

Developing Soft Skills and Personality
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Lecture - 27
Technology and Communication: E-Mail Principles

Hello everyone, welcome back to NPTEL mooch course on developing soft skills and personality. So, we are on the fifth week and this week completely I am focusing on technology and communication. We are on module 3 and in this module I am going to talk to you about some of the basic principles, in which you have to use emails - emails or electronic mails. So, which you have been using frequently now a days if you look at the total number of lectures we have already reached lecture number twenty seventh with this I am going to spend a couple of lectures using email as a focus point to talk to you about particularly about technology and how technology is actually trying to influence as in terms of soft skills and personality.

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Highlights

Highlights of the Last Lecture

Influence of mobile on human personality
How mobile has deviated from its main intention: saving time, help in emergency, distance connection, keep human relations intact
Humans have become "Moborgs": sleeping, playing games, watching movies, using it for checking time, calculation, address, etc
Mobile addiction/Nomophobia
Obsessive compulsive disorder
Get angry, tensed, depressed without mobile
Suggestions for become human: mobile free time, keeping it away, treating it as a slave, not using it as a substitute for watch, calculator, map, etc.
Mobile Etiquette: Avoid when face-to-face communication is possible; be empathetic about other's time; use apt caller/ring tone; use silent mode/switch off; use e-mail

Now, some of the highlights with regard to what I thought in the previous lecture, the previous lecture concluded particularly referring to the influence of mobile on human personality, I was telling you that it has already altered modified human personality, just like the way technology in general has been making human being cyborgs this is also changed people and in that sense it as deviated from its main intention of saving time,

but now its consuming so much time it has to help in emergency, now emergency people do not care, even when you call them on mobile distance connection, now actually distance connection is becoming on the one hand yes, but on the other hand it is creating problem with people who are nearby people are. So, closely connected to people in distance, but they are completely forgetting those who are nearby and it was invented to keep human relations intact, but actually it is disintegrating human relations.

So, I concluded by saying humans have become Moborgs that is mobile organisms because their using at before sleeping, after sleeping, they are using it for playing games, watching movies using it for checking time, calculation, address everything they are using it. So, that it has become indispensable part of human beings. So, they cannot live without it.

I gave a test of identifying what is your mobile use level. Have you become really Moborgs and then I asked you to respond to it depending on the degree of frequency that you are using depending on the intensity and depending on number of questions you say yes no it was determining whether you have become really Moborgs and most of us would have followed under the category yes we become Moborgs.

And the next level I asked you to identify whether you have become addicted to mobiles or whether you are suffering from this Nomophobia that is no mobile phobia. You cannot live without mobile any more. Now if you have reached that I gave you some basic questions and if you all answered affirmatively by saying yes, yes, yes, then you are also suffering from this obsessive compulsive disorder you cannot live without it you are obsessed with it.

So, if somebody takes your mobile you will get angry, you will become tensed and if mobile falls into what will feel so depressed and you cannot live without mobile and you can live without human beings, but you cannot live without mobile, you we can live without pets we can live without reading you can live without sleeping, but then it looks like you cannot live without mobile. So, I concluded that by giving you some suggestions for becoming human.

First of all I said that create some mobile free time, let people know that 1 hour, 2 hour 3, hours or even at least 15 minutes your mobile will be switched off in a day and whatever think they call they cannot teach you on mobile. Either they have to call you on landline

or they have to use email or they can do anything else, but they cannot reach you on mobile. Let them know it is your sleeping time it is your lunch time it is your reading time and you are in library. So, you cannot be disturbed at all.

So, keep it away also literary and figuratively, keep it in distance all the time. So, do not make it an integral part, keeping it in hot is giving you cancer, keeping it in ties, is also giving bone cancer. So, literary try to put it in your hand bag or pouch and carried separately use various kinds of speakers which are available if possible. So, that you try to keep it away from you. Treat it over all as a slave not as a master who is trying to control you and then do not use that as a substitute for other gadgets we were using such as watch calculator or even map which we were using for finding address. So, till continue to use and then do not make mobile as the whole and sole of your functioning.

Finally, I concluded with some mobile etiquette some norms, some social norms that governed the use of mobile. So, certain things highlighted were telling you to avoid mobile, if you can use face to face communication. If we are living in same house and no need to send text message to your mother or somebody to bring food upstairs.

