

**Developing Soft Skills and Personality**  
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**Lecture - 25**  
**Technology and Communication: Technological Personality?**

Hello everyone, I am Ravichandran from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT, Kanpur. I have been giving you this course through NPTEL MOOC on Developing Soft Skills and Personality. I am very happy that we have now completed half of the course, already 4 weeks are over and then there are very interesting discussion happening on the forum. I request those who are not participating yet to join the forum and there are very interesting answers even people are giving themselves even before I could give the answers some of the answers that I liked I have marked as the best answers.

Having said that now we are just moving to the remaining of the course which I think is going to be as exciting as how we started before 4 weeks are over. Now, we are on the fifth week and this is the first module and lecture number 25. Now, in this week I am going to bring in a new concept and then introduce you to something again you been taking for. So, much for granted and it is been permeating our entire life, but we do not stop and then think about what is doing to us you might have guessed what I am going to tell about its about technology and how it is related to communication how it is making our ability to develop our own personality and use soft skills to enhance it.

Now, in this module and this lecture in particular I am just going to introduce you to the concept the technological personality that we been developing and whether it is the right thing to do or not and why we are developing that kind of personality. Now, before we actually get into the core concept lets quickly remember what we did in the last lecture and then I would give you some important points in terms of highlights.

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In the last lecture I continued with more challenges that you can face in terms of handling telephone calls and particularly dealing with difficult callers and in terms of difficult callers I talk to you about dealing with angry callers. So, most of the aspects of dealing with angry callers are similar to the way you deal with a angry person in conflict resolution, but there are certain special triads which again we discuss and after that I focused on some essential telephone skills.

You should have whether at basic or at advanced level the key important thing that I started with first asking you to manage your voice I said even you can record it train it and then say key words like sorry thank you most welcome etcetera and you have to be an active listener throughout the telephone conversations you should be cheerful because the cheerfulness that you will have by feeling good will affect the other person and make the person also to feel good.

You should know your caller in advance or even if you do not know the caller in advance try to guess what is the caller in terms of age in terms of mood in terms of title by which you should address the caller, you may have some initial fear especially, if you are in a new place and then you are suppose to handle some tuff callers you may have some initial fear and apprehension, but only by practising and doing the things that you fear you will be able to develop confidence and I also told you some amount of initial fear is necessary to remain focus and energise yourself be polite use polite expressions avoid

jargons technical words which are not very familiar even if you use or somebody is using seek clarifications by that way you will avoid miscommunication anticipate problems when you are making a call because not all the time the calls are going to end very peacefully and in a harmonious manner there are likely to be problems.

Over all you should consider calls as opportunities to grow your personality to enhance the image of the company or the people whom you represent ultimately you should be the person anybody wants to talk to you should never be the person people want to avoid you know you yourself might be avoiding people you should not become one of those persons whom people want to avoid become the most popular person people want to talk to follow the tips that I suggested.


Now, if you remember I ended the lecture by saying that there are some people who just want to keep away from technology to be with themselves like the musical genius like A. R. Rehman particularly the time when he was creating his music he wants completely cut off from telephone calls now have telephone and other such technology interpose as our personality obviously, yes or we still remaining humans or we changing according to technology the answer is like we have become techno humans we are technological man we are technological women we are technological kids. So, we have we have just changing ourselves according to technology.

There are theories who are working on this techno culture or how technologies effecting the living environment and there are terms associated with that one interesting term that you should know is that now we are considered as Cyborgs, what are Cyborgs?

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## Cyborgs: Part Human Part Machine

- Donna Haraway refers to the techno-humans as "cyborgs" in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* (1991)
- The boundaries between man and machine are blurred.
- Organisms are no longer bodies of knowledge but biotic components, a kind of information-processing device.
- Cyborgs—cybernetic organisms—a result of a fusion between biology and technology
- Cybernetics: the study of control systems.



