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## The Need of English Language Skills for Employment Opportunities

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### Abstract

Communication skills in English have been identified as indispensable workplace tools for success in business (Hynes & Bhatia, 1996). English is considered the primary prerequisite qualification for employment. English has been seen as a passport to a pensionable government job. The knowledge of English is considered one of the employability skills.

**Keywords** Employment Opportunities, Language Skills

### Introduction

The globalization of knowledge, and of higher education itself, is contributing to an increasing use of English as the medium of education (Graddol, D., 2010). Globalization has made English a compulsory ingredient of a successful personality as it is an important tool widely used in international communication all over the world. In the present global market economic competition among the countries is inevitable and employers need people who have international experience as well as good qualifications accepted and recognized all over the world. English is considered the primary prerequisite qualification for employment. English is not only for the employment but also for the students wishing for higher studies especially in the countries where English is a native/official language.

*“In 1991 the Finance Minister, Manmohan Singh pushed through radical liberalising reforms. Since then the private sector has made an increasing contribution to GDP. Many public sector jobs require applicants to pass English language exams – for over a century, English has been seen as a passport to a pensionable government job. Now, the private sector also requires English – but often of a different kind. India is now embarking on a massive upskilling programme, expanding both higher and vocational education. Government reports have identified improving English competence as a key ingredient at all levels”- (Graddol, D., 2010, English Next India)*

### English at Workplace

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*“As a multinational company we have businesses around the world. Employees with a good standard of English can connect and communicate with each other effectively, since everyone speaks the same common language.” - (Chloe Gan HR Director, Arvato Systems, Malaysia).*

English is essential to use at workplace and it is different from general conversational English. Each work domain has its own special requirements with regard to communication; there may be particular kinds of reports or forms to be filled in, or perhaps interactions with customers need to conform to a corporate policy. For these reasons, workplace English training is best carried out using materials taken from the workplace itself. Most of the employers started conducting English training programmes for their employees in order to reach the target in their business. English Communication skills are essential for the career growth. As English is commonly used language in the corporate world and the knowledge of English is considered one of the employability skills.

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### **Background Study**

English language skills or proficiency is a key factor for employment success and advancement. Communication skills in English have been identified as indispensable workplace tools for success in business (Hynes & Bhatia, 1996). More importantly, communication skills in English play an even more significant role as technology increases the speed of efficacy of messages.

Business communication studies have cited the numerous hours managers spend communicating with others (Krizan, Merrier and Jones, 2002), the time managers devote to writing correspondence and reports (Ober, 2001), and their ability to earn higher salaries if they have strong writing skills (Fisher, 1999). As Thomas N. Huckin and Leslie A. Olsen, state: “Scientists and engineers may be technically brilliant and creative, but unless they can convince co-workers, clients, and supervisors of their worth, their technical skills will be unnoticed, unappreciated, and unused. English, as it is being used around the world today, with authentic and unscripted recordings, helps employees prepare themselves for today's truly global workplace.

### **Need of English Language Skills**

Employers are constantly in need of employees with strong communication skills covering a wide range of verbal and written communication. As there is multi-cultural and multi-linguistic work force in the companies, employees should be interactive and communicative with others in

the team work, for which English is the common language which connects people. English is used for official communication in meetings, presentations, training programmes, conferences, letters, documents, reports etc. for this purpose employees are expected to read, write, speak and understand English.

Lack of English language skills has been considered a barrier to entry of employment and workforce accomplishment. English communication skills are an important pre-requisite for a career at national or international level. English proficiency is a key factor for employment success and advancement.

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### Suggestions

In order to acquire language proficiency job-aspirants have to study the rules of such a language –labeled as grammar, phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon. So, the activities are suggested for learning practice.

*Practice of the language Skills:* learners should undergo practicing the four language skills- LSRW to be fluent, proficient and accurate in English language. The four major skills of language learning, listening, speaking, reading and writing provide a platform for the learners to hone their proficiency in the language well.

*Pronunciation:* English is an unphonetic language and the sounds of English are not uniform. English language doesn't have one-to-one relationship between the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they represent. The 26 letters of English alphabet represent 44 sounds in the Received Pronunciation of England (R.P), a variety of speech. Learners are advised to practice the sounds of English using phonetics or IPA symbols.

*Vocabulary:* Vocabulary means a number of words that one knows how to use. English has the largest vocabulary of any language. Vocabulary knowledge is the single most important area of language proficiency. English vocabulary is complex, with three main aspects related to *form*, *meaning*, and *use*, as well as layers of meaning connected to the roots of individual words (Nation & Meara, 2010). Learners ought to acquire the word-power such as: Word Roots, Word Formation, Prefixes and Suffixes, Synonyms and Antonyms, Homonyms, Homophones, Homographs, Study of Word Origin, One-Word Substitutes, Idioms and Phrases, Collocations,

analogy, Words Often Misspelt- Confused/Misused, Business Vocabulary, Technical Vocabulary.

*Grammar:* English is a difficult language with complicated grammar rules to master. Grammar constitutes the rules and framework, changing the form of words and joining them into sentences. If there are no rules, or if everybody follows their own rules, it creates problems in communication for everyone. So, we can finalize grammar is an important factor to learn a new language.

Thus the rubrics of grammar, such as usage of parts of speech, auxiliary verbs, use of articles and word order for the expression of complex tenses, aspect and mood, as well as passive constructions, conditional sentences interrogatives, etc. are necessary for those who desire to master over the language and to enhance the proficiency level.

### **Suggested Activities**

*Activities of listening and speaking:* Simulation, role-play, seminars and group discussions on the topics of technology and science are mainly suggested for activities of listening and speaking skills. On the other hand, mock interviews and speeches/presentations are also recommended.

*Activities of reading and writing:* Different Types of reading-comprehension exercises of science and technical texts are primarily recommended specifically on scanning, skimming, extensive reading, intensive reading, etc.

*Activities of grammar and vocabulary:* the practice of reading and writing helps the students identify tenses, sentence structures, and adjectives, use of modal auxiliaries, conditional sentences, and connectives in technical texts. They can also find out new and technical vocabulary and to know the meanings and usage of the vocabulary.

### **Conclusion**

Thus, English is indispensable to use at workplace and the primary prerequisite qualification for employment. English proficiency is a key factor for employment success and advancement. The four major skills of language learning, listening, speaking, reading and writing provide a platform for the learners to polish their proficiency in English.

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