

**Effective Writing**  
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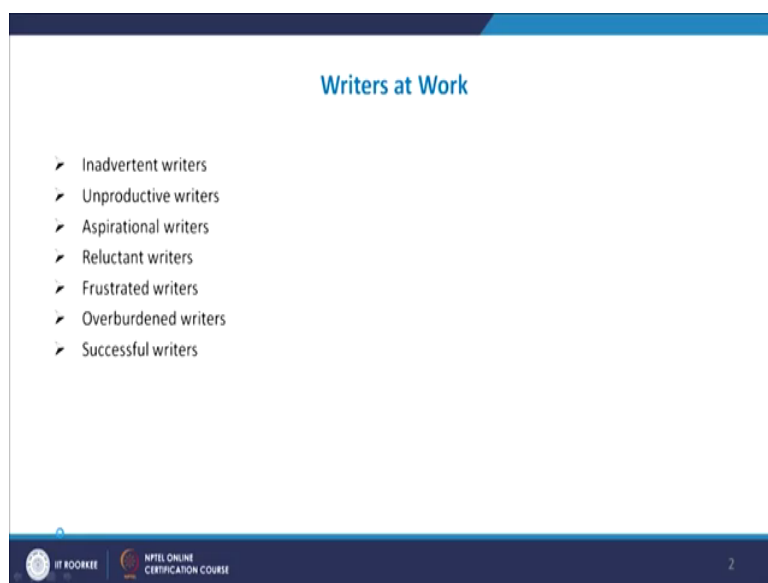
**Lecture – 03**  
**Principles of Effective Writing**

Good morning and welcome back to online lectures on Effective Writing and you are listening to these lectures by Binod Mishra and hope you are enjoying these lectures. Friends, as you remember in the previous lectures, we talked about effective writing, what effective writing is and how, what are the parameters, what actually can make you an effective writer, but then that was rather introductory.

And today we are going to talk about the various Principles of Effective Writing. As I said the other day that all of us are writers; whatever way we write, we are write, we are writers rather. All of us actually want to write and within all of us there is a writer. Maybe at times our roles as writer change and this change depends upon the circumstances.

Since, we are talking about effective writing, we are also going to discuss what actually are the underlying principles that can make all of us effective writers, but before we do that let us find out what sort of writer we are, because in today's world all of us are writing, whether you are writing with a pen or you are writing on your laptop, on a personal com or whatever we or you are writing at your workplace or sometimes you are writing (Refer Time: 02:21), sometimes you write because you want to perform a task, sometimes, because if you are going to join a workplace today you will find that your writing will have to be need based.

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You also remember that in the previous lecture we also talked about the various aims of writer. Now, having understood the aims is it not important to know what sort of writing we are going to make and what sort of writers are there and how we can change ourselves from an everyday writer to a writer that counts to a writer whose excellence, whose brilliance, whose art of writing actually matters, because as we all have learnt that writing is a skill, writing is an art and with efforts we can make ourselves better writers, but before that let us try to find out what sort of writers we are.

Now, here are writers at work, when you join an organization, when you join an institution or you join some other professions, you will find that your responsibilities include some amount of writing. So, here taking a cue from any dangerous book where she writes that all around us there are writers and we can categorize these writers.

So, first is an inadvertent writer. When you join an organization, you find one day that your responsibilities also include writing, but then you are not a writer. So, in advertent writers are those writers, who actually consider writing to be a byproduct. They are working hence, they have to write something or the other depending upon the need, depending upon the exigency my dear friends.

Another category of writers is unproductive writers. Now who are these unproductive writers? These writers actually want to write, but then they do not get time to write. Such writers actually feel that time will come and they do not get time to write, they might be thinking that they want to write, but they cannot write, because they are waiting for some time. The next category of writers is aspirational writers. These writers as we can go by the term aspiration, they actually aspire to be writers.

They have within themselves the aspiration to become a writer, but actually they are waiting for a perfect time. My dear friends, will that perfect time come, will that come at a distant are and if we keep on waiting can we become a writer? Then there is one more category of writers who can be classed into or who can be put into the category of reluctant writers. As the title goes, as the term goes reluctant writers are those writers who actually are not in a position or not at all designers of writing.