So, you can just go and call and if you are just sitting face to face again do not use mobile at all. So, avoid it minimize it as much as possible and when you use it be concerned about the other person particularly be empathetic about the other persons time do not hijack their time just because you want to pass time do not intrude in to their time, just because in your mobile button you can press and then immediately it call somebody, do not do such activities which may annoy the person because it also tells something about your own attitude, your own sensitivity, your own concerned for the other person in terms of using your mobile.

Most of the times in advertently, we are using in very aggressive manner and we do not care about others. So, soft skills actually tries to position you in a such manner that handle mobile in a soft manner keep it in silent manner and let the mobile speak less, whenever it is silent mode you may miss some calls that is you catch up with those calls later that is no problem, but whenever you are focus let it remain in silent mode.

I also said practice switching it of especially in formal and very important personal relationship discussion you have to put it in switched of mode because there is nothing more important than attending that particular event. For example and interview, keeping

your mobile frequently busing is very surely to get you eliminated from this because there are other candidates was much more sincere than you. However, good in your marks, however extracurricular activities that you might have done and got medals and all that it is at that point of time important that you show at most sincerity to the person to whom your attending. Last but not the list I concluded by saying that try to use email, if you can communicate with the person using email rather than calling person again and again using your mobile and then taking the persons time away if we can explain that on email simply and if the person is looking at frequently that is still a better mood.

Now, having said that this lecture and may be next 2-3 lecture are going to focus on, this aspect of using emails and then the question whether you are using emails properly. Before we go to how you should use emails and then am going to discuss about basic principles that you can follow using emails.

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Let us look at these quotations the first one says, The greatest polluting element in the earth's environment is the proliferation of electromagnetic fields. I consider that to be a far greater threat on a global scale than warming, or the increase chemical elements in the environment. So, this quote is coming from Robert Becker a two-time Nobel prize nominee.

Now, the fact is trying to highlight and then deliberately I have put the quotation at the beginning instead of the way I usually end my lecture with the quotation at the end

because I want you to understand the shift that should happen in your thinking with regard to email use, and generally with regard to mobile and email use.

So, mobile use he says his proliferating increasing the electromagnetic field which are responsible for causing all kinds of harm to human beings as I said Cancer and other diseases.

But in case of birds for example, the small birds the Sparrows. So, they just die or they are not able to pass through this one. Electromagnetic fields are affecting the path of honeybees. So, much research has been happening on that. So, the Nobel prize nominee is of the opinion that this is worst and global warming because that is happening at a gradual pace, but this is imminent this is happening immediately and we need to pay attention.

The other one is from Marilyn vos savant. So, she says Email, instant messaging and cell phones give us fabulous communication ability, but because we live and work in our own little worlds that communication is totally disorganized. Remember we invented all these point email cell phones to organize our communication and to shape of our lives in a better manner.

But unfortunately they are totally disorganized and not only they are disorganized they make ourselves as also this organized. Now am just going to give you some basic principles in terms of soft skills and personality and at the same time you know that those are the skills which we can use it generally in terms of any communication aspects.

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I would like to call them as 5 Ps because all these words are starting with the letter P and they are the Cardinal Principles of Soft Skills and Personality Development.

The first one is Planning. So, you have to think ahead, you have to think about and then you have to make your decision before actually you reach a place reach a spot and then do something. For example, exam the simple one you need to plan. So, what will be the syllabus that you will read during this time? In fact, you should have proper schedule.

So, what they or you going to handle questions; will you answer the easy question first or you will go for one tough one spend this much time will you do time planning, will you try to finish it ten minutes before how many pencils you will carry how many pens you need to carry what are the other things you will carry do you make a to do list, planning and preparedness.

So, once you planned that I should take all this once. So, preparedness is your alertness. So, you plan to go to the swimming pool. So, you went there and then the person says where is your swimming costume. So, you say oh I do not, that I have to use swimming costume for swimming in to the pool. So, you told that without it you cannot come. So, you lack preparedness.

Preparedness also in terms of any kind of proposal that you give, any communication activity that you are involved, in terms knowledge in terms of knowing things in terms of

showing that you are ready. So, that is preparedness. The next level is persuasiveness. So, again you reach the spot you show that you are prepared, but people are not willing to accept you. So, you should be able to use your communication ability to influence the thinking, persuade the convince them with facts, convince them with examples that you are really capable of doing something or what your trying to propose is something that is true.

