Strategies for Professional Growth

Quiz 2 notes · Weeks 1–7 · built from the course slides, with what the 2022–2026 papers asked

1. Teamwork and Getting Along	TEAM · why teamwork · 9 challenges · **10 Cs of Teamwork**
2. Communication and Listening Skills	7 types · 5 barriers · **10 Cs of Communication** · listening
3. Presentation and Writing Skills	Professional communication · presentations · formal writing
4. Leadership Lessons	3 levels (18 lessons) · spheres · Gung Ho! · leadership styles
5. Emotional Intelligence and Conflict	**6R** · **Goleman's 5 constructs** · amygdala hijack · **Thomas–Kilmann**
6. Cross-cultural Understanding	Iceberg · stereotyping, ethnocentrism, parochialism · 4 stages · 4 dimensions · **5 strategies**
7. Fiscal and Economic Sense	Wealth mantra · inflation · returns (CAGR, real, tax, IRR, XIRR) · tax · balance sheet
8. Exam playbook	Paper pattern · written-answer template · repeated MCQs · one-page cheat sheet

> **How to use these notes.** Orange **PYQ** boxes show what past papers actually asked. Read every box marked ★ twice. Then do the cheat sheet on the last page and the model paper (*SPG_Model_Quiz2.html*).

Sources: SPG Week 1–7 slides (IIT Madras BS). Items marked "from PYQs" are tested in past papers but appear only briefly or not at all in the slides.

Week 1 · Teamwork and Getting Along

What is teamwork?

TEAM = Together Everyone Achieves More. Teamwork is collaboration by a group of people to achieve a **common purpose**. It often brings together people from different functions or departments, and a team should ideally consist of people with **complementary skills**.

Diverse teams are smarter: they keep biases in check and make members question their assumptions, but they need **inclusive practices** so that everyone feels heard (Rock & Grant, HBR 2016).

Why teamwork matters (10 points)

- Builds competitive advantage
- Saves time, energy, costs and resources
- Covers competency and skill gaps
- Improves workforce efficiency and productivity
- Inspires ideation, creativity and innovation
- Builds higher morale
- Peer learning and self-improvement
- Creates **synergy** (1 + 1 > 2)
- Enhances workplace experience
- Balances the needs and goals of the organization

Common challenges (9)

- Lack of honesty and trust
- Conflict and tension
- Comparison and competition
- Lack of transparency
- No long-term thinking
- Working in silos
- Lack of direction
- Lack of common goals
- Not managing the weakest link

★ The 10 Cs of Teamwork

C	What the slides say (use these words in answers)
1. Clarity	Align organization, team and individual on **vision, purpose, mission, core values**. Clear, well-defined **roles and responsibilities with accountability**, individual and shared goals, rules, processes, standards and policies.
2. Commitment	Clearly defined roles, shared vision and **SLAs (Service Level Agreements)**. Turn expectations into clear **written agreements** with outcomes, timelines and deliverables. Commitment is an **honour code**, "personal and internal". It makes you go the extra mile. Valuing members' contributions inspires commitment.
3. Communication	Create space to ask questions and give answers. Share ideas, experiences and best practices. Open, honest, **transparent** interaction. Clear guidelines for email, messages, meetings and **MOM**. Streamlined feedback, appraisals, escalation and follow-ups.
4. Competence	Core competence is getting along and working in harmony towards a shared goal. **Diverse, complementary** talents bridge gaps. Lead yourself: take responsibility, initiative and ownership, and contribute as a **team member, not an individual**. *Example: a NASCAR pit crew, where each member has a specific job.*
5. Collaboration	Generate ideas by **activating the team's collective talents**. Equal access to opportunities and resources. Exchange creative ideas **regardless of authority or hierarchy**. Collaborative leadership, shared tools, streamlined processes across locations.
6. Coordination	All about **convergent thinking**: converge on one or two ideas, then **plan, schedule, execute**. Integrate execution plans. Visibility of each other's progress. Assist and support peers.
7. Connection	Formal team building (self-worth, self-trust, mutual trust). Informal get-togethers. Cultivate empathy and caring. Guidance and support. Acknowledge milestones and successes.
8. Conflict Resolution	Clear rules for different types and severities of conflict. Well-defined **escalation and resolution mechanism**. Effective communication and listening. Preventive, proactive strategies.
9. Change Management	**Plan, initiate, control, stabilize** change. Two perspectives: **organizational** (top level, managerial) and **individual** (employee transition). Training to empower members. Link each role to the bigger picture. Manage resistance.
10. Continuous Improvement	Course correction through **feedback loops**. Learn, improvise, iterate, grow. Workshops and training. **Lean, iterative processes, tiny steps and tiny gains**. Surveys and assessments.