Cyborgs or thought humans and thought machine and Donna Haraway in her famous book *Simians cyborgs and women* refers to the techno humans that we all have become as cyborgs now cyborgs are actually a shorten from the phrase cybernetic organisms now what do cyborgs indicate they indicate that the boundaries between man and machine are blurred. So, now, you cannot distinguish man from machine they become integrated they become organisms are no longer bodies of knowledge, but biotic components a kind of information processing device that is what Donna Haraway says, the meaning is that she said we are not having our own knowledge about ourselves, but we are becoming like a kind of a floppy disc or a kind of pen drive in which we are carrying information by which people can accesses uses manipulate us cyborgs cybernetic organisms according to her a result of a fusion between biology and technology.

Cybernetics is also another field that has given this cyborgs because cyborgs the first part is actually from cybernatics; cybernatics simply is the study of control systems, but in today's world what kind of control systems. So, we can understand those systems which are actually controlled by machines and today machines which are actually being controlled by computers or artificial intelligence. So, that is what is meant by cybernetics now you can get a feel of what I am going to tell you that now human beings are controlled by machines which are again controlled by machines are computers which have artificial intelligence that can act behave much better than a normal human being

and we are cyborgs some of us are still in the process becoming there are other theories who say that we have already become cyborgs now.

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Let us see how we became cyborgs, if you are agreeing to the theories what made us become. So, take a look at this citation from Marshall McLuhan.

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In his famous book the medium is the message what McLuhan talks about is that he says that all media that is any medium we use are all extensions of some form of human faculty. So, let me read the quote and then explain to you quote from Marshall McLuhan

all media are extensions of some human faculty the wheel is an extension of the foot from the wheel we have car. So, he says or bike or even cycle he says that that itself is an extension of the foot the book is an extension of the eye we have extended the book.

So, now we can understand now we have e books now then they have monitors TVs now these are all higher projections of eye clothing he says an extension of the skin electric circuitry an extension of a nervous system. So, all kinds of this technological inventions for McLuhan one way or the other or actually extends of some kind of human faculty some kind of human functioning some kind of human parts which are represented in this.

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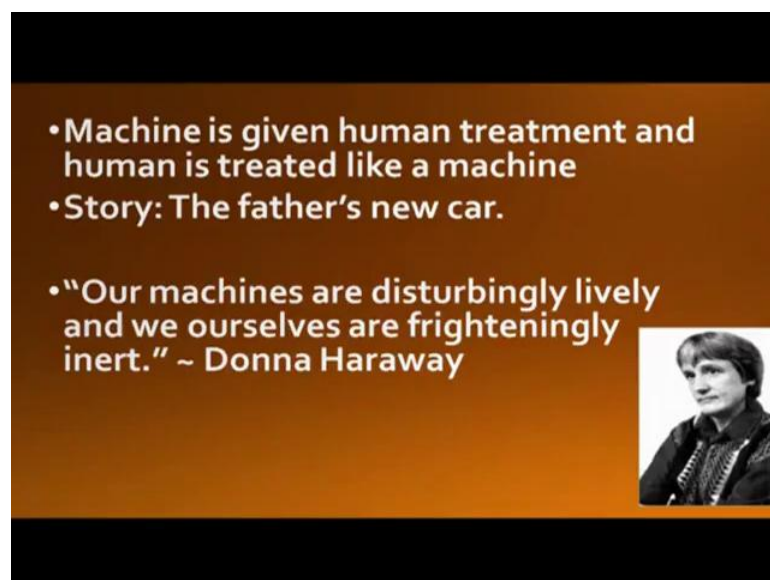
But what happens in this techno culture or cyber culture scenario the extensions have actually become the real the extensions have gained. So, much autonomy that they have become the real what do I mean by this for example, you start having something as a kind of technological extension, but then the extension actually becomes real it becomes a kind of metal that is inserted in your body after facture.

So, initial it was in outside one, but after some time it becomes you cannot leave without that the peacemaker that is kept in the inside the heart again without it you cannot leave so much. So, you become and then there are something which we taught that actually extensions they also become completely autonomous they define and give identity to the

source and subject of extension what is meant by this they tried to even give identity to the source subject of extensions that is human beings.


