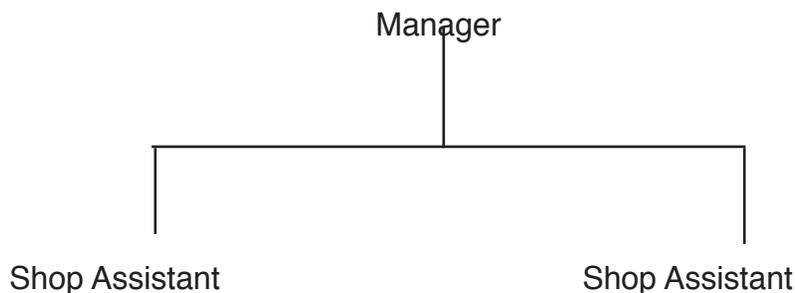
Nonofang Masake (Mr)
(HR Manager)

Activity 2E

- (a) People may not understand what you say and get offended.
- (b) At times, relatives fail to see their role as workers and may not take you seriously.
- (c) That can put off potential and regular customers.
- (d) Words carry different meanings, and what you say could be misinterpreted.
- (e) People who are jealous of your business success may intentionally interfere with communication.

Activity 2F

- Gagolelwe should be the overall manager.
- Her husband and children should assist with ideas.
- She should appoint one of the workers as assistant manager.
- She should define responsibilities and channels of communication.

Activity 2G**Activity 2H**

1. Downward communication
 - (a) Advantages
 - instructions come directly from the manager
 - it ensures discipline among workers
 - (b) Disadvantages
 - workers dislike being dictated to
 - the manager will not have the chance of listening to those below him/her

2. Upward Communication

(a) Advantages

- subordinates make suggestions for use in management
- the manager makes better decisions by combining his/her ideas with those from workers

(b) Disadvantages

- Suggestions from workers may not be useful in achieving business goals
- workers do not necessarily understand the problems of running a business

The response will vary with individuals management style.

Activity 2I

- | 1. | Column A | Column B |
|----|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a kiosk • a general dealer's shop • a restaurant • a liquor bar • a hair salon | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cattle ranching - clearing farmland on - contract - consultancy |
| 2. | A Kiosk involves movement of cash on a daily basis. If you are unable to supervise this, there is danger that the cash will be mishandled. Any small business to do with cash cannot be left unsupervised for too long. | |
| 3. | Cattle rearing, unlike a Kiosk requires minimum supervision. It is possible to count the total number of cattle, calves, and the bulls. You can be away for a month or even longer. With a Kiosk, you cannot afford to be away for even a day. | |

2.12 Answers to the Self-assessment Exercise

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. False | 2. True |
| 3. False | 4. False |
| 5. True | 6. True |
| 7. False | 8. True |
| 9. False | 10. True |