They do not want to write that is why you will find many people they often try to hide themselves at the workplace so that they may not be given the task of writing something. So, such writers they often try to keep themselves hidden, they actually are afraid of visibility, they do not want to be visible and that is why they are most of the time shrinking, they actually try to escape.

Another category of writers is frustrated writers. Now, this category of writers is a bit bitter this category of writers, actually they struggle a lot to complete the task, they want to write and not only do they want to write, but they want to complete, they want to make their writing true and they struggle a lot. Of course, the generation of becoming a writer has begun in them,

but then when this sort of tendency, this sort of desire to write ensues in them, they actually start writing and a time comes when they become overburdened writers.

Now, who are these overburdened writers? Such writers they actually think that they can write everything and anything such writers not only struggle a lot, but they want to take all sorts of writing. And these writers actually do not get much time to channelize, do not get much time to revise, do not get much time to beautify their writings, but then since you want to be a writer as I said the other day all of us want to be writers.

So, in order to be writers what actually we need is we do not fall into any of these categories that I have mentioned. Actually, we want to become a writer who counts around writer who matters and in order to become that what you are aspiring for is, you are aspiring for becoming a writer who is valuable. A writer becomes valuable only when his written words not only count, but only when his written words actually give him a lot of importance.

So, a valued writer which we can also call successful writers. Now these successful writers cannot become in a day. You might be thinking that since you want to be a writer you have words and you can write, but then in order to count, in order to reckon yourself with the category of successful writers, you actually need to create a sort of content that matters and such a content actually requires a lot of patience, a lot of perseverance, a lot of efforts my dear friends.

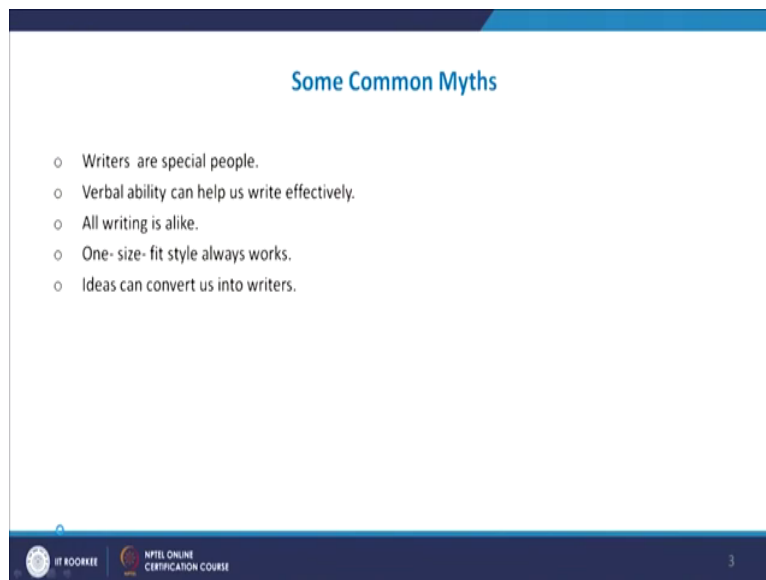
Now, where are the problems in becoming a writer, what actually are the myths, what actually are the general impressions that go and that make a budge? Among many of us are we start thinking that writers are special people, I mean people are born with the special ability, they are actually born with a natural talent that they can write. Now this is only a myth, no one can become a writer in a day and no one can write effectively in a day. If you have a look at as I might have said the other day, if you have a look at these tablets writers they have burnt midnight oils.

And specially now it is whether you want to become a writer or not I mean a creative writer or not, but then if you are working somewhere or the other your writing should matter,

because sometimes or the other in your career, in your profession, in your life, in your day to day activity there comes a time when your writing comes into picture and you are demanded.

So, never ever think that writers are special people, they are not these special people, they become special by didn't of their efforts they become important by didn't of their hard works that they have put into. Moreover, there is also a sort of impression among people that if you know more words, if you have got a good vocabulary, if you know how to write sentences, but then writing sentences means writing effective sentences.

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The slide is titled "Some Common Myths" in blue text. It lists five common misconceptions about writing, each preceded by a small circle icon. The slide has a dark blue header and footer. The footer contains the logos for IIT Kharagpur and NPTEL Online Certification Course, along with the number 3.

- Writers are special people.
- Verbal ability can help us write effectively.
- All writing is alike.
- One-size-fit style always works.
- Ideas can convert us into writers.

