

Chapter 3. Conferences



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Introduction

- Word Conferences is derived from the word 'confer' means to consult together.
- Conferences are part of Group Communication. Various types of Conferences are arranged in the field of Business and Academics.
- Conference is a meeting of a large group of people assembled for purpose of discussing common problems or activities. Many conferences are organised in business world and academic field to discuss and share new ideas.

- A conference can be arranged for 20 to 1000 or more people . The conference can be arranged for one or for a few days. Every conference has a main theme e.g. ‘Trade and Environment’ or ‘Nano Technology’ etc. So depending on the theme, sessions are arranged. Speakers are invited and delegates[guests] are sent invitations.
- The main purpose of the conferences is to achieve exchange of information through information.
- Knowledge sharing is also very important objective of conferences. It is a tool of learning, training and development.

- Many Organisations arrange conferences on various issues. The staff members and various other delegates and guests are invited to attend the conference to share ideas and information. Business conferences are also arranged regularly. They are referred as Annual conference, Zonal conference or Two Day conference. Conferences can be arranged on State Level, National Level or International Level .Examples of Conferences are Indian Science Congress,Conference of Commerce, Conference of Doctors[Medicine] etc.

Organising a conference

- Role of Convener
- The convener has to look into the overall arrangements , preparing the theme, inviting the speakers, preparing the schedule, inviting the guests and making their arrangements.He or she also require to plan the overall sessions of the conference- inagural sessions, speeches of the guests and till the valedictory sessions. All the arrangements of the conference are required to be done in the advance.

Roles of other people

- The chairpersons of the sessions need to pay attention to the smooth functioning of the sessions and they should motivate to other participants for their better participations.
- The participants or delegates should involve in the discussion of the conference. It is a opportunity to learn the new ideas.

Advantages of Conferences

- To encourage the exchange of ideas and opinions
- To bring out many facets of problem or situation.
- To provide solutions on various issues.
- To provide opportunity for face to face communication.
- To provide opportunity for consultation with various people
- To increase employee participation conference help

Disadvantages

- Sometimes Decision Making is not achieved in the conferences because of non-co-operation of the other members.
- If the conferences are not properly planned, the outcome or the result is not achieved .
- Conferences arrangements can be very expensive.
- Conferences can be time consuming.

Types of Conferences

- 1. Informational Conference: For passing information to subordinates
- 2. Suggested Solution Conference: The problem is placed in front of delegates along with the solutions for discussion.
- 3. Problem Solving Conference: In this conference various problems are discussed for finding solutions.
- 4. Sales Forecasting Conference: To forecast or predict the Sales in future .
- 5. Conference for Training: The employees are trained and exposed to various topics.

Organising Conference

- Planning :Every Conference need planning. The issues or subject of the conference should be planned well in advanced with the themes and subthemes. The Delegates, Chief Guest, Key Note Speakers should be invited in advance.
- The physical arrangement includes printing brochures, invitation cards, banners etc. The conference Venue should be decided carefully. All the physical arrangement should be done in considering the need of the conference.
- The Schedule or the Agenda should be prepared carefully themewise. The information should be given to all the participants.

Procedure for organising conference

- Usually Conferences begin with Key Note Address or Speech by Chief Guest.
- The Introductory Statement should be drafted carefully .
- All the participants should be given opportunity to express their opinions.
- Collective opinion should be generated for better co-operation.
- Valedictory session or Concluding Session is also important. The review of all the sessions should be taken for better decision or conclusion

Modern Methods of Conferences

- Audio Conferencing: In this method the speakers who are geographically separated or situated at different places can communicate with each other at same time. This method is used in teleconferencing also.e.g. employees of an office at Mumbai can communicate through the audio conferencing with the employees at Delhi. Audio conferencing is ideal for the group of 5 to 15 people.

Teleconferencing/Audio-Conferencing



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Video-Conferencing



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- Video-Conferencing: It is an interactive electronic meeting system involving two or more groups of people who can see each other using television screen. It uses telephones, TV monitors ,computers and networks to link geographically separated participants It can be one way or two way communication method. In two way communication method, the participants can see and hear each other. Video conferencing methods are widely used in business , distance education and in companies located globally.
- Now a days various applications are used for videoconferencing and chat such as Skype Technology.

References

- Business Communication, University of Mumbai
- Business Communication , Himalaya Publishing House