Now, when you do this your present ability is also very important. Present ability is not just presenting things in the decorative manner, like even physically personally presenting yourselves. So, nicely, nicely dressed and all that although dressing is going to give the first best impression people are not going to judge the book by the cover people are going to read what is inside what is the content. So, of an you see a trailer and then you like the movie thinking that the trailer will tell you everything about the movie, but you go and then you are miserable disappointed in the first 10 15 minutes because the content is not delivered in the most presentable manner possible, it is totally disorganized there is no story line. So, in short even in terms email communication present ability means you should be able to present it without any spelling mistakes, grammatical errors, paragraph spaces, it should be very pleasing for I to look no dirty look that is produced over all.

And lastly perseverance, especially generally in terms of soft skills you may fail. So, I am happy when am reading from the forum, that some of the participants they tell me that, they are happy their able to change their habit, they remember the lessons they try to do that.

But then there are others words sayings that. So, am not able to follow it can you give some more suggestions. So, this is the time you need perseverance. So, repeat. So, if you think that you are not able to get up at five thirty and go for a walk. So, if you started at 7:30 fine. So, next day try to go at 7, third day at 6:30 and slowly 6 and then move to 5:30. Overnight you may not be able to do, but perseverance, continuing with whatever efforts that you have taken will take you near your goal and will of achieves success.

Now, let us look at some of these principles although they are general in terms of soft skills and personality development, let us see how we can apply this in terms of looking at emails. And before, I actually go to tell you the concepts like the principles, the

etiquette, that you use the norms that you should follow when writing emails. I just want to give an experience of those emails who completely violate some of these norms of soft skills and some of the mails even some of you might have written to some people without knowing that you are writing such mails.

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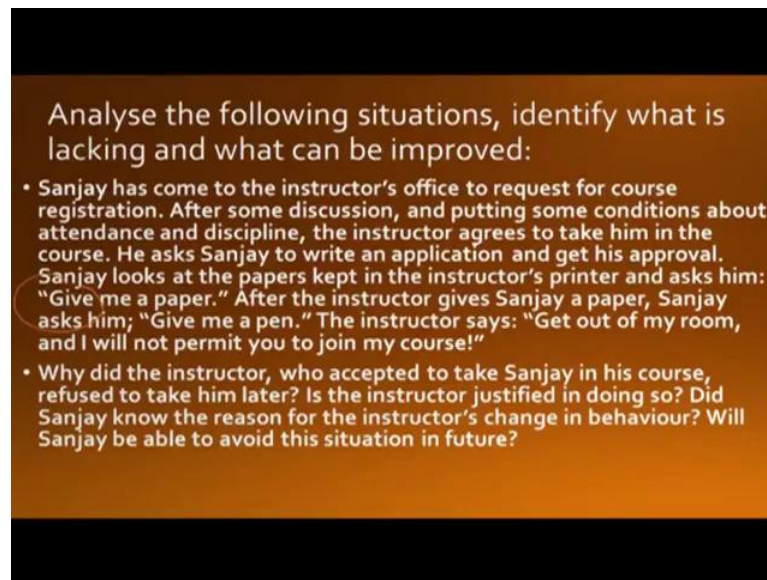


Let us, start by looking at some examples now look at this first one this is an E-mail I received. It simply says respected sir my name is AMEET PRAKASH. Ok yes put in capital letter. So, I should know the name, but I do not know what is the subject, what does this person, bond from me who is this person, is he student or a vendor or a distant friend of mine. I do not know anything about this person why he has written this email. After that there was no contact nothing with this person and if I wanted to contact him except the email id that is come there is no phone number nothing and then even if you look at it in terms of presentability, use of capital letters.

For example this r should be capital, s should be capital, and then I would prefer a, here. So, my m should be capital letter and this I do not want in capital letters and then there is full stop indicating that the sentence is ending.

Now, he is not able to tell the purpose why he wrote and whether he really wanted to write it to me or somebody else it was not clear.

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Analyse the following situations, identify what is lacking and what can be improved:

- Sanjay has come to the instructor's office to request for course registration. After some discussion, and putting some conditions about attendance and discipline, the instructor agrees to take him in the course. He asks Sanjay to write an application and get his approval. Sanjay looks at the papers kept in the instructor's printer and asks him: "Give me a paper." After the instructor gives Sanjay a paper, Sanjay asks him; "Give me a pen." The instructor says: "Get out of my room, and I will not permit you to join my course!"
- Why did the instructor, who accepted to take Sanjay in his course, refused to take him later? Is the instructor justified in doing so? Did Sanjay know the reason for the instructor's change in behaviour? Will Sanjay be able to avoid this situation in future?