Now, the pen that you carry whether it is a simple pen or a parker pen, so that tries to define give you some identity, the bike that you drive a car that you drive. So, whether you drive a Nano or whether you are driving a BMW or Audi. So, that is actually initially it became an extension of you, but slowly its starts defining you slowly it starts giving an identity to you. So, even the clothing the brand that you wear. So, it also tells something about you. So, everything that you take us accessories as extension sooner or later started defining you giving you an identity.

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• Machine is given human treatment and human is treated like a machine  
• Story: The father's new car.

• "Our machines are disturbingly lively and we ourselves are frighteningly inert." ~ Donna Haraway



So, now, in this scenario Donna Haraway again points out that machine is given human treatment and human is treated like the machine. So, ironically it should be the other way around human being should be treated as humans and machine should be treated as machines or they should recognize them as machines, but unfortunately the human beings are losing their humanity with that the personality which actually defines the human beings and they are slowly becoming machines or machine like let me tell you a story just to illustrate this point.

We all know that we have reached a point where as rightly pointed out by Donna Haraway that the things which we purchase are. So, possessed by us and then we get, so irritated. So, annoyed even if somebody touches or somebody makes any scratch or

anything on that especially all the electronic gadgets or any of the equipment we have now this is about the story of a father who purchased a new car and we all know like when you buy a new car or even you have a new bike or any new machine that you have new t v new phone you do not even want to a small scratch on that especially when it is a car if there is a slight scratch it feels as if it hurts you it touches your heart you feel very bad about it you talk about dent which can completely leave you in completely sense of trauma if somebody hits your new car.

Now, the father has taken the car out from his garage and he went inside to close it and take something from that before he wanted to start the car at the same time he saw his small son around eight or nine years old. So, he came and then he had a nail a sharp object by which he can write something. So, he was actually scribbling something on the new car the father saw that from the distance and he got so wild, so angry for a while he dint think that it is his son who is writing there and then making this mark on the car. So, he had a hammer. In fact, he went to take the hammer from the garage for tightening something hitting something. So, he took the hammer he came running and in his hanger he just hit the son on the hand on the fingers the two fingers which he was using to write something.

Now, the boy cried in pain and then he hit the fingers. So, fast the fingers were crushed he took into the hospital he came to his senses. So, they had to actually remove one finger fully and other one partially and the third finger is quite damaged now the son return home and then the car was still there and then the father was also there. So, the father felt little awkward and then the son said daddy I dint know that you will be. So, hurt I just wanted to write something there, but can it be removed. So, he said that ha yes son it can be removed I just have to spray some paint on that and its do not worry about it I can just spray and then I have remover also.

So, if I use it, it will be as new as the old one the car that was new the son listen to this and then he said daddy I am happy that you can recover your car and then it will become as the new one as it was before, but just tell me one thing and I just want to know. So, dad asked, what he asked him tell me when will this fingers grow. So, the father was completely speechless and then he realized the mistake that he did and he was not able to say anything and then he just reach the car and then he just saw the scribbling that the son had done and it was there with some blood strain while he taught of removing it he



wanted to see what he was written and the son has written I love you so much daddy. So, the father started sobbing the lesson of the story is that the machine that we use, become of us and we become. So, obsessed with that we are not able to distinguish between the machine and the man between humanity and machine.

So, the personality gets blurred there that is why Donna Haraway says our machines are disturbingly lively and we ourselves are frighteningly inert in the story that I told you the car looks as if it is a human being and it cannot be touched. So, it will hurt it. So, much the father got. So, angry and then he came and hit his son own fingers and frighteningly inert like inactive and then as if your dead he had no feeling at that moment he just thought that he sons is a troublesome machine and then the car is just like human being and he is going and hurting scratching and affecting the car instead of thinking a other way around now this is the danger, how far you are taking your extensions of your own selves, your own personality as real.

And then how much do you take it your heart now this is one lesson where you should realize and then you ask yourselves have you trans this boundary that you should have set between you and machine and then within this boundary. So, the people around you should be there not the machines which are surrounding you.