So, people are under the impression that verbal ability can help us write effectively. What you may have the verbal ability, but you may not write effectively, because many of us start thinking that all writing is alike, what does it mean? All writing is alike means actually in life

as well as in job in career, in professions, in institutions there are different categories of writers and you will find the different types of writing, isn't it?

Now, such writings, every writing requires a different sort of understanding, a different sort of say condition in which a person is writing and conditions keep changing, situations keep changing. So, all writing is not alike though many people think that all writing is alike.

And why such people think that one size fit style will always work. For example, suppose you are going to write a letter or you are going to write a report, you are going to write a letter to your friend and you are going to write a letter to your boss you are going to write a poem and you are going to write a drama you are going to write a technical proposal and you are also going to draft a CV. Do all these things become alike? Do all these sorts of writing have the same amount of formalities, have the same sort of layout, no my dear friends.

And again we must say that one size fit style does not work all the time. Every writing has different limitations has got different expectations, we shall be discussing how those expectations and how those different limitations how those different demands have to be performed when you are writing specifically for one or more than one purposes. Many people also think that they have got ideas and I have always said that ideas have helped mankind rule the world. You have ideas, but what will you do with your ideas, the ideas that you have they actually need to be written. In spoken English, they need to be articulated, but in written English, the ideas have to be written they have to be explained, they have to be explained in order to meet the desired demand, the desired request and that is why I have been saying that efforts mattered more.

Now, as I said in the previous class that we want to become writers, but we do not put efforts. Do you think simply by thinking that you can be writer you will become a writer, no, you will have to start sometimes or the other some way or the other and that is what I call efforts matter more.

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The slide features a blue header with the title "Efforts Matter More" in white. Below the title, a quote by Angela Duckworth is displayed in black text. The words "hidden prejudice" and "think arrived at their place" are highlighted in yellow. The quote reads: "The 'naturalness bias' is a hidden prejudice against those who've achieved what they have because they worked for it, and a hidden preference for those whom we think arrived at their place because they're naturally talented". (Angela Duckworth in *Grit*)

At the bottom of the slide, there is a dark blue footer containing the IIT Roorkee logo and the text "NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE" on the left, and the number "4" on the right.

Now, here I want to provide you with a beautiful quote which Angela Duckworth in her famous book *Grit* gifts. This Angela Duckworth says and, and this is actually a response to those people who think that writers are special and writers are born with a natural ability. Now Angela Duckworth says, the naturalness bias' is a hidden prejudice now, now look at the words, the naturalness bias' is a hidden prejudice against those who have achieved what they have. Now, if you think that simply by nature or having a having the gift of the god you can become a writer, No. So, when you are suffering from a bias which says that writers are natural, writers are born, No. This naturalness bias is a hidden prejudice against those who have achieved what they have, because they worked for it and a hidden preference for those whom we think arrived at their place, because they are naturally talented, ok.

If you have a look at all those great writers, playwrights, novelists and poets they have written quite a lot. And you might be thinking that they have got this natural talent maybe

they might have got imagination, but in order to convert their imagination into a sort of writing which people go for, which people hanker after, which people love to read. Actually all these require not only the natural talent, but they actually require the efforts. And these efforts my dear friend these efforts, you will find these efforts matter more. How these efforts can matter more?

Simply not only by having a hidden prejudice, but then by having a sort of effort and how this effort you actually have to put your efforts into becoming a writer. And that is why we say whom we think arrived at they could not arrive at or they could not get there committed desire of writing unless and until they might have put their effort into it. Now, so, what, what we here have come to conclude is that your efforts will matter more.

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The slide is titled "Identify Your Purpose" in blue text. Below the title, there are three bullet points, each preceded by a blue diamond symbol:

- ❖ Why are you writing?
- ❖ For whom are you writing?
- ❖ What do you hope to achieve?

At the bottom of the slide, there is a dark blue footer containing the logos for "IIT ROORKEE" and "NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE", along with the number "5" on the right side.



Now, you have the ideas even if you are going for a creative writing, you might have the imagination, but then whenever you are writing there are certain things that you must ask yourself, because writing as I said cannot materialize in just one day. And even when you want to put your efforts what are the different things that you must keep yourself in mind while writing. First is asked yourself why are you writing, what makes you write this? If most of us start thinking whether you are in a job or you are in your own profession where you want to make writing your career, your profession.