Let us look at some more examples and you can analyze the following situations identified one situation and you should tell me what is lacking and what can be improved. Now in places like IIT, we have this instructor that is the teacher offering a course and then the students have to request the teacher to take the course. It is purely up to the instructors prerogative, whether to all over student to take a course or not. So, these are some situations which I faced with some of my students, but I have changed the name slightly some modified situation I to make you understand how email is playing a role or how soft skills which are accompanying the email situation is playing a crucial role and you will understand what I mean by soft skills when I explained this.

Look at the situation, Sanjay has come to the instructors' office to request for course registration. That means, Sanjay wants instructor sign to do his course after some discussion and putting some conditions about attendance and discipline they instructor agrees to take in the course. He asks Sanjay see you should understand that before taking. So, here the instructors ask whether the student is really interested and then they allow. Allowing itself is a big thing for student because it is very difficult to get good courses.

So, Sanjay has got the course almost, the instructor decided to give him he ask Sanjay to write an application and get his approval. Sanjay looks at the papers kept in the instructors printer and asks him give me a paper. After the instructor give Sanjay a paper,

Sanjay ask him, Give me a pen. T he instructor says, Get out of my room, and I will not permit you to join my course.

Now, Why did the instructor, who accepted to take Sanjay in his course, refuse to take him later? Obviously, you know when he accepted he thought that he is planned well he has prepared and he also knows how to present by writing neatly, but even if you look at the request that this person is giving. So, he simply says give me a paper not please give me a paper sir it is not in request form it is like almost suggesting like a command lacking in soft skills.

So, he is at the receiving end, but then his commanding the other person to give it to him not only that first of all if he is going to ask for course, he should with the paper and pencil and then write the application himself which he failed to do. So, planning is not there, preparation is not there, present ability is not there.

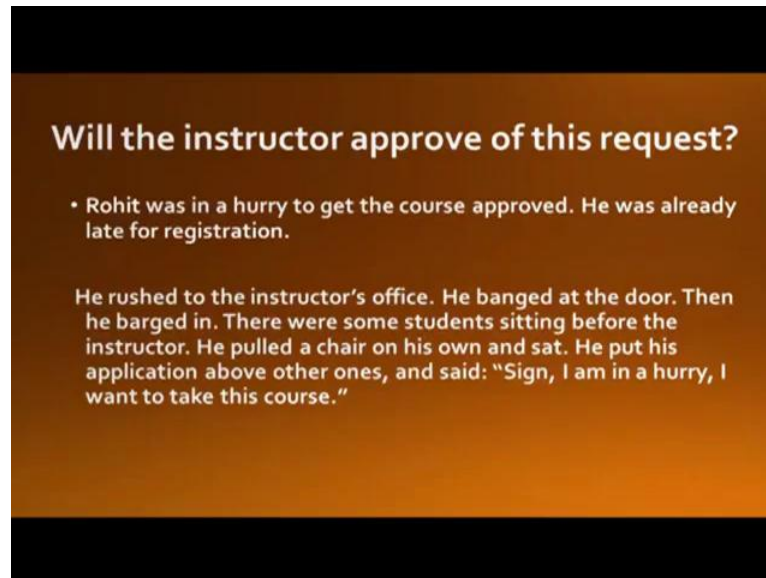
Now, he can persuade ok. So, he can say sir I am sorry, sir I really made a mistakes sir, please do not feel bad about what I have done, I apologize I will just coming in few minutes. So, you can go out, get another one, write neatly again, apologize and then tell the instructor that, he will not repeat that could have changed it that is what I mean by perseverance.

But if you look at the instructors' part, is the instructor justified in doing. So, now the answer is yes and no. So, if the instructor himself is not concerned about soft skills he is not justified if let us say if I am in the instructor shoes am playing his role and also want the student to learned soft skills. So, then I would rather make the student realize what mistake he did. Because the next question which I have ask this Sanjay know the reason for the instructor change in behavior, unless the instructor tells the person this is why I am angry people whom lacking soft skills will not even know what change the instructors behavior and especially if the person is not empathetic he will not understand why he is getting angry with me unnecessarily. Ok I just ask the paper if he wants he can give, but he is getting angry with me.