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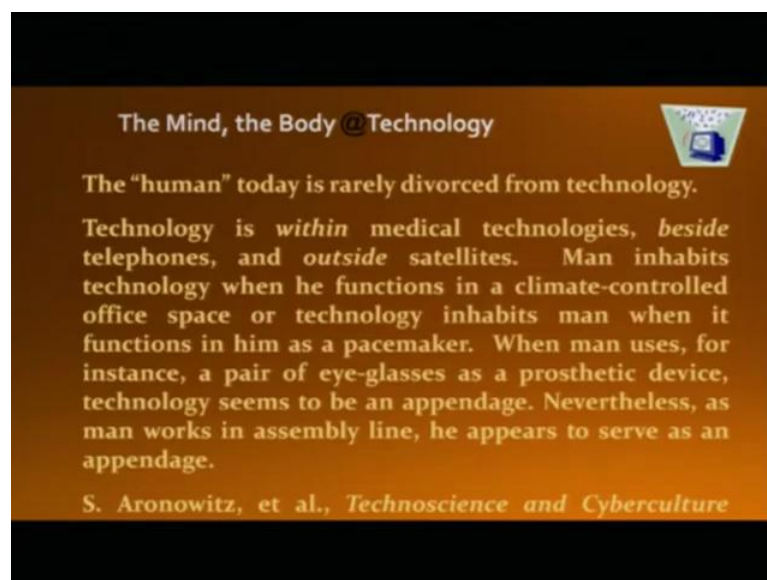


Let us look more at how these changes happened, how the Cyborgian shift took place it is because of the changing times amazing transformation was taken place in the cyber

space cyber culture. So, you have you tube. So, today like the enter classroom has become completely mobile I am teaching and then I am teaching for about fifteen thousand students you are able to watch it in YouTube and then you are able to see that and respond to that through internet. So, completely online and we are seen each other we are responding, but then we are removed the boundaries. So, it is good, but it is also changing the times Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, I-pod, the web, the internet, the mobile.

In fact, I am going to devote one complete lecture the next one on the mobile and other than this new devices new applications new technologies new practices now what is this doing to us this effects the mind in the body the thought patterns thinking capabilities ways of expression, communication, change in language we use, SMS language in exam papers we use chat language in formal letters which we are suppose to write to some director or for job application and we do not know the difference and our talk itself will changed handwriting has changed because typewriter has taken place completely we use typing we no more write. So, even if we write our fingers are not tuned to good writing. So, this scribble, it is not very clear.

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This changes it is not only affecting the mind, but it affects the mind the body because of technology. So, the human if you look at it as pointed out by another criticone, techno science and cyber culture is as this the human today is rarely divorced from technology.

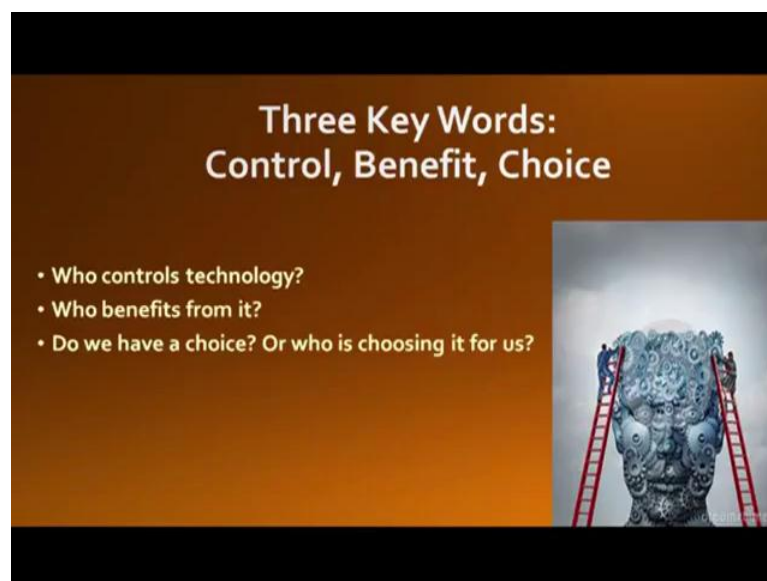
You cannot separate the human being from technology it has completely permeated as and interpenetrated as look at the quote from him he says technology is within medical technologies beside telephone and outside satellites.

