

## **Speaking and Presentation Skills are essential to make an impact and assert oneself. A Brief Study with reference to the Ramayana**

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### **Abstract**

The Ramayana, one of the greatest Hindu epics of Indian mythologies is very popular among the Hindus. Though it represents familial bonds, as well as ethics and values, it provides many communication skills which are necessary to imbibe in the students of the current generation. Many characters in that epic perform speaking skills which are their inborn skill without any practice by trainers. Though Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, Hanuman, and Ravana are the major characters the minor characters like Jatayu (a bird) presents his speaking skills which is a role model for all ages to remember its artful speaking at the time of adversity. While Sita was a captive of the Demon King Ravana, Hanuman, the who was the loyal devotee of lord Rama identified Sita in the kingdom of Ravana presented his speaking skills to convince Sita that he was the messenger of her devoted husband Rama. While Sita was being carried by Ravana she spoke to Rama, the central character, with clarity of expression without any hesitation. His art of speaking while communicating with Rama is praised by one and all. Here my primary aim is to explore the speaking skills as well as presentation skills in the Ramayana with special reference to Hanuman, one of the round characters of the epic.

### **Introduction**

In the Hindu epic Ramayana, Jatayu is the younger son of Aruna. His brother, Sampati, is a demi-god who has the form of a vulture and was an old friend of Dasharatha (Rama's father). When Jatayu sees Ravana abducting Sita, he tries to rescue Sita from Ravana. Jatayu fought valiantly with Ravana, but as he was very old Ravana soon got the better of him. Jatayu and his brother Sampati, when young, used to compete as to who could fly higher. On one such instance, Jatayu flew so high that he was about to get seared by the sun's flames. Sampati saved his brother by spreading his own wings and thus shielding Jatayu from the hot flames. In the

process, Sampati himself got injured and lost his wings. As a result, Sampati lived wingless for the rest of his life.

While Jatayu was wounded and lying on the ground when Lord Rama arrived, Lord Rama sensed the result and decided that Jatayu gets moksha. Jatayu consoles the distraught Rama and reassures Him that no harm will come to Sita and that very soon she will be restored to them. Rama is as much overwhelmed by grief as by a surging sense of affection and gratitude and embraces Jatayu. He asks Jatayu to be comfortable and blesses the bird. Rama says that the grief of seeing Jatayu pass away is greater than the loss of Sita. He considers Jatayu as equal to His father and proceeds to do the final rites for the bird. All along Rama had shown Himself as a human being in this avatar, but in this context, He forgets Himself and by His Sankalpa and supremacy, Lord Rama then slammed an arrow into the ground to call all seven sacred rivers, called Teertha. Six rivers' waters arrived, one river water failing to obey Lord Rama's call. Since Lord Rama was himself an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, He forced the Gaya Teertha to arrive at the spot.

Rama is the hero of the holy epic Ramayana which the title represents his movement from Ayodhya to Lanka as well as the principles he followed. Rama's speech pattern is described as Srutha Bhashi (One who always spoke TRUTH), Hitha Bhashi (One who speaks pleasant things to hear), Mitha Bhashi (Spoke very limited, as per the need) and Purva Bhashi (One who initiates the conversation, without waiting for others to begin a dialogue).

Aims:

- 1.To identify the speaking and presentation skills in the Ramayana
- 2.To identify the leadership qualities in the Ramayana

## Discussion

When it comes to speaking and presentation skills, drawing inspiration from characters in ancient literature, such as Hanuman from the Ramayana, can offer valuable insights. Hanuman, a central figure in the Hindu epic Ramayana, is revered for his unwavering devotion, courage, and eloquence. Here are some key aspects of speaking and presentation skills that one can learn from the character of Hanuman: While the Ramayana is primarily an ancient Indian epic that narrates the life of Prince Rama and his quest to rescue his wife Sita from the demon king Ravana, it does offer insights into effective communication, leadership, and presentation skills. Here's a brief study with reference to the Ramayana: Hanuman, a mighty minister of monkeys'