So, cannot he give me a paper, will Sanjay be able to avoid the situation in future, absolutely know, if he is not developing his soft skills, if he is not developing empathy, if he is not being told, if he is not creating self awareness, he cannot change. He will continue with same kind of mistake, he will continue to go to instructor without pen and

paper, he will continue to ask in commanding tone on the instructor will continue to talk to him like this unless a friend points out unless somebody tells him to change.

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Will the instructor approve of this request?

- Rohit was in a hurry to get the course approved. He was already late for registration.

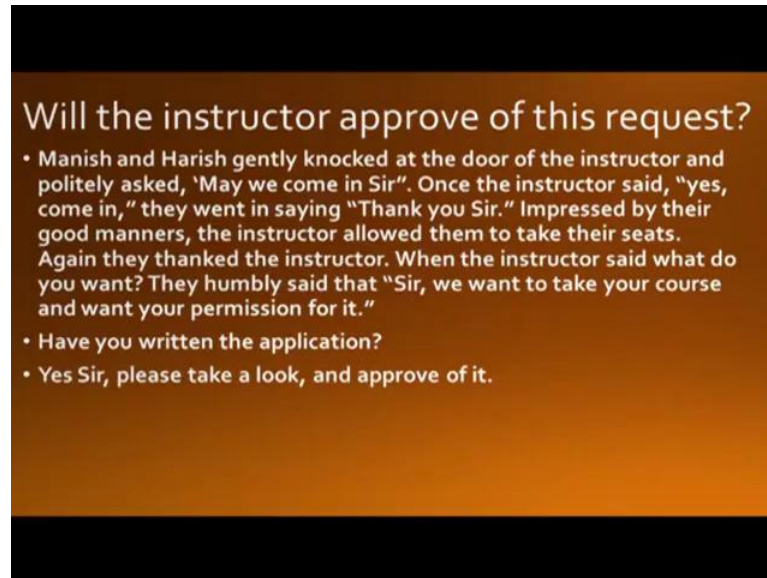
He rushed to the instructor's office. He banged at the door. Then he barged in. There were some students sitting before the instructor. He pulled a chair on his own and sat. He put his application above other ones, and said: "Sign, I am in a hurry, I want to take this course."

Let us look at more situations which will make it clear. Look at this one, and tell me whether the instructor will approve of this request, Rohit was in hurry to get the course approved. He was already late for registration. Now he rushes to the instructor's office. He banged at the door, and then he barged in. There were some students sitting before the instructor, he pulled a chair on his own and sat he put his application above other ones and said sign I am in hurry I want to take this course.

Now, if you look at it; obviously, will the instructor approve of this request no because his hurriedness show that he is not planned or prepared at all, and then even while going there he is not presenting himself in a proper manner. He is just banging which is not soft skills, which is showing that you are aggressive, you are rough uncivilized, barging in without requesting may I come in, is again showing your uncivilized behavior and then there was some students sitting, than you be in the queue. So, he rushed and then pull the chair and then sat and then he put his application above other once and then he is requesting, but then he is commanding and then instead of saying sir will you please sign on this I am in hurry that is why I want to get this done before, but am very much interested in your course I want to take this.

So, instead of putting this in polite manner the entire aggressive behavior the way in which he is presenting himself will again make the instructor disapprove this request also. No instructor is likely to allow him to take this course if he will behave like this.

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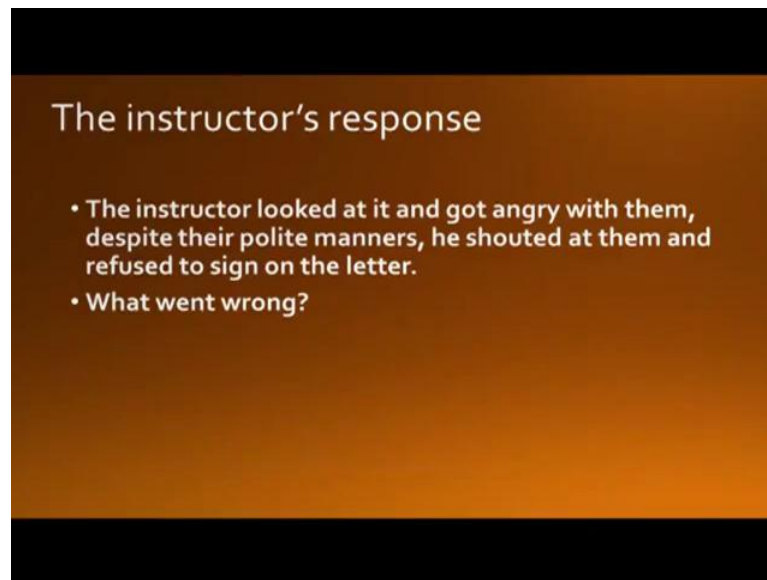
Will the instructor approve of this request?