PYQ ★ Coordination vs collaboration (Jan 25, Sep 25 ET, Jan 26, May 26 ET): "Manager 1 splits the work and integrates the outputs; Manager 2's team brainstorms and refines together in real time." Answer: **first = coordination, second = collaboration.**
PYQ: continuous improvement vs change management (Jan 25): monthly retrospectives with small incremental changes = **continuous improvement**; a planned large shift = **change management**.
Written-answer PYQs: "Using any FOUR of the 10 Cs of Teamwork, design an intervention that restores psychological safety and trust" (May 26, 5 marks); "What should Rita have done to set clear teamwork norms?" (May 25, 5 marks).

Teams terms from PYQs: Synergy = combined output exceeds the sum of individual outputs · **Social loafing** = as team size increases, individual effort decreases · **Psychological safety** = a non-judgemental space to speak up, ask and admit mistakes · **Tuckman's stages**: forming → storming (conflict, competing for status) → norming → performing (→ adjourning) · Team types: functional, cross-functional, virtual, self-managed (no boss).

Week 2 · Communication and Listening Skills

"Communication is the understanding **not of the visible but of the invisible and hidden**." Hidden, symbolic elements in the culture give meaning to the visible process (Luthans). This line came up as a true/false question.

7 types of communication

Pair	Meaning
Inner vs Outer	Inner: unexpressed, inner chatter, thinking, imagining, feeling · Outer: expressed through speech or action
Personal vs Social	Personal: self, family, friends · Social/professional: community, workplace associates
Verbal vs Non-verbal	Verbal: spoken word · Non-verbal: gestures, body language, **paralingual** (tone, pitch)
Written vs Oral	Written: documents, agreements, reports, emails · Oral: spoken discussions, opinions
Internal vs External	Internal: within the team or organization · External: clients, vendors, other teams
Vertical vs Horizontal	Vertical: up and down the hierarchy · Horizontal: peers in the same team or across teams
Formal vs Informal	Formal: reports, briefings, MOM, feedback, appraisals · Informal: ad hoc chats over coffee or lunch

★ 5 barriers to communication

Barrier	Examples from the slides
Psychological	Inner chatter · preconceived notions · cognitive bias · lack of interest, attention or focus, boredom · emotional state (fear, anxiety, anger) · limiting beliefs
Language	Complex language · different languages · technical or domain jargon (= *semantic* barrier)
Cultural	Gestures, signs or words appropriate in one culture but inappropriate in another
Organizational	Hierarchy blocks free flow · complex structure causes distortion · no proper channels · official channels vs the **grapevine** should be clearly distinguished
Physical	Environment · acoustics and space · noise · physical things (and, in remote work, missing non-verbal cues)

PYQ: "Emails and chats lacked body language cues. Which barrier?" (May 25, 1 mark): a physical or medium barrier (no non-verbal cues). · A policy that gets distorted as it moves down the levels: **downward communication** distortion / organizational barrier. · Selective perception and confirmation bias = psychological barriers (Jan 25).

★ 10 Cs of Communication (bad → good)

C	Avoid	Do (with a slide example)
Clear	Wordy, vague, ambiguous, no specific message	Simple words, one specific message. "We updated Risk and Compliance policies."
Concise	Long, redundant, irrelevant detail	Short and essential only: "Mandatory COVID regulations: wear mask · sanitize · distance."
Concrete	Vague, general, no data ("sales are low")	Specific facts and figures: "Conversion is below 40%; aim for 50% next quarter."
Correct	Grammar or spelling errors, misrepresented data ("200–300 people")	Accurate grammar, language and data ("200 people registered")
Complete	Missing information, so questions arise ("shutdown tomorrow")	All data points: "2 p.m., Sat Feb 26, for 30 min, back up before then"
Consistent	No schedule; communicates only when there's a conflict	A regular communication schedule (a weekly update). Proactive and responsive; builds credibility
Confident	Nervous "umm, err", unprepared, tries too hard	Firm, assertive, prepared: "I need 2 days of leave on the 24th and 25th."
Creative	Monotonous	Humour, stories, quotes ("Once upon a time, an ant and a cricket...")
Courteous	Rude, hidden insults, passive-aggressive ("You always do things wrong")	Respectful, tactful, constructive: "There's some rework; let's go through it together."
Considerate	Self-centred, harsh ("I don't care how, get it done ASAP")	Empathise and ask for feedback: "First, I'd like to understand what challenges you face."

PYQ ★ The most-asked written framework: "Using any FIVE of the 10 Cs of Communication, evaluate the communication / choose the draft / say how a manager should deliver negative feedback" (Sep 25, Jan 26, May 26, all 5 marks). Pick the Cs the case *violates* (Courteous, Considerate, Concrete, Complete and Clear fit almost any feedback case), quote the line, then give the fix.

Listening skills (Shiva Subramaniam)

Listening = **reducing the noise in your head** and **seeing with your ears**. (Hearing is just the passive perception of sound. Listening is active attention to meaning.)