king Sugriva appears in Ramayana for the first time in Kishkindha Kanda- the fourth part of Ramayana. He is the leading character and hero in Sundara Kanda. Lord Rama with his younger brother Lakshmana in search of his wife who was abducted by monsters' king Ravana enters the surroundings of Rishyamuk Mountain. There, in the nearby precincts of Kishkindha, King Sugriva was living in exile. Being afraid of his elder brother Vali, Sugriva thought that, perhaps, they came there at the instance of Vali to kill him. Also Read - A Devotee's View of Hanuman. Hanuman having understood the anxiety of Sugriva pacifies him with his typical communication dialogue, "if a king of your stature and caliber loses his reason, logic, wisdom, intellect and integrity then how can he save his people? Do not form opinions merely on face value". The immediate reaction of Sugriva was to deploy Hanuman as his emissary to elicit information about Rama and Lakshmana. Also Read - Improving Leadership Culture Hanuman on reaching Rama, in his own typical style conversed with the brothers. "My lords! Who you are? Why did you come here? By looks you seem to be king sages or gods". His communication to Rama and Lakshmana was so interesting that they were spell bound all the time without interrupting. Hanuman revealed his name and who he was and mentioned about his king Sugriva including how Vali his elder brother driven away Sugriva from the kingdom. Also Read - Staggering distortions of Adi Kavya in Adi Purush Rama was pleased and told Lakshmana, "Hanuman appears to be an expert and exponent of grammar. Despite continuous communication there is no single aberration in his words. He did not utter even one single out of context word. Anyone who listens to him will automatically become his admirer. He is a true, devout, and committed emissary". On reaching Sugriva, introducing Rama to Sugriva, Hanuman used all his communication skills and put all information about Rama in right perspective. "He is personification of truth, bravery, courage, divinity and what not. Since his wife was abducted by Ravana, in search of her, soliciting your friendship, he came here with his brother. You better go to him and worship him". Ultimately the bond of friendship between Rama and Sugriva developed. Also Read - Adipurush: Makers in thought of changing few dialogues of Hanuman! After Sugriva's elder brother King Vali was killed by Rama during a duel between the brothers, Vali's wife Tara fell into deep sorrow and was crying incessantly. Hanuman consoling her said, "Past is past. What you are supposed to do now is not cry but plan. Your son Angad, who is still a boy, needs to be taken care of and it's your responsibility totally". Later Lord Rama performed the coronation ceremony of Sugriva making him Monkey King of Kishkindha. When Hanuman felt that Sugriva forgotten the responsibility of searching

Sita, decided to caution him. Accordingly, he told Sugriva "Oh! King of Monkeys! You acquired prosperity, wealth, and the kingdom. Your friend's work is yet to be accomplished. It's better that you immediately initiate efforts to do the work entrusted to you by your friend. You send monkeys in all directions to search for Sita. It's already delayed. Better you fulfil your promise". On hearing Hanuman Sugriva jumped into action and sent monkey warriors to all directions. Towards southern side Hanuman with his team was asked to go. Rama took out his golden ring and passed on to Hanuman to show it to Sita as and when he would be able to see her. Hanuman shouldered the responsibility on the advice of Sampathi, monkeys reached the Ocean side to cross it and go to Lanka. Hanuman plunges into action and burgeons his body multiple times as a show of strength to cross the Ocean. Hanuman moved towards the mountain Mahindradi on his way to Lanka in search of Sita. Here the communication of Hanuman to his fellow monkey heroes exhibits his confidence in him and enthuses others. On reaching Lanka, Hanuman plans to enter the city but is obstructed by Lankhini the chief sentry who questions his credentials. Unperturbed, Hanuman says to her that, he came to see the beautiful Lanka which is shining with its army, ramparts, and domes as well as houses. When she did not accept, he outwits her with a big hit forcing her to request him to save her. Later he is allowed to go in and wander as he liked to search Sita. Hanuman searches in the whole of Lanka for Sita and sees her in Ashoka Garden. Hanuman decided to communicate to Sita all the details of Rama so that she would recognize and believe him. He moved on to the top of the branch of the tree and started speaking loudly so that Sita would be able to hear and receive the communication well. Hanuman by starting with the name of Dasarath, attracts the attention of Sita. Having succeeded he proceeds further. Then Hanuman mentions about Dasharatha's elder son Rama, his qualities, his valor, his omniscience, omnipotence, omnivorous characteristics etc. Having heard her husband's name, she becomes more interested. Then Hanuman starts mentioning from Rama's entering forest till Sugriva entrusting the work of Sita's search. He concluded by saying that "I am fortunate that I am one among those who are searching for Sita, could find her here". After gaining confidence that Sita is steadily believing him, Hanuman gets down from the tree branch and conversed with her to confirm that she was Sita. This provokes Hanuman to reveal to Sita the purpose of his coming there. Here again Hanuman used all his communication skills by praising Rama and his qualities. He said that Rama, with such great qualities sent him as his emissary to find out where Sita was. In a bid to resolve doubt in her mind Sita questions Hanuman to explain in detail as to how he became a