- Manish and Harish gently knocked at the door of the instructor and politely asked, 'May we come in Sir'. Once the instructor said, "yes, come in," they went in saying "Thank you Sir." Impressed by their good manners, the instructor allowed them to take their seats. Again they thanked the instructor. When the instructor said what do you want? They humbly said that "Sir, we want to take your course and want your permission for it."
- Have you written the application?
- Yes Sir, please take a look, and approve of it.

Now, look at the next one. So, I said previous one they were the guy was lacking in soft skills. Now in this case Manish and Harish gently knocked at the door of the instructor. So, the gentleness is indicating that they are polite and politely ask may be come in Sir. This is really impressive very nicely presented. Once the instructor said yes come in, they went is saying Thank you Sir, again impressive. So, the instructor was also impressed. Impressed by their good manners, the instructor allowed them to take the seats. Again they thanked the instructor. when the instructor said what do you want? They humbly said that, Sir we want to take your course and want your permission for it. Have you written the application? The instructor asked. Yes Sir, please take look, and approve of it.

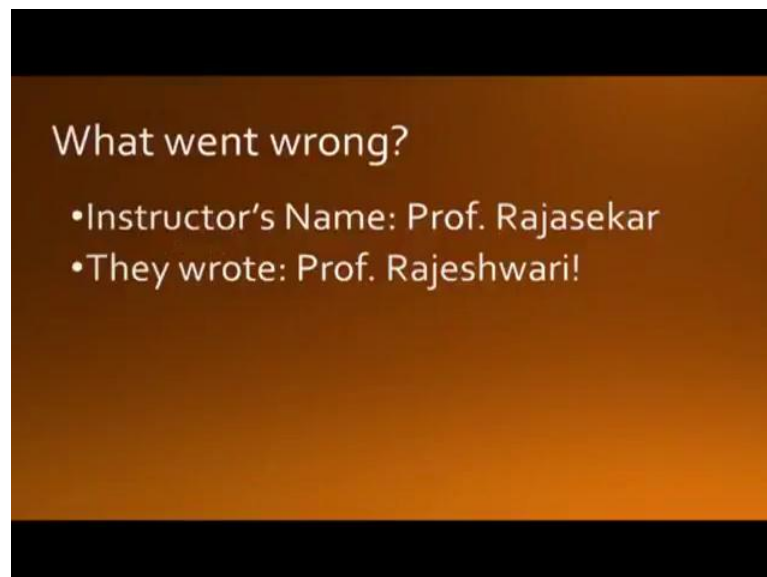
Now, at the outside it looks like they are very good in soft skills. They are planned, they are prepared, they are presenting in a nice manner, there even persevering by train to put the request politely will the instructor accept this, or if he is not accepting what could be the reason actually I am saying is not going to accept it why.

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Look at the reason, the instructors' response, the instructor looked at it and got angry with them, despite their polite manners he shouted at them and refused to sign on the letter. What went wrong? They were polite, they were having soft skills. So, all the qualities that I said were there, but what went wrong?

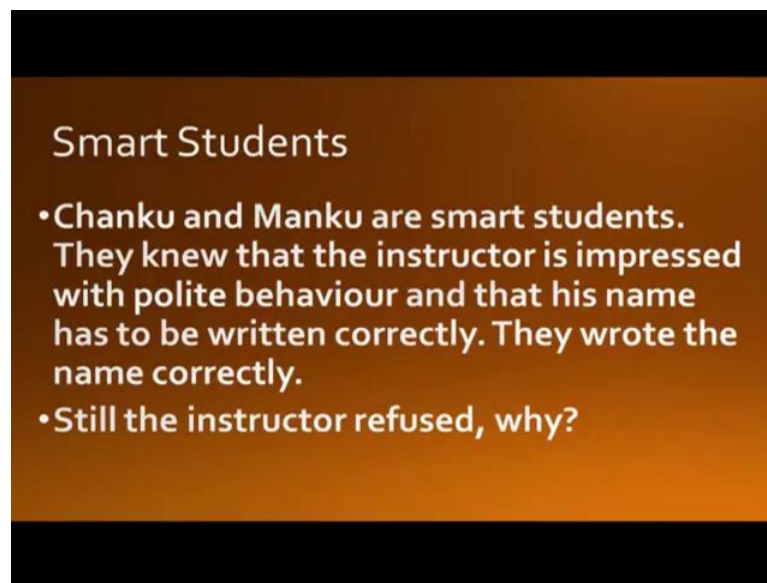
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What went wrong was this? The instructor's name is Prof. Rajasekar and they wrote Prof. Rajeshwari. Now Professor Rajeshwari and Rajasekar are working in the same department. So, they confused this person with the ladies name.