So, ask yourself why are you writing, what is actually the purpose, I mean unless and until you know the purpose of writing you cannot put your efforts, because once you know the purpose of your writing, you will also come to know, because this purpose will tell you, you are actually writing to entertain, as I said the other day about the aims you are trying to entertain. Naturally when you try to entertain you will start writing something in a very creative manner. You are trying to inform, so, when you try to inform that will become very official or when you try to explain.

Naturally when you will explain our orientation will change. So, why are you writing? Asked yourself why you are writing we actually write for a number of regions. Suppose as a young boy aspiring to get a job what he will write? He will, he will write or he will draft he will create a CV. Now creating a CV will be different from writing a poem.

Naturally, now, now you see how these two things vary. So, why are you writing? You are writing to get a job. Now when you are writing to get a job your first question to yourself is how should I write, because everyone is writing, everyone is creating a sort of CV. Now you have to write a CV that tells, a CV that actually can tell about yourself better, can inform the prospective employers about your merits, about your talents, about your capabilities.

So, there are a number of things and likewise when you are writing something different. Suppose, you are going to write a short report or a long report or a feasibility report or whatsoever naturally that also will vary. So, first you have to ask what are you writing? So, when you have got the answer to what you are writing, you will come to know about the

layout. And not only about the layout, when you know why you are writing you will also know for whom you are writing, isn't it?

Because you know the reason behind writing, but you also have to know for whom you are writing sometimes you may be writing simply for your boss because when you write in a profession when you write you will have two sorts of readers. And I have been telling that whenever you start writing first think about your reader or your audience, we will we will discuss more about how to our audience. So, when you know your audience you will not only know your audience and it is very difficult to know your audience.

For that what we must do? We actually have to think in advance, I mean a sort of visualization, a sort of anticipation, a sort of pre knowledge, you cannot have this pre knowledge you can simply make a guess and most of the time you will find your guesses are correct. So, for whom are you writing who are the people for whom you are writing. When you know who are the people you are writing your orientation will completely change, because you might be knowing about his background, you may be knowing about his taste, you might be knowing about his post, you might be knowing about his position, you also might be knowing about his grasp over language, you also might be knowing about his subject knowledge, you also might be thinking about how this person will react, you also might be anticipating as to whether he will react positively, negatively, neutrally or whatsoever. And finally, you also have to think what do you hope to achieve. You have already asked yourself why you are writing.

So, you know the reason the reason that I am writing or a drafting a CV that is, that is the reason. Now what I do want to achieve I actually by, by writing a CV or by drafting a CV, I actually want to get shortlisted for an interview. So, and I am depending upon and varying upon your aims, your regions, your purpose of writing, the entire orientation of your writing will change, because as I have already said my dear friends you will also be thinking of the language that you will a prefer.

Since you know the person to whom your writing is directed and also knowing about the person subject, knowledge, background, age, education, surroundings that will actually make

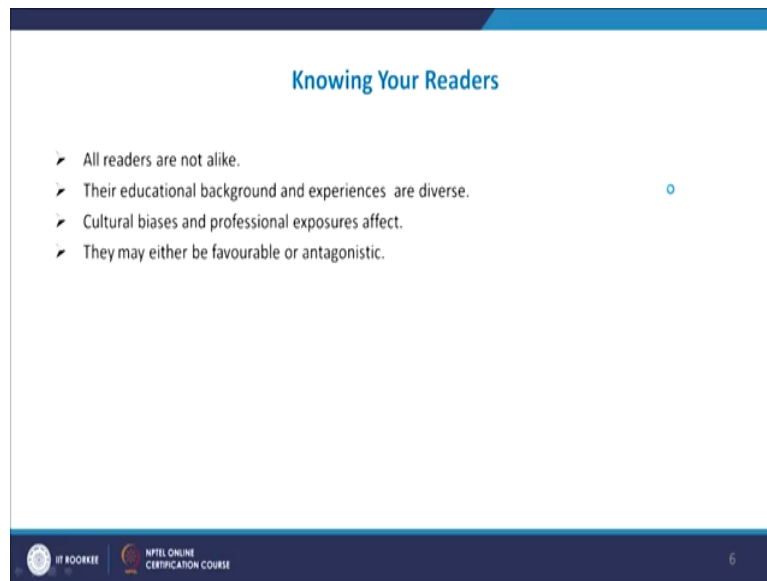
you or enable you to prefer a sort of language that the other person actually wants. And by that only when you have actually thought of all these things as to why you are writing, for whom you are writing and what do you hope to achieve.

