A Report on
Workshop on Communication Skills
8th – 10th July, 2009

Each one of us has to develop a vision for ourselves, identify the milestones we have to cross and create a roadmap for ourselves. Besides excelling in our own particular domain, we need to strengthen our communication skills if we want to acquire an edge over others. Keeping the above in mind, the Department of Applied Sciences and Humanities organized a three-day workshop on Communication Skills from 8th to 10th July, 2009. The Workshop aimed at helping the participants in assessing and enhancing their strengths with respect to oral and written communication.

The HODS were requested to recommend the names of four faculty members from their respective department to attend the workshop. The following participants attended the workshop.

Name of the Participants

1. Mr. Ajay Verma
2. Mr. Bhaskar Chauhan
3. Mr. Rajiv Kumar
4. Mr. Sunil Pandey
5. Dr. Navdeep Bhullar
6. Dr. Hukum Singh
7. Dr. Sunanda Vashishta
8. Dr. Sanjeev Singh
9. Ms. Pranati Purohit
10. Mr. Debasis
11. Ms. Pooja Sabherwal
12. Ms. Charu Rana
13. Ms. Kusum
14. Ms. Amanpreet Kaur
15. Ms. Niragi Dave
16. Ms. Divya Sharma
17. Ms. Meghna Sharma
The workshop was conducted by Prof. Rajan Rai and Dr. N.P.Singh. They were assisted by the English Section of the Department of Applied Sciences and Humanities.

The aim of this workshop was to help the participants improve their proficiency in all areas of communication. The activities in the workshop were designed in such a way that:

- the participants may brush up their grammar.
- They may start speaking in English
- They may improve their writing skills.

The workshop was learner oriented. Emphasis was laid on group work, problem solving exercises and simulation activities. It provided meaningful and interesting contexts in which activity related to linguistic development took place. The workshop was conducted as per the following schedule.

### DAY -1

Welcome by the HOD
Inauguration by the Principal
Overview of the Workshop by Prof. Rajan Rai
Module-1 Introducing yourself, Interviewing and Describing your partner
Module-2 Grammar
Worksheets on errors in the usage of nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and prepositions
Worksheets on use of does, do, did, has, have, had, was, were
Worksheets on Verb-Subject agreement
Worksheets on usage of tenses, conditionals and non-finites

### DAY -2

Module-3 How to improve pronunciation
Sounds and words wrongly articulated
Phonetic symbols
How to pronounce sounds correctly
How to look up the correct pronunciation of words in the dictionary

Module-4 Phrasal verbs used in Spoken English
Idiomatic Expressions used in spoken English along with worksheets
Idiomatic Expressions used in spoken English along with worksheets

Day -3
Module-5 Comprehension and Spoken English
Reading and narration of stories by participants followed by question answer session based on the stories
Module-6 Writing Skills Inter office Memo, Notice, Formal letters
Module-7 Familiarization with the Language Lab.
Interactive session between the faculty and the participants
Feedback session
Valedictory address by Principal / HOD

Workshop on Language Skills

Day 1

Activity -1

Getting to know each other

This activity was meant to be an ice breaker. The activity was a confidence building exercise with respect to spoken English. The objective of this activity was:
   To encourage participants to get to know each other
   To create a personalized context for developing speaking skills

This activity aimed at providing an opportunity to the participants for speaking in English. The ultimate goal of the exercise was to impress upon the participants the need for inculcating the habit of speaking English.
The purpose of this activity was to help the participants interact with each other, know about each other’s interest, share their opinions on topics of common interest and finally introduce themselves and tell other participant about the interests of their partner.

The participants were given an activity sheet. After they had introduced themselves and their partners, there was a review session in which the errors made by the participants in the speaking exercise were discussed without any reference to the person who had made the error. The participants evinced great interest in this activity and decided that during the workshop each one of them would interact in English.

Day 1

Activity -2

Grammar

The basis of written communication is a thorough understanding of the syntax and structure of the language. Among the activities planned for honing up writing skills the first one was related to brushing up of language usage. The activity aimed at working upon some of the errors we often make in the use of different parts of speech and the use of tenses. The worksheets in this activity were selected/designed to make the participants aware of such common errors.

The activity sheets along with worksheets on different components of grammar were given to the participants. The participants worked on those sheets and after each worksheet they were informed about the
correct answers. The ultimate purpose of this exercise was to create an awareness in the participants about the errors that are generally made by the people and to work upon them.

The worksheets comprised sentences having errors of nouns, pronouns, adverbs, adjectives, articles, prepositions, subject-verb agreement, tenses, conditionals etc. The participants were given separate worksheets pertaining to each part of speech, usage of tenses, other grammatical principles. The participants worked on those sheets, spotted the errors and made the necessary corrections. At the end of each work sheet, the answers pertaining to each worksheet were discussed.