Now, the instructor got angry and then everything day went with planning, preparedness, presentability everything collapsed with this one small mistake. And completely revealed their planning is poor, the presentability is not relevant and then they were not really prepared they did not even know who is the instructor for this course. Is it Rajasekar or Rajeshwari. So, they had no idea. So, when they had no idea; obviously, the instructor got angry and he wants to not accept the request.

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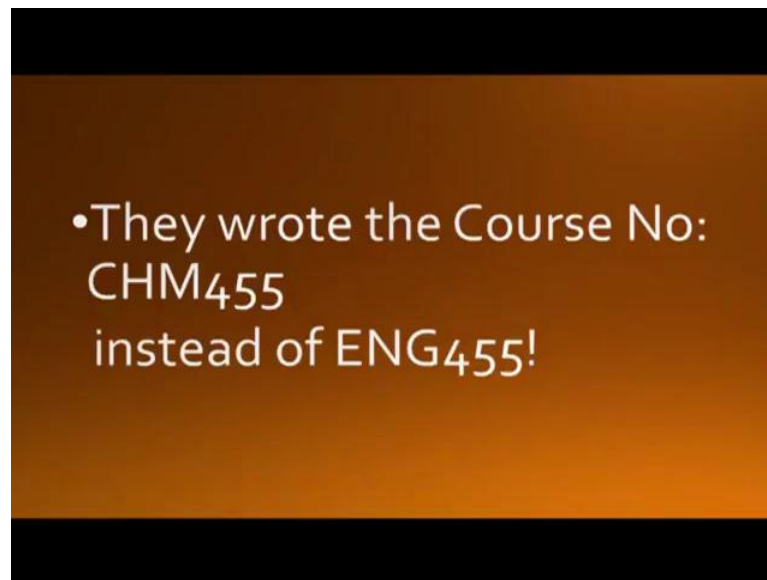


Smart Students

- **Chanku and Manku are smart students. They knew that the instructor is impressed with polite behaviour and that his name has to be written correctly. They wrote the name correctly.**
- **Still the instructor refused, why?**

Now, watching this there were 2 others smart students. So, they want to get the course some over other. So, this is Chanku and Manku. So, they are the smart students. They knew that the instructor is impressed with polite behavior and that his name has to be written correctly. So, they wrote the name correctly and then they went very politely they asked sir may we come in and all that. So, the instructor was also pleased.

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But at the end, still the instructor refused why. So, here they wrote the name correctly they had all the freezing mannerisms, but why did the instructor say no because they wrote the course number CHM455. So, CHM455 indicates the course in chemistry, instead of writing ENG455. So, they wanted the instructor to give this course in English and they went to the English instructor, but they wrote the course number wrongly this annoyed the instructor irritated again whatever did even including writing the instructors name correctly got defied completely dismissed by this another silly mistake.

So, this is what I mean by planning, preparedness, presentability and one small mistake you make everything collapses. Even though you might have developed good soft skills, it can go wrong. Let us look at one more situation before I conclude this and see whether you can improve the situation.

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Can you improve the situation?