Passive listening	Active listening	Listening to the Future
Listen without interruption, to the whole person (voice, tone, body language). Acknowledge with "hmm" or nodding. **Used when the person is very distressed.**	Listen with animation and acknowledgement · **paraphrase** · ask for clarification · ask (open-ended) questions · **mirror emotions**	Listen for what the speaker **desires** · listen to help the speaker **move forward** · help the speaker build **hope and dreams**

PYQ: "Asks open-ended questions, paraphrases, notices non-verbal cues" = **active listening** (Sep 25 ET). · "Listening to the Future" options: desires ✓, move forward ✓, hope and dreams ✓; "judge experiences" ✗; "inner chatter" ✗. · May 26 written question: "Explain how listening differs from hearing..." (3 marks).

Week 3 · Presentation and Writing Skills

3.1 Communication in a professional setting

Why communicate at all?

- Share your input
- Get credit for your work
- Raise issues
- Provide feedback

Whom to communicate with

Find the **appropriate person** (a broken chair wheel goes to facilities, not to every senior leader).

Tone: polite, please

✗ "We do not provide accommodation." ✓ "We regret we're unable to... however, here are relevant contacts."

Length: aim for efficiency

Replace a long self-justifying paragraph with one clear request: "I missed the deadline due to official activity; please share the late-registration procedure."

Emails

- Choose recipients carefully; don't send to every senior person you can find
- Formal emails are **not** social media (no emojis or abbreviations); write complete sentences
- Structure: greeting → context → request → regards, name, roll number

Manager	Team you lead	Customer
Stay formal. Clear reports of work done and **projections** of what's coming. ✗ personal comments about people	Set **clear expectations and deadlines**. ✗ "fiery messages get people to work better"	"Be the service you'd like to see." Be clear and polite about what you can do; you represent the organization. ✗ arguing to win

Summary: communication is about the message and about you; it affects your organization and your career.

3.2 How to make a presentation

Setting: a "serious" activity where you're likely being evaluated, reporting a status or conveying an idea. It's repeatable, structured by the organization or event, interactive, with a specific audience each time.

Constraints: audience (seniority and purpose) and **duration** (very important professionally).

Outline = a structured list of the major headings or topics to be covered (★ PYQ ×3).

★ Connecting with your audience:

1. Repeat a summary slide from your previous presentation
2. Separate facts from opinions
3. Pause to enable decisions
4. Use familiar formats
5. Explain what is being shown and how to understand it
6. Special effects can be distracting

Don't read from a slide. Turn paragraphs into **keywords or short phrases** (the fuel-cell example). **Illustrations:** tables, graphs, photographs, drawings, schematics. Choose the right type, pay attention to detail (round off numbers, label axes), match the level of complexity to the audience, and convey a **sense of scale** (of the impact and of the object).

> **PYQs:** All 5 "connect with audience" points are correct (May 23) · Bullets should be **keywords or phrases** · Preventing misleading charts: **complete and consistent axis scales** (not 3-D, stacked or flashy colours) · Speaking with no pauses **reduces effectiveness**: it overwhelms listeners and gives key points no structure (May 26) · Team presentation: coordinate portions, agree durations, list all names, avoid duplicate content (all correct).

3.3 Writing skills in a professional setting

Why important: credit for your work; shaping organizational policy.
Why difficult: personal background, not knowing what's expected, "poor" examples.

Structure: Beginning (title, summary, introduction) → **Middle** (details and strategy: **chronological**, **spatial**, flow of variable) → **Ending** (summary and future perspective).

How to improve: understand the **purpose**; recognize the **structure**.
Purpose: to inform, to persuade, and to do both efficiently.

Language: correct word (speed vs velocity) · clear ("function", not "functionability") · concise ("now", not "at this point in time") · no arrogant phrases ("it is obvious") · define unusual terms.

> **PYQ:** Steps in sequence in a report = **chronological order** · Identify your audience so you can **adapt the writing to their needs** · A sloppy document sends a negative non-verbal message; a neat one improves readability.

Week 4 · Leadership Lessons

Lead Yourself from Within	Lead Yourself to Lead Others	Lead Others to Lead Themselves
1. Uphold your core values 2. Know your spheres of responsibility 3. Exercise your power of choice 4. Take responsibility / ownership for yourself 5. Play to your full potential 6. Invest in yourself	1. Cultivate a growth mindset 2. Manage your time and energy 3. Focus on the One Thing 4. Communicate effectively and listen actively 5. Be emotionally resilient 6. Embrace change 7. Manage conflict 8. Delegate effectively 9. Be a collaborative leader	1. Make work worthwhile and important (**Spirit of the Squirrel**) 2. Put individuals in charge of their goals (**Way of the Beaver**) 3. Cheer each other on (**Gift of the Goose**) *From Gung Ho! by Ken Blanchard & Sheldon Bowles*

Level 1: Lead yourself from within

- **Core values** are non-negotiable: a guiding compass for thoughts, plans, decisions and actions. Don't compromise them.
- **Power of choice:** you choose to say yes or no, explore possibilities, seek support and build a support system.
- **Ownership:** "Accept conditions as they exist, or accept responsibility for changing them" (Waitley).
- **Full potential:** put in 100%, play to your strengths, know your weaknesses, keep cultivating skills.
- **Invest in yourself:** value yourself, work on limiting beliefs, practise self-compassion, cultivate a positive, abundant, growth mindset.