You go to moon using technology, you go to mars using technology when you go to hospital it is technology when you make a telephone its technology man inhabits technology when he functions in a climate controlled office space. So, when you use the air conditioning. So, you are actually inhabiting technology in a climate controlled one or technology inhabits man when it functions in him as a pace maker.

The technology goes inside you lives in you as a pace maker when man uses for instance a pair of eye glasses as a prosthetic device even the eye glass that we use the watch that we use the pen that we use these are all prosthetic devices the device which we rely upon. So, much, but they are machines technologies seems to be an appendage as an added one nevertheless as man works in assembly line he appears to serve as an appendage. So, if you look at it cannot completely remove technology from us nor we can come out of technology.

Now, what is the final point I am going to make in terms of technology and human personality its influence in our personality despite the benefits that it has conferred on mankind?

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**Three Key Words:  
Control, Benefit, Choice**

- Who controls technology?
- Who benefits from it?
- Do we have a choice? Or who is choosing it for us?

So, many things that we have got out of technology three key words you should keep in your mind whenever you are using technology any kind of technology the first key words is control the second one is benefit and the third one is choice now ask these kind of questions related to control ask the question who controls technology take, for example, internet technology who is controlling it you put something do you have your ability to take it back Facebook, who is controlling it you put something, but do you have control over it or if somebody else is controlling you using that your own mobile technology do you have control over mobile or is mobile trying to control you who is controlling technology if it is not you.

So, there is some problem with your personality because only when you gain control over anything that is determining your personality on identity you will be able to develop it you will be able to enhance it growth is not possible if some kind of external source is trying to control yourselves your identity and personality remember our entire course philosophy is to change the inside first and then make modifications outside not only focus on the outside.

Now, in that sense you need to know who is controlling you inside using technology if somebody is doing that it is high time you have to distance from that and restore your sense of identity ask the other questions associated with its benefits who benefits from it. So, when you buy a particular brand of phone who is benefitting of course, there is some amount of benefit for you also, but you keep asking who is finally, benefiting is it you or somebody else.

So, that question again will make you realize that the benefits that your getting may be just an illusion may not be really what you are getting and somebody else may be making you believe that you are getting certain benefits, but actually making you addicted to some bad habits by which you will always believe that you are getting the benefits you will never able to come out of bad habits and like the Zeigarnik effect that we talked about things will keep remaining incomplete your mind will go back to that again and again and somebody else is taking benefits out of this situation.

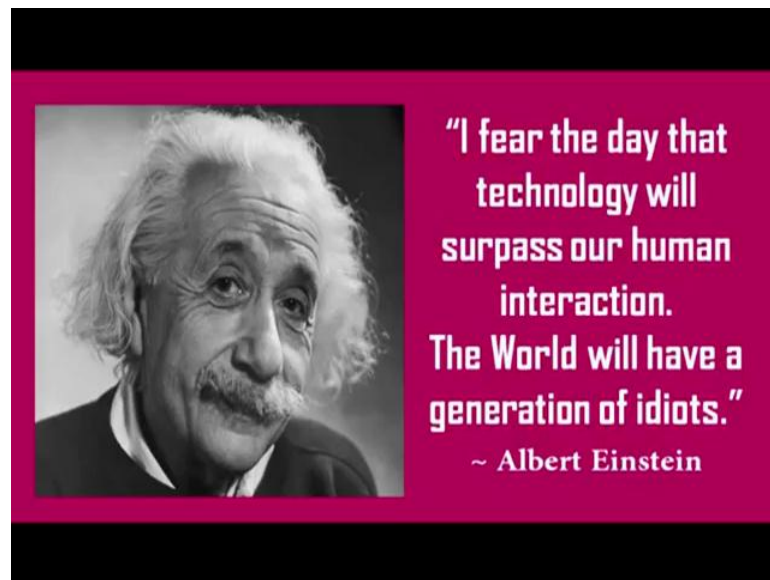
The last question that you need to ask is do we have a choice can I choose something no apparently you will think that oh I choose when you go to the market and I want to buy something when I go to the mall to buy something I choose it, but if you ask yourself