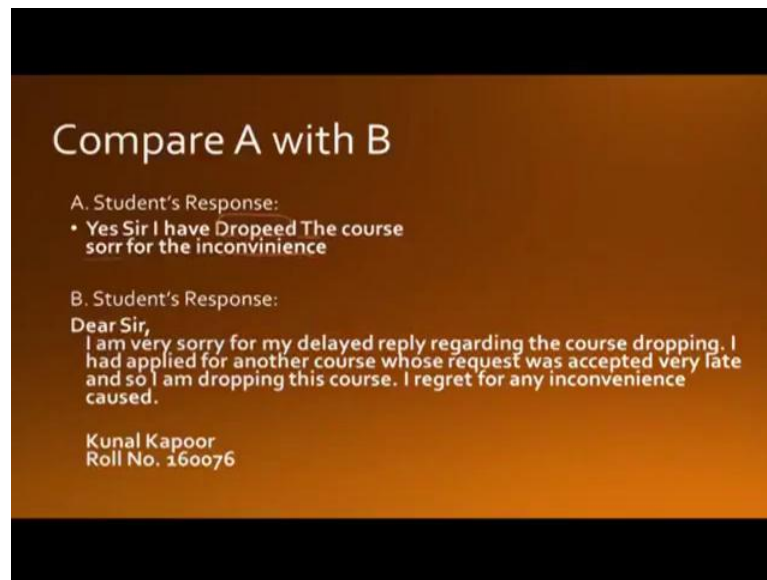
- With great difficulty some students got the course. Three of them dropped due to time-table clash. But none of them informed this to the instructor. When the instructor wrote to them, one of them replied as follows:
- Instructor's mail:
Dear Students:
Your names have not been finally registered. Let me know if you have dropped from the course. This will help me to give chance to other students in waiting. Please inform by e-mail immediately.

Warm Wishes,
Ravichandran
- **Student's Response:**
• Yes Sir I have Dropeed The course
sorr for the inconvinience

Now, finally, with great difficulty some students got the course, but 3 of them dropped due to time table clash they had other issues, but none of them inform this to the instructor, this is the bad thing. So, you got it with great difficulty and then you are just leaving it and then you need to tell the instructor. So, that those who are waiting can be given a chance when the instructor wrote to them one of them replied as follows: instructors mail is these he wrote Dear Students: your names have not been finally, registered.

Let me know if you have dropped from the course. This will help me to give chance to other students in waiting please inform by email immediately. So, warm wishes instructors name. Student responded like this yes Sir, I have dropped the course sorry for the inconvenience. Can you improve on the situation? Can you think that how better you can write a mail on the one hand it looks like out of the 3 students at least this student responded to the instructor but on the other hand its look like it is better than not to respond by giving a mail like this, bad in planning. So, bad in presentation and creates a very worst impression about you.

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Compare A with B

A. Student's Response:
• Yes Sir I have Dropeed The course
sorr for the inconvinience

B. Student's Response:
Dear Sir,
I am very sorry for my delayed reply regarding the course dropping. I had applied for another course whose request was accepted very late and so I am dropping this course. I regret for any inconvenience caused.

Kunal Kapoor
Roll No. 160076

Now, compare a with b. So, then will be able to understand what I mean by this student's response, Yes Sir fine I have Dropped. First of all d small letter and then p e e d, dropped single e there is no need for capital there, small t the course. Sorry, y is missing, for the inconvenience again another spelling mistake, there is no full stop, there is again written in this mobile kind of language SMS, texting kind of language which does not suit email when you write to somebody in a formal manner.

Now, look at another response from another student and compare and you will know the difference look at the second response. Dear Sir, now the previous person begins with the salutation this student begins with the Dear Sir. So, the even the angry person feels little bit reduced in anger. I am very sorry this again reduces the anger. Further or no response other I am very sorry for my delayed reply regarding the course dropping. So, yes said the fact clearly, it reduces the anger completely I had applied for another course he tells the reason why he is dropping whose request was accepted very late. So, it is not his fault, but the course request in the other one was acceptably.

So, I am dropping the course. I regret for any inconvenience caused. So, again he apologizes. So, I feel bad he says, if I had caused you any inconvenience. He writes the name, he gives the roll number. So, when you just suppose keep the bad one with a good one, you realize what I try to tell you in terms of the email principles that you should be following. all the five Ps that I discussed should be followed, but at the same time they

are not enough. They ought to be really governed by the basic principles; even things like spelling, grammar mistake, writing the number correctly, putting the salutation appropriately, these things are going to matter. So, that you keep in mind.

And then in the coming lecture am just going to highlight how not to send emails. Because before you learn how to send emails, it is important to unlearn your wrong learning by knowing first how not to send emails. My attempt in the course as you might have noted is to make you redo and undo. So, many of your learning's which have learnt wrongly and then imbibed as a bad habit in you and without even knowing that they have become bad habits and then you been using it for such a long time in advertently.

Now, my challenge is to unearth and make you unlearn those things and then make you learn these ones correctly. So, in the following lecture again I am going to give you bad emails or how not to end emails. Before, I go to the other 2 lectures on how to actually send good emails. What is the etiquette that you should be following?

Thank you for watching this video. I will get back to you in the next lecture, as how not to send mails.

Thank you once again.