★ Spheres of responsibility	
Sphere of Control	Within your control: your mind, body, potential, **time and energy**. Focus here to save time and mind space.
Sphere of Influence	Outside your control, **may concern you directly**. Find ways to influence when necessary (family, friends, peers, your manager, team behaviour).
Sphere of Concern / Interest	Outside your control, **affects you indirectly**. Find ways to respond (other groups, **the economy, war, pandemic, external events**).

PYQ: War, pandemic, economy = **concern** (asked 4+ times) · Persuading your manager to change a policy, or getting the team to submit on time = **influence** · Blocking focus hours or mindful breathing = **control** (May 26 ET) · Written question: "Explain spheres of control, influence and concern with your examples" (Sep 24, Jan 26).

Level 2: Lead yourself to lead others

- **Growth mindset:** overcome adversity, turn obstacles into opportunities, use words of power and positivity.
- **Time and energy:** to-do lists, prioritize, know your energy drainers and boosters, recharge regularly. **One Thing:** write goals down; one big goal drives the rest.
- **Communicate and listen:** words of power, body language, the power of silence and pause, solitude for creativity.
- **Emotionally resilient:** know your emotions and triggers, process and regulate them. **Embrace change:** expect it, monitor it, adapt quickly.
- **Manage conflict:** be clear on your non-negotiable values and learn to say NO; turn expectations into clear agreements; reframe your lens (drop bias); become your own inner coach.
- **Delegate:** pick team players; build trust and reliability; define roles; empower; **ensure psychological safety**.
- **Collaborative leader:** open, transparent and non-judgemental; equal access; **diverge (diverse ideas), then converge**; "Listen. Understand. Act."; collaborative tools.

Level 3: Lead others to lead themselves (Gung Ho!)

- **Squirrel: worthwhile work.** Squirrels gather nuts because it's important; they don't see it as hard work. Show the vision and the social value, not just the business value. **Values guide all actions; goals can go unmet, but values cannot.**

- **Beaver: in charge of their goals.** Each beaver knows what to do and does its part. Mark out the playing field (roles, rules), then empower. Listen, understand, act; stretch people beyond their abilities.
- **Goose: cheer each other on.** Geese honk to encourage the leaders in V-formation. **TRUE** praise = Timely, Responsive, Unconditional, Enthusiastic. Congratulations should be **Spontaneous, Individual, Specific, Unique**.

★ **Leadership styles (from PYQs, asked as 3-question sets): Task-oriented / job-centred** = protocols, exact methods, deadlines, targets, reports, benchmarks, incentives and accountability, planning alone. **People-oriented / employee-centred** = warm greetings, checking in personally, asking for ideas, team meetings, psychological safety, mentoring.
Also asked: **laissez-faire** = gives full freedom to decide · **managers** administer, maintain and focus on structure, while **leaders** innovate, develop and focus on people (True). · Written questions: "Characterize Anil's and Prath's leadership styles" (May 26, 2 marks); "Is Ritika's style appropriate for Arjun's experience level?" (Jan 26). Match the style to the follower's experience: directive for a novice, delegating for an expert.

Week 5 · Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Management

★ The 6R Framework of Emotional Intelligence

R	Meaning (from the slides)
1. Recognize	Identify emotions and their **triggers**. Ask yourself: What am I feeling? Where in my body (tightness, pain, lightness)? What's my energy (upbeat or drained)? Emotions show what's being said vs what's being meant.
2. Respect	Every emotion has a message; **there are no good or bad emotions**. Name it: "I am feeling angry." Honouring your emotions lets you honour others'. *PYQ: acknowledging the emotion without judgement.*
3. Rationalize	Thoughts and emotions influence each other. **Process the emotion instead of suppressing it.** Ask clarifying questions: Which thought is triggering this? What's the worst case? Is it absolutely or only conditionally true? Where can I channel this energy? *PYQ: investigate the triggers and objective facts.*
4. Release	Suppressed emotion is baggage that clouds perception and decisions. After rationalizing, let go of unwanted emotional energy **daily**.
5. Response-able	Take **responsibility** for your emotions and choose how to respond to stimuli. A poor response triggers an **amygdala hijack**: the primitive **flight–fright–fight–freeze** response. Repeated hijacks cause chronic stress and anxiety and harm health.
6. Resilient	Build self-knowledge; be kind to yourself; **carry lessons forward, not emotional baggage**. Resilience can be cultivated.