So, when you hope to achieve you will find actually that will connect to you, that will connect you not only the reason for which you are writing, but finally, the outcome. What will be the outcome of my writing? So, what will you achieve by writing this. So, when you have done all this. Now perhaps, half of your task has become easier my dear friends. So, as I said you must know your readers you know why you are writing now you will know who are your readers.

Now, who can be your readers, think? When you are drafting a CV naturally these employers these recruiting agencies will be your first reader, but when you are writing a report who will be the first reader, I should rather call a primary reader and a secondary reader. Who will become the primary here? The primary reader is the person to whom you are going to submit your report, the primary reader is actually the recruiting agency for whom you are submitting at this CV isn't it? And again sometimes you also might be preparing or writing your presentation.

So, you will have to think who will be the audience, who will be the receivers. So, and you must remember, you must rather realize all the first must realize that all readers are not alike.

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The slide is titled "Knowing Your Readers" in a blue font. It contains a bulleted list of four points. The first point is "All readers are not alike." The second point is "Their educational background and experiences are diverse." The third point is "Cultural biases and professional exposures affect." The fourth point is "They may either be favourable or antagonistic." The slide has a dark blue header and footer. The footer contains the IIT Roorkee logo, the text "NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE", and the number "6".

**Knowing Your Readers**

- All readers are not alike.
- Their educational background and experiences are diverse.
- Cultural biases and professional exposures affect.
- They may either be favourable or antagonistic.

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You know, this is actually the difference in their age, in their education, in their background, in their sex, in their tastes, in their habits, in their religious preferences or many more, they are all different people.

Now, no one can ensure that whatever you write or whatever I write will satisfy my readers or will make my readers understand, because ultimately your writing will become meaningful only when there is a response. Let us go back to the communication theory which says that once you send a message.

So, as a writer also you are sending a message and you are waiting for the response. So, the response can only be favorable if the writing is favorable. So, the writing is verbal means, you

have chosen the right words, you have chosen the right approach that we shall be discussing in the lectures to follow.

So, all readers are not alike, their preferences are different, their tastes are. Even their educational background and experiences are diverse, what actually happens is most of the time we have certain assumptions, what are these assumptions? These assumptions are that whatever I know or whatever you know you as a writer I mean you never think about what our readers expect, what our audience wants or even if it is actually intended to benefit the reader only then the writing can be effective and moreover our readers may have cultural biases.

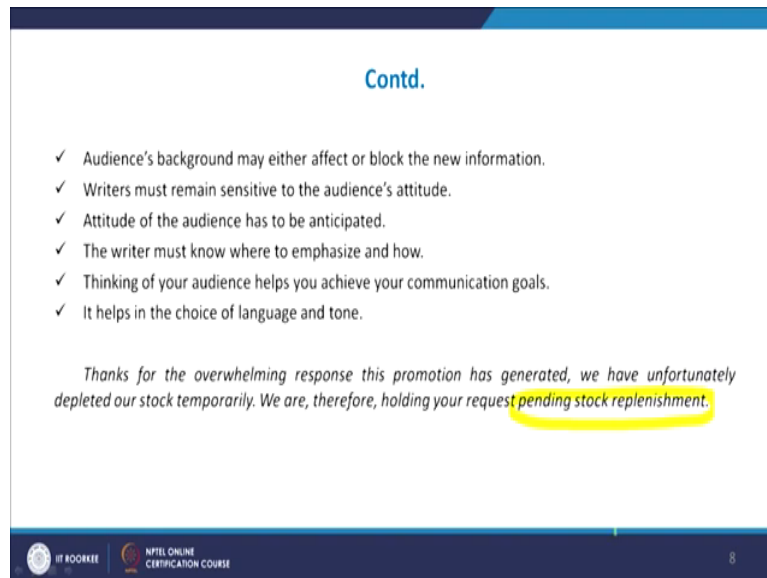
Nowadays, if you are working somewhere or the other. So, there are people of different cultures, different faiths, different countries, different tastes, different habits and their educational background is also different. So, many of them may have a sort of culture which is not similar to ours. Now when you are writing something that may affect their culture or you as a writer may have a cultural bias, because many of us are under the impression that what we think what we do what happens in our culture happens the same in other cultures also. So, what we need to do cultural bias and professional exposures. Suppose, you have joined a new workplace and then when you go to the workplace for for the first time, you find there are many things which are different and it takes time for you to get adjusted.