very carefully how did you make this choice somebody told you how did that somebody tell you is it a marketing person or a sales person or a friend or a colleague how did they get the impression who told them this they read from something they saw on advertisement they heard it on the radio they watched in the TV or you yourselves watch some advertisements or you saw your neighbour wearing that using it. So, it entertain to your mind that we should also own it. So, the choice which looks like you actually wanted to buy that by your own thinking itself is not correct at somebody has actually penetrated your thinking itself and given you some kind of image in your mind only if you buy that only if you eat its only if you wear it only if you have it then you really making a good choice that is telling your identity and personality, but actually when you think that you have a choice you actually have no choice.

The other thing that you should ask in relation to this is who is choosing it for you generally we can ask this question who is choosing for us if we are not making the choice and is it the same person who is benefitting from whatever we are using as consumers and is it the same person who is also trying to control the direction of technology where it knows what should be the next aspects of technology now if it is the same person same group same corporation. So, then you have to be careful about not getting enslaved the kind of trap that is surrounding you.

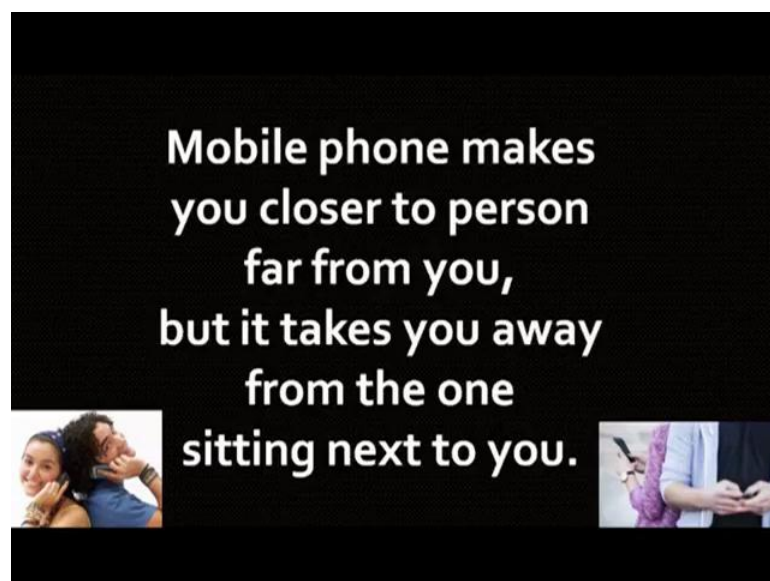
Now, it is rather appears to be easily said, but I know that it is not easy to follow I will give you more illustration in the next one as taking mobile as an example on how it is actually captured our imagination our creativity and then everything has been seized and then it is been taken complete control on possession of us before we go to that there is two thoughts for one from the famous Albert Einstein.

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He said that long ago, but whatever he said at that point of time is appearing to be become so real. Now, in the contemporary information age and the age of technology he said, "I fear the day that technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots" and I am not going to interpret this I just want you to look at the other one that is available on Facebook about mobile phones make the comparison yourselves and arrive at a quick conclusion.

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Mobile phones make you closer to person far from you mobile phone makes you closer to person far from you, but it takes you away from the one sitting next to you. So, it is connecting to people far from you, but its taking away the one who is sitting next to you think about this.

So, in the next lecture I am going to focus more on how mobile is used for communication, but how effectively it is been used and how in effectively its being used. So, with this I conclude this lecture. Thank you for watching this video and as I said I am very happy that we have crossed half of this course and then be with us, be actively participating in the forum and all that.

Thank you once again.