PYQ ★ Amygdala hijack (May 25, May 26): "reacting with sudden anger during a discussion and **regretting it later**", or "harshly berates her, later feels remorseful". It is NOT feeling tired or calmly disagreeing. · Meditation helps through **reduced amygdala reactivity and improved neuroplasticity** (Jan 26 ET).

★ Understanding EI: Daniel Goleman's 5 constructs

Construct	Meaning	Cues in a scenario
Self-awareness	Knowing your own emotions, strengths, weaknesses, triggers, biases and their effect on others	"Conscious of how his emotions affect decisions", "double-checks his biases", "attuned to gut feelings"
Self-regulation / management	Controlling or redirecting disruptive emotions; adapting	"Stays calm despite delays", "doesn't let frustration spill over", "manages stress"
Motivation / passion	Inner drive, optimism, persistence towards goals	"Passionate, goal-directed, optimistic and resilient after setbacks, seeks feedback to improve"
Empathy	Understanding other people's feelings and perspectives	"Listens to concerns, picks up unspoken cues, adjusts to their comfort; team feels understood"
Social skills	Managing relationships, persuading, collaborating	"Communicates persuasively with stakeholders, gets along well, fosters collaboration"

PYQ: 3-question EI construct sets (Sep 23, Sep 24, May 25) · Written: "Using five EI constructs, analyse the interaction between Ritika and Arjun" (Jan 26, 5 marks); "Use Goleman's five components to show how tone and authenticity build or erode trust" (Sep 25, 5 marks). Use one sentence per construct: what the person did → what they should have done. · Self-concept is **not** part of EI. · Being conscious of emotions = self-awareness (True).

★ Conflict management: Thomas–Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)

Two axes: **Assertiveness** (Y axis: satisfying your own concerns) and **Cooperativeness** (X axis: satisfying the other person's).

Competing (high assertiveness, low cooperativeness): win-lose, forcing. Use for urgent decisions or when relationships aren't the priority.	**Collaborating** (high, high): **win-win**. An important issue, enough time, both sides committed; co-create a solution.
Avoiding (low, low): withdraw or postpone. A trivial issue, low stake, or confronting would cost too much.	**Accommodating** (low assertiveness, high cooperativeness): yield to preserve a valuable relationship.

Compromising sits in the middle (medium, medium): each side gives up part of what it wants, reaching a mutually acceptable, partly satisfying solution. Some PYQs call it "negotiating".

PYQ ★ asked in 4 of the last 5 Quiz 2 papers. Typical set: a junior in a minor disagreement with a valued senior → **avoiding** · a decision needed before 5 p.m. despite objections → **competing/forcing** · two committed designers with time in hand → **collaborating** · yielding to a client's minor demand → **accommodating** · "Collaborating = win-win, high assertiveness and cooperativeness" · Written: "Identify Ritika's and Arjun's conflict styles" (Jan 26, 2 marks).

Week 6 · Cross-cultural Understanding and Personal Grooming

Culture = "a set of shared beliefs, values, norms and practices that characterizes an institution, organization or group." These are learned from earlier generations and passed on. **We are not born with a culture, we are born into it** and internalize it through socialization. Culture = beliefs + attitudes + values + assumptions + shared ways of doing things (all five).

★ The Iceberg Principle

Above water: what you see	Below water: hidden (most of the iceberg)
Language, dress, customs, food, traditions and festivals, artefacts, dining etiquette	Values, beliefs, attitudes to work, concepts of **privacy**, time, past and future, authority and hierarchy, notions of leadership, ideas of right and wrong, priorities in life, tempo of life

Stereotyping, ethnocentrism, parochialism

Stereotyping	"Mental files" for processing new information against past experience. It's natural and can simplify things; the **problem comes when you refuse to let new information in**. The issue isn't that stereotypes exist but how you use them.
Ethnocentrism	The belief that **one's own culture is better** than others. Combined with stereotyping, it is very destructive. *"Our system is objectively superior; local practices are inferior."*
Parochialism	Very **narrow outlook, not open to new perspectives**; focusing only on the local without considering the broader context (unaware that other ways exist).

Principles for dealing with other cultures: individuals may not fit stereotypes · not every difference is cultural · understand your own culture first · cultures fall on gradations, not extremes.

Cross-cultural intelligence: understand how cultures can differ · understand yourself · understand others · value different points of view · develop shared values, beliefs and norms.

Variables of culture (Dessler): national (economic, legal, political, technology) → cultural (values, norms, beliefs) → attitudes (work, time, materialism, individualism, change) → employee behaviour (motivation, commitment, productivity, ethics).