Day-2

Activity -3 PPT

Improving Pronunciation

In all interactions, the impact we have upon others is either through the spoken or through the written word. The most important component of oral communication is pronunciation. Language is primarily learnt by the ear. Therefore, we pronounce words as we hear them. Sometimes we continue to pronounce a word as we have heard it being spoken till someone tells us that it should be pronounced differently.

The purpose of this session was:
- to acquaint the participants with some of the words wrongly pronounced
- to acquaint them with the phonetic alphabet so that they may be able to learn the correct pronunciation of the word from the dictionary.
- to help them learn how to articulate sounds which are generally mispronounced.

With the help of a PPT, the mismatch between spellings and sounds of English was highlighted.
The participants were acquainted with various letters in English which appear in the spellings of words but which are not pronounced during the articulation of the words.

The participants were introduced to the 44 sound symbols of phonetic alphabet and how those symbols are used for reading correct pronunciation of words from the dictionary.

The participants were informed how to articulate certain sounds by placing the tongue at the right position. These sounds are generally not articulated correctly due to the influence of regional accents.

Words generally mispronounced were discussed with the participants.

A brief reference was made to the use of stress and intonation in speech in English. The rest of the session was devoted to interaction with the participants on sounds and pronunciation.

Day-2

Activity –4

1. Phrasal verbs and Idiomatic Expressions

The objective of this activity was to acquaint the participants with the meaning and usage of some of the phrasal verbs (verbs followed by preposition) in written as well as in spoken English. At the same time, the participants were also acquainted with some idiomatic expressions commonly used in oral communication. The ultimate purpose of this exercise was to build the confidence in the participants with respect to spoken English. The participants were given an overview of phrasal verbs followed by two worksheets.
In the second part of the activity the participants were given short passages in which certain idiomatic expressions were used.

The participants read the passage and made an effort to understand the meaning of the highlighted expressions.

They attempted three simple exercises on the usage of the idiomatic expressions learnt in the passage.

After the exercises were completed, they were discussed with the participants.

This activity on idiomatic expressions was repeated two or three times with different sets of idiomatic expressions in different passages.

Day-3

Activity-5

Story Narration

The purpose of this activity was to help the participants develop the reading habit, acquire comprehension skills and to speak English. The ability to narrate past events is an important language skill. The activity focused upon inculcating the habit of reading as a prerequisite to comprehend, to think and to speak English.

The medium of developing this language skill was reading a story. The participants were required to read a story and narrate it. As it was a group activity, every participant narrated some part of the story and the others followed. The last member in the group also talked about the underlying message of the story.

The participants were divided into groups of 5. Each group was given a story to read. The group leader divided the story into four parts. Each of the
participants had to read the complete story but had to narrate the part allotted to him/her.

The participant who was allotted the first part of the story came and began the narration of the story and the rest of the three members followed and completed the story. After the story was completed, the other participants asked questions and a discussion on the theme and incidents of the story took place. The same process was followed by the other four groups.

The stories the participants were given to read were *The Bet* by Chekhov, *One Friday Morning* by Langston Hughes, *The Invisible Wound* by Karoly Kisfaludi and *A Service of Love* by O Henry.

The purpose of this activity was to help the participants overcome hesitation, develop fluency in oral communication and develop the habit of reading in order to sharpen their language skills.

**Activity-6**

**Writing Skills**

The purpose of this activity was to acquaint the participants with the structure and lay out of formal letters, inter-office memos and notices. The different components of a formal letter were discussed. A sample of each kind of writing was given to the participants or projected before them with the help of transparencies. The participants were given worksheets pertaining to writing skills in which they were supposed to fill in the missing information. Some significant opening and closing sentences with respect to inter-office memorandums and formal applications were also discussed.
**Activity –7**

**Familiarizing participants with language lab.**

The objective of this activity was to familiarize participants with a software which exists in the language lab. The participants were familiarized with the different programmes in the software related to the grammar as well as pronunciation. The resource persons with the participants to initiate them in this activity so that the participants could familiarize themselves with the software and continue brushing up their grammar and working on improving their language skills independently.

**Day-3**

**Feedback**

The participants were requested to write their feedback. The feedback included

1. What they had added to their language skills
2. Activities which were interesting / uninteresting
3. Modules which they would have liked to be included
4. Suggestions to make such workshops more useful.

**Valedictory Session**
A review of the workshop by the HOD
Valedictory address by the Principal
Distribution of certificates to the participants