friend of Rama and describe the body features of Rama and Lakshmana. This in fact was a typical question Sita put to Hanuman and his reply was again a great example of his communication skill. On taking leave from Sita, Hanuman wanted to have a look at the whole of Lanka for which he decides to wage a war against Ravana's supporters. He does so and finally voluntarily surrender in a bid to reach Ravana. Hanuman spoke few words, typical of his communication skills, to Ravana. "At the behest of King Sugriva, I am here to see you and your Lanka. I saw Sita in your Lanka. (Hanuman did not tell Ravana that he abducted Sita, but categorically mentioned that she is illegally in his custody, which again is a communication skill). You, who literally studied all pious literature, should not indulge in troubling women like this. This will lead to annihilation of your kith and kin and entire kingdom. No one can face Rama in the war. Handover Sita to Rama". On returning to Kishkindha the way he revealed the presence of Sita in Lanka to Rama is again an embodiment of communication skills. Impressed with the way Hanuman, communicated Lord Rama admires the communication capabilities of Hanuman. In the 7 or 8 slokas, Lord Rama explains the important aspects of communication skills of Hanuman, that impressed him most. They are: 1. Hanuman spoke very briefly. Not too long or too short. He spoke only for the required level. 2. He also spoke with clarity and without ambiguity. 3. He spoke without any grammatical errors. 4. He used only appropriate words, that cannot be replaced with any other word. 5. He spoke in a medium voice that was audible to the other person. Not too loud or too feeble. 6. His pronunciation of words was correct. The way he was pronouncing the words was like music and it was pleasant. 7. All the words spoken by him, went to the heart straight.

While we are discussing about the first meeting between Ram and Hanuman, we should not make haste to run the story forward but need to investigate some other aspects of this incident. The most important aspect I have noticed is the art of communication. While Ram Charit Manas doesn't speak much about this aspect, Valmiki Ramayana has thrown bright light on it. In the third section (sarg) of Kishkindha Kand of Ramayana, Maharshi Valmiki has highlighted Hanuman's art of communication. Look at shlok-27 & 28 of this sarg, where Shri Ram advising his younger brother Laxman to interact with Hanuman:

“Tamabhyabhap Saumitrey Sugreevsachivam kapim.

Vakyagyam madhurervakye: snehyuktarmarandam.(27)

NanRugvedvineetasy NaYajurveddharin:

NaSamvedvidush: shakyaamevam prabhaashitum. (28)

(Meaning: “O Laxman, please interact with Hanuman, who is not only the minister of Sugreev, but he is a brave person who has destroyed all his enemies. The way he has been talking to us is not possible for anyone who has have the deepest study and knowledge of three major Veds (namely- Rigved, Yajurved, and Samved).

Further, in shloka 29 to 33, Maharshi Valmiki has described the qualities of the art of communication through Ram, where Ram appreciate the communication skill of Hanuman and tells Laxman about the qualities of Hanuman’s communication skill:

1. Complete knowledge of grammar, so the spoken language has no flaws.
2. Complete synchronization in eyes, forehead, eyebrows, and other parts of body when you speak.
3. Length of speech should be balanced, meaning it should neither be very lengthy that the listener gets distracted, nor it should be so brief that listener cannot understand what you want to say.
4. While speaking, the speed should neither be fast nor very slow.
5. Vocal performance should be of high quality, means the voice should come from the heart and throat. (Means it should not sound gimmicky or artificial. It should sound genuine).
6. Your voice should be normal and ear-loving. It should give a feeling like the voice is coming from chest-throat and head. Such a sound would convert your enemy into a friend.

Finally, Ram says to Laxman that if any King has a minister like Hanuman, he will be successful in all his endeavors (shlok 34 Valmiki Ramayan, Kishkindha Kand, sarg-3):

“Evamvidho yasy dooto na bhavetparthivasy tu.

Sidhyanti hi katham tasy karyaanam gatayoanagh.”

Hanuman’s communication prowess teaches us the importance of considering what, how, and how much we communicate in different places, situations, and projects. Undoubtedly, Hanuman stands as one of the most exceptional communicators of all time, and we can learn valuable lessons from his expertise.

In the Ramayana, Jatayu is a vulture and a loyal friend of King Dasharatha. Jatayu plays a significant role in the epic when he encounters Ravana, the demon king, as Ravana abducts Sita. Jatayu tries to rescue Sita but is ultimately overpowered by Ravana. While Jatayu is not known for his speaking skills in the same way as some other characters like Hanuman or Rama, his actions and attempt to protect Sita convey a sense of bravery, loyalty, and determination. Here are a few aspects related to Jatayu's "speaking" role in the Ramayana. Jatayu’s attempt to rescue Sita showcases his bravery and dedication to Dharma (righteousness). Although he

knows he is not as powerful as Ravana, he courageously confronts the demon king to protect Sita which is the quality of leader. Jatayu's actions speak louder than words. His attempt to save Sita is a powerful statement about his character and loyalty. In this way, Jatayu communicates his commitment to duty and friendship through his brave act.