Now, our readers are also like that when you are writing and you do not think about your readers, what happens is you are thinking in the light of your own experiences in the light of your own education, but the readers expectations and the readers backgrounds are different. So, cultural biases and professional exposures they actually may affect. And that is why when you are going to write you actually have to know or you actually have to think about your readers. So, how can you do that?

Now, your readers response may either be favorable or may be antagonistic, your readers may react differently, they may react indifferently, they may sometimes be favorable also, but then as a writer our aim should be that whatever we write or whatever you write this actually has

to ensure that it is conveyed properly not only it is conveyed properly, but it actually meets the desired results. And how is that possible sorry, how is that possible my dear friends?

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**Contd.**

- ✓ Audience's background may either affect or block the new information.
- ✓ Writers must remain sensitive to the audience's attitude.
- ✓ Attitude of the audience has to be anticipated.
- ✓ The writer must know where to emphasize and how.
- ✓ Thinking of your audience helps you achieve your communication goals.
- ✓ It helps in the choice of language and tone.

*Thanks for the overwhelming response this promotion has generated, we have unfortunately depleted our stock temporarily. We are, therefore, holding your request pending stock replenishment.*

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Audience's background may either affect or block. Now, how, how does this happen at times we think that all readers, because you are a writer, you are writing something you either think that they might be knowing it when you are going to explain you are going to instruct you are going to provide some pieces of information or sometimes you also start thinking that maybe they might have come across this thing earlier.

So, if because we say familiarity in communication is a very good things when two people think alike the communication results very favorably, but when the two people I mean the receiver and the sender they have different backgrounds there may be a possibility of a

deadlock. So, writers as writers we have to remain sensitive to the audience's attitude. What will be the attitude as I said how will they react?

If you use a language if you go for a style that may actually hurt the sentiments of the readers naturally they will not be favorable, they will be unfavorable. So, the writer must know where to emphasize and how, where to emphasize, because when you decide why you are writing and your purpose, because you have already decided what you want to achieve, your purpose is to benefit isn't it? Your purpose is to benefit in that condition what you should do?

You should actually go for an approach you should go for an attitude that my readers have to be benefited. So, if you are going to put some emphasis somewhere you are actually to present it in a manner that the readers understand where you are emphasizing for example, in business writing it is always said that when you are trying to sell a product or you are going to launch a new product, you have to tell the reader how this product has got more advantages and that is actually the key element that is actually where you are going to emphasize and how will you emphasize by telling about the qualities. We shall be discussing it in detail in other lectures.

Now you also have to think of your audience in such a manner that it helps you achieve your communication goals. As I said the goal of your communication is to benefit them and for that you not only have to choose the proper layout, the proper structure, but also the proper language. How? Actually, when you know your readers background that will enable you or that will help you in the choice of language and tone. My dear friends, it is actually language that matters nowadays.

In an age where people do not have time you know we are all having problems of time. And so, as a writer you also have to focus in such a way that in less time you are going to convey your thoughts in a very organized manner. Now you can have look at the example that I have provided here. This example is from a letter and this letter is a response to a letter to one of the customers. Now look at this and you put yourself in the position of the receiver and think whether this language is suitable, whether the tone is suitable or where the writer has failed.

Now, the letter says thanks for the overwhelming response this promotion has generated. We have unfortunately depleted our stock temporarily. We are therefore, holding your request holding your request pending stock replenishment.

Now, now look at my dear friends what happens, what actually has happened. Here, you have or the writer has not been able to understand the background of the reader. There are certain words which actually have been used and this has been used in such a manner that this actually have been used in such a manner. Now look at the last lines here pending stock replenishment. Now imagine, because as I have been saying that all readers are not alike. So, when a reader comes across and a reader may be a boy of say twenty years or twenty one years now will he be able to because you do not understand his background will he be able to understand this last three, words pending stock replenishment.

Actually, this is a response to a letter and in the letter you have to explain, because now the reader wants to know some pieces of information, but you have written it in such a manner that it does not convey. What actually should you do or should or might he have done is to make the language more familiar. This language here is not familiar my dear friend and that is that is why this defeats the purpose.

