

The Mobile Revolution

As much of a game changer as social media have been, some experts predict that mobile communication technology will be a more significant force in the future.

THE RISE OF MOBILE AS A COMMUNICATION PLATFORM

Whether it's emailing, social networking, watching videos, or doing research, the percentage of people using mobile devices to communicate is growing.

HOW MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES ARE CHANGING BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

The rise of mobile communication has some obvious implications, such as the need for websites to be mobile-friendly.

Writing Messages for Mobile Devices