★ Dealing with cultural differences: 4 stages

I. Elation	II. Transition	III. Understanding	IV. Integration
Everything is new and exciting. "Wow! I love this place!"	Frustration, confusion, dissatisfaction, embarrassment. "The food is so bland."	Familiarity increases. "I'm beginning to understand the traffic rules."	Accept the differences and adapt. "I love sushi; I'll sign up for golf."

> Recent papers use these slide names. Older papers and the Kansal notes say Honeymoon, Frustration, Adjustment, Acceptance; if those appear as options, map them in the same order.

★ Dimensions of culture (the slides' own names)

Dimension	Meaning · India	Hofstede name
Collective or Individual (expression of identity)	Collective: extended family, loyalty, in-group, group decisions. Individual: self and immediate family, autonomy, individual decisions. **India: collective** (family decides names, schools, weddings)	Individualism vs collectivism ("I" vs "We")
Equal or Unequal (expression of authority)	Respect for parents, bosses and teachers; titles like "Sir". **India accepts unequal**	Power distance
Certainty or Ambiguity	Preference for rules and structure vs comfort with uncertainty. India constantly deals with ambiguity (traffic, schedules); monsoon cultures are more ambiguous	Uncertainty avoidance
Time is Scarce or Plentiful	Scarce: linear, every minute counts. Plentiful: cyclical, "there's always a tomorrow". **India: plentiful** (long weddings and festivals). These are attitudes, not punctuality values	(Long-term orientation is asked separately)

PYQs: Publicly rewarding one employee is seen poorly in Asia = **individualism vs collectivism** · Titles and deference = **Equal or Unequal / power distance** (May 26, Jan 25, Jan 26 ET) · A German partner insisting on SOPs and approvals = **uncertainty avoidance** (Sep 25) · **High-context** (indirect, relies on cues, India, Japan) vs **low-context** (explicit and written, Germany, USA), from Erin Meyer's *The Culture Map* (May 24, May 25, Jan 26 ET, May 26 ET).

★ Strategies for cultural creativity (Nancy Adler)

Strategy	Whose way?	Scenario cue
Cultural Dominance	My culture's way only	An HQ or acquirer **enforces** its system across branches despite differences
Cultural Accommodation	Their culture's way	Fully adopts the local system: "blends in", "embraces local customs"
Cultural Compromise	Partly mine, partly theirs	A **middle ground** where each side gives up something
Cultural Avoidance	Neither	Ignores the differences: "lets issues stay unresolved", "assumes things will settle"
Cultural Synergy	Both, combined into something **new**	"Combines German precision with Japanese kaizen and Indian adaptability" into a new model

Adler's case: in a US hospital, a Uruguayan doctor and a Filipino nurse misread each other over a procedure with a machine. The fix was a **synergistic solution**.

Personal grooming for the workplace: appropriate dress, hygiene, body language, punctuality and digital etiquette; first impressions matter.

Week 7 · Fiscal and Economic Sense

First things first: Health, Wealth, Relationships · make the best use of **time, money, energy, resources** · wealth flow: **cash inflows → cash outflows → investment options → return on investment**.

"Compound interest is the eighth wonder of the world. He who understands it, earns it; he who doesn't, pays it." Examples: Warren Buffett made most of his wealth after 50 (compounding); Oseola McCarty, a washerwoman, saved $150,000 and donated it. Boris Becker and Michael Jackson ended in debt despite earning huge sums.

Life cycle and wealth mantra

Life is a bell curve: wealth **creation → accumulation → maximization → distribution**. For employees, technology shortens earning years to about 25–28, so you may spend 20–30+ years in retirement. Small daily savings grow (₹5/day over 40 years).

★ The wealth mantra (personal finance checklist)

1. **Save before you spend** · 2. Keep an **emergency fund** · 3. Buy a **term insurance** policy · 4. Buy **health insurance** · 5. **Diversify** across asset classes · 6. Start investing for **retirement** · 7. Do **SIPs in mutual funds** for future goals · 8. Do tax planning in **April**, not March · 9. Make sense of existing investments · 10. **Write a will** if you own assets

Asset classes: money market/cash · fixed income/debt · gold · real estate · equity. **92% of returns come from proper asset allocation; only 8% from the investment vehicle.** Too much real estate hurts a portfolio. Build a portfolio by knowing yourself, diversification, risk vs reward, timing, and the role of an advisor. Plan each goal by **time, amount and risk appetite** ("no one gives a loan for retirement"). Mistakes: unplanned or ad hoc investments, tax-season insurance buying, herd mentality, taking loans too early.

★ Inflation: "the silent killer"

Inflation = a rise in prices, i.e. a **decline in purchasing power over time**. It's measured by the **CPI** (the "Big Mac index" is a fun alternative). Good: higher pay cheques, can help the economy grow, **helps borrowers**. Bad: higher expenses, too much hurts growth, **bad for lenders**. Food inflation in the slides' grocery example was above 10%. Over long periods it erodes returns: 9.6% CAGR minus about 8% inflation leaves very little.