Now, when you are going to analyze your audience there are certain questions as I said earlier also that must be given due consideration. Who are my primary readers? When you write your sales letter of course, this is directed at the customers. Now if we take the example from the last slide as you have already seen. Some of the customers may understand, but will all the customers understand the implication of what has been written in the last three words, not at all.

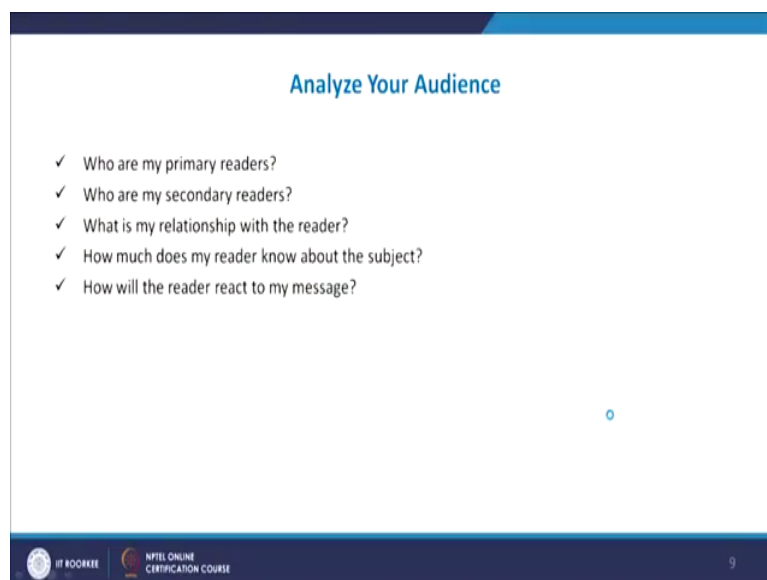
Who are my second readers? As I said you have to focus not only at the primary, but also on the second readers, primary there may be your boss second readers may be the people client, customers. What is my relationship with the reader? Now your relationship with the reader whether it is primary or secondary when you are writing or submitting a report you will find you must ensure that how is your relationship with your boss and how will he react.,



Moreover you must not sacrifice your writing simply to please or simply to satisfy your boss, because your target reader I mean the secondary reader is more important. So, you must have to create a sort of blend between the understanding of the primary reader as well as of the secondary reader. How much does my reader know about the subject.

Now, we have already discussed, because most of the time we try to. So, what we know, but we do not try to explain what our readers do not know and that is why the problem persists.

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How will the reader react to my message? Now my dear friends when we talk about all these, you must actually think that in order to make your writing effective all that you need to do, all that you need to understand is that there has to be a balance between what the readers want to know and what the writers want to express. Unless and until there is a proper balance between the readers expectations and the writers intention no intended result will materialize.

Writing, as I have been saying is an arduous task my dear friends and writing is not one day affair.

What you write matters and since writing becomes the part of recorded information becomes a part of information that is to be preserved for years to come. Hence, as a prospective writer as a prospective say person of the workplace, you also have to see how your writing conveys what it should convey. You will find in the lectures to follow what are the different sorts of writing, what are the different expectations of the writing and what are the underlying principles that can make your writing effective.

Till that keep thinking and keep thinking not only about your writing, but also about your readers, also about your readers reaction also about what you wanted to achieve and what you have achieved, because ultimately it is your writing that represents you in your absence, it is your writing that creates an image in the mind of your readers. And it is your writing that actually may lead you towards the stairs of success not only in job, but also in life.

And so, long as you keep working towards reaching this perfection, because as I have said perfection is a misnomer, you cannot become perfect just in one day, you have to keep trying every day, every night and you also have to think what words are preferable, what words are authentic, what words mean, because there are times when you go for a word that does not mean, but that actually demean not only you as a writer, but then it actually imposes your reading, your learning, your understanding on your readers.

I hope with this lecture you will actually generate a sort of consciousness as to how you should start writing and how you should practice all the different nuances, because the course that we have designed actually tells you and makes you familiar with different sorts of writing which if you keep yourself in the background and if you go accordingly will convert you into a writer that effects into a writer that matters into a writer that actually commands respect and is effective for all the times to come till then keep thinking.

Thank you very much, have a nice day,