## **Findings**

Hanuman played a very important role in the epic of Ramayana. Hanuman protects people from debacles. Let us learn some life management skills from Lord Hanuman.

1. Mastering Communication Skills – From the incidents of Ramayana, we can note that Lord Hanuman met Sita first in Ashok Vatika. Sita was not able to recognize him immediately. But with Hanuman's remarkable communication skills he could assure Sita that he is the only messenger of Lord Rama. Therefore, speaking and presentation skills are essential to make an impact and assert oneself.

2. Never Compromise on Your Ideals – In Lanka in Ashok Vatika when there was a war between Hanuman and Meghnath. Meghnath displayed the power of "Brahmastra" to defeat the enemy. Hanuman could have broken the "Brahmastra" but he did not do it because he did not want to lessen its importance. Here Lord Hanuman teaches us we should not compromise over our ideals.

3. Leadership and Persuasion: Rama's ability to inspire and lead is evident in his ability to persuade Hanuman to search for Sita. His leadership style is based on respect and persuasion rather than force. While Hanuman was constructing the bridge in the sea it was his organizational and leadership skills that could motivate the mischievous monkeys in getting the task done. During Ram-Ravan war, Hanuman managed the whole army of monkeys with his brilliance.

4. Lesson in Loyalty:

Jatayu's loyalty to Rama's father, King Dasharatha, and his attempt to protect Sita highlight the theme of loyalty in the epic. Even though Jatayu is not successful in saving Sita, his loyalty is evident in his unwavering commitment to duty.

5. Clarity of Expression:

Hanuman was known for his clear and articulate speech. When he spoke, his words were precise and easily understood. In your presentations, strive for clarity by organizing your



thoughts beforehand and delivering your message in a structured manner. Avoid unnecessary jargon and ensure that your audience can follow your ideas seamlessly.

#### 6. Passion and Enthusiasm:

Hanuman's devotion to Lord Rama was characterized by boundless passion and enthusiasm. When presenting, infuse your speech with genuine enthusiasm for your topic. Passion is contagious and can capture the attention of your audience, making your presentation more memorable.

#### 7. Tailoring the Message to the Audience:

Hanuman tailored his message to his audience. When he spoke to Lord Rama, he conveyed his unwavering devotion, and when he addressed Sita, he reassured her with words of comfort. Similarly, adapt your communication style to suit your audience. Consider their interests, needs, and level of understanding to make your message resonate with them.

#### 8. Storytelling:

The Ramayana itself is a narrative, and Hanuman's role often involved storytelling. Use storytelling techniques in your presentations to make your content more engaging and relatable. Personal anecdotes or relevant examples can help your audience connect with your message on a deeper level.

#### 9. Resilience in Communication:

Hanuman faced numerous challenges and adversities, yet he remained resilient. In presentations, be prepared for unexpected questions or challenges. Maintain composure, address concerns gracefully, and adapt your communication as needed. This resilience can enhance your credibility as a speaker.

#### 10. Listening Skills:

While Hanuman was an excellent communicator, he was also a good listener. Effective communication involves active listening. Pay attention to your audience's reactions, questions, and feedback. This allows you to adjust your presentation on the spot and connect more effectively with your listeners.

#### 11. Humility:

Hanuman's humility was evident in his unwavering service to Lord Rama. In your presentations, acknowledge the contributions of others, be open to feedback, and demonstrate humility. This can create a positive and receptive atmosphere among your audience. By reflecting on the qualities of Hanuman and incorporating these principles into your speaking



and presentation skills, you can enhance your ability to connect with and captivate your audience.

### **Conclusion**

In summary, the Ramayana provides timeless lessons on effective communication, leadership, and resilience, all of which are essential components of impactful presentations in the modern context. While Jatayu may not be a central figure in terms of speaking or rhetoric in the Ramayana, his character contributes to the overall narrative by exemplifying virtues such as courage, sacrifice, and loyalty. His actions and sacrifice serve as a poignant moment in the epic, emphasizing the importance of staying true to principles even in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges. Thus, if we want to ensure our communication meets the objective, we must actively listen and make sure that there is a give and take of information on both sides. We should not rush into giving any information but should work on building trust before we open. To build trust, we must substantiate our claims with reasons and evidence. Adopting the right tone and body language is also essential.

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