> **PYQs:** "Too much money chasing too few goods" = **demand-pull inflation** (5+ papers) · Savings at 6% with inflation at 8% means purchasing power **decreases** · Inflation **erodes the purchasing power** of returns · "Silent killer" because the same money buys less over time.

★ Types of rate of return (slide 7.2)

Return	Formula / rule	Slide example
Absolute return	(Final − Initial) / Initial × 100. Ignores time. Use when the tenure is **under 1 year**	₹1,000 → ₹1,500 = 50%
CAGR / annualised	(Final/Initial)^(1/n) − 1. Use when the tenure is **over 1 year**. Assumes constant growth; no intermediate cash flows	House ₹25L → ₹1.25Cr over 20 yrs: absolute 400%, CAGR only ~8%
Effective return	More frequent compounding means a higher effective rate	8% FD: yearly ₹1,080 · half-yearly 1,081.6 · quarterly 1,082.4 · monthly 1,083
Tax-adjusted return	Nominal × (1 − tax rate)	₹1L FD at 10% with 30% tax: ₹10,000 − ₹3,000 = **7%**
Real return (inflation-adjusted)	(1 + return) / (1 + inflation) − 1 (rough: return − inflation)	12% return, 7% inflation: 1.12/1.07 − 1 = **4.67%**
Real tax-adjusted	Apply tax first, then inflation	8.05% bond at 30% tax = 5.635%; with 7% inflation, real ≈ −1.3%
IRR	The discount rate at which the PV of inflows = PV of outflows. For **periodic** cash flows. Excel: =IRR(values)	Pay ₹50,000, receive ₹15,000 × 5 yrs: IRR = 15.24%. Insurance policy: 5.74%
XIRR	IRR for cash flows at **irregular dates** (SIPs, partial redemptions). Needs dates. =XIRR(values, dates)	Use it to review a mutual fund or real estate portfolio

Extra calculation tools from PYQs: Rule of 72: years to double ≈ 72 ÷ rate (8% → 9 yrs; 12% → 6 yrs) · Future cost = P(1+i)^n (₹1L at 15% for 5 yrs ≈ ₹2.01L) · CAGR ₹50k → ₹75k in 3 yrs ≈ 14.47% · Compound doubling in 4 yrs means 8× in **12 yrs** · **IRR vs CAGR:** IRR considers the timing and size of intermediate cash flows; CAGR doesn't · A project with uneven yearly returns: use **IRR**.

★ Income tax: 5 heads of income

1. Salaries · 2. Business or profession · 3. **House property** · 4. **Capital gains** · 5. **Other sources** (dividends, interest). *Agricultural income is not a head; it's exempt.* Old vs new regime: the new regime has lower slab rates but removes about 70 deductions, so the better choice depends on your situation. **Finance Bill 2023 made the new regime the default** (you can still opt for the old one). Under the old regime, **Section 80C allows up to ₹1.5 lakh** (PPF, ELSS, life insurance premium, home-loan principal, tax-saver FD). A regular FD is not a tax-saving investment.

★ Income statement and balance sheet

Income statement = income − expenses, giving the monthly cash flow (net pay = gross pay − deductions).
Balance sheet = **assets** (what we own: financial + physical) vs **liabilities** (what we owe).
Net worth = Assets − Liabilities (= owner's equity: what's left after selling all assets and paying all debts).
Track growth in net worth: absolute, percentage, after inflation and after taxes.

Assets: cash, bank, FD, RD, investments, insurance cash value, property, automobiles, loans receivable.
Liabilities: credit cards, mortgage, personal debts, auto loans, unpaid taxes, insurance commitments.
Slide example: assets $570,500 − liabilities $201,500 = **net worth $369,000**.

PYQ balance-sheet logic: Buying a car or laptop with a loan: assets ↑ and liabilities ↑ by the same amount, so **net worth is unchanged** · Selling stocks to buy a mutual fund: **unchanged** (swapping assets) · Taking a loan without buying an asset: net worth ↓ when the money is spent · Home appliances = **depreciating personal assets** · ₹5 Cr net worth with ₹4.5 Cr in land, ₹10L liquid and a planned ₹40L loan = a **liquidity deficit** · Liquidity: cash > savings > liquid fund > FD > property.

Other fiscal PYQs: Opportunity cost = the value of the **next best alternative forgone** · Mutual funds can hold stocks, gold ETFs, government and corporate bonds, debentures (all) · Debt funds invest in **bonds and T-bills** · Riskiest asset: **cryptocurrency** · "Savings accounts are great long-term investments" = **False** · Risk and return order: cash < debt < property < equity · Diversification **minimizes risk** but doesn't maximize returns · Rent and EMIs = fixed expenses · Term insurance = protection, not investment · Sovereign Gold Bonds = a tax-efficient way to hold gold · Employee vs entrepreneur: entrepreneurs take **calculated risks** and must manage all 7 business functions.

Exam Playbook · Quiz 2

Paper pattern (May 2025 – May 2026)

Section	What to expect
A · Written answers (≈15 marks)	One case with two characters, then 4 questions: two at **5 marks (about 100 words)** where you apply a framework, and two at **2–3 marks (50–75 words)** where you identify something (leadership style, conflict mode, barrier, listening vs hearing).
B · MCQs (≈15 × 1 mark)	About 5 fiscal · 3–5 culture · 2–4 EI · 2 conflict · plus teams, communication and presentations. Many come as 2–3 question scenario sets.

★ Written-answer template (no framework = zero marks)

1. **Name the framework** in the first line: "Using the 10 Cs of Communication…"
2. **Apply 4–5 components**, each as one sentence: component → what the character did (quote the case) → the fix.
3. **Close** with one line on the outcome (trust, morale, psychological safety, performance).
4. Stay within the word limit. Bold or capitalize the component names so the grader can spot them.

Framework	Asked in written answers	Have ready
10 Cs of Communication	Sep 25 · Jan 26 · May 26 (and May 25 indirectly)	Courteous, Considerate, Concrete, Complete, Clear
Goleman's 5 EI constructs	Sep 25 · Jan 26	All five, one line each
10 Cs of Teamwork	May 25 · May 26	Clarity, Commitment, Communication, Connection, Conflict Resolution
Leadership style	Jan 26 · May 26	Task vs people; match the style to the follower's experience
Thomas–Kilmann	Jan 26	Name both people's modes and their axes
Culture shock · context · barriers · listening	May 25 · May 26	The 4 stages; high vs low context; 5 barriers

Most-repeated MCQ answers

Sphere of concern	War, pandemic, economy	TKI axes	Assertiveness × cooperativeness
Demand-pull inflation	Too much money, too few goods	6% interest, 8% inflation	Purchasing power falls
Owner's equity	Assets − liabilities after liquidation	Asset bought with a loan	Net worth unchanged
Coordination vs collaboration	Split and integrate vs co-create	Amygdala hijack	Sudden anger, regretted later
Iceberg: visible	Food, dress, language, festivals	Iceberg: hidden	Privacy, time, values, work attitudes
Outline	Structured list of main topics	Misleading charts	Use consistent axis scales
Gardner's MI "can't be developed"	FALSE	IRR vs CAGR	IRR includes intermediate flows
Ethnocentrism	"Our way is superior"	Parochialism	Narrow, unaware of others
Synergy (culture)	Combine into something new	Compromise (culture)	Middle ground
Self-regulation	Stays calm under pressure	Empathy	Picks up unspoken cues

One-page cheat sheet

Topic	Remember
10 Cs of Teamwork	Clarity · Commitment · Communication · Competence · Collaboration · Coordination · Connection · Conflict Resolution · Change Mgmt · Continuous Improvement
10 Cs of Communication	Clear · Concise · Concrete · Correct · Complete · Consistent · Confident · Creative · Courteous · Considerate
5 barriers	Psychological · Language · Cultural · Organizational · Physical
Listening	Passive (distressed speaker) · Active (paraphrase, clarify, mirror) · Future (desires, move forward, hopes)
Presentation	Constraints: audience and duration · Connect: summary slide, facts vs opinions, pause, familiar formats, explain visuals
Writing	Inform and persuade efficiently · Beginning (title, summary, intro) → Middle (chronological or spatial) → Ending (summary, future)
Leadership	Self → others → others lead themselves · Spheres: control / influence / concern · Squirrel, Beaver, Goose · Task vs people
6R	Recognize · Respect · Rationalize · Release · Response-able · Resilient
Goleman	Self-awareness · Self-regulation · Motivation · Empathy · Social skills
TKI	Competing (H,L) · Collaborating (H,H) · Compromising (M,M) · Avoiding (L,L) · Accommodating (L,H)
Culture	Iceberg · Stereotyping / Ethnocentrism / Parochialism · Elation → Transition → Understanding → Integration
Dimensions	Collective or Individual · Equal or Unequal · Certainty or Ambiguity · Time Scarce or Plentiful (India: collective, unequal, ambiguous, plentiful)
Strategies	Dominance (mine) · Accommodation (theirs) · Compromise (middle) · Avoidance (neither) · Synergy (new blend)
Returns	Absolute (<1 yr) · CAGR (>1 yr) · Tax-adj = r(1−t) · Real = (1+r)/(1+i) − 1 · IRR (periodic) · XIRR (irregular dates) · Rule of 72
Tax and balance sheet	5 heads: Salary, Business, House property, Capital gains, Other · New regime is the default · 80C ₹1.5L · Net worth = Assets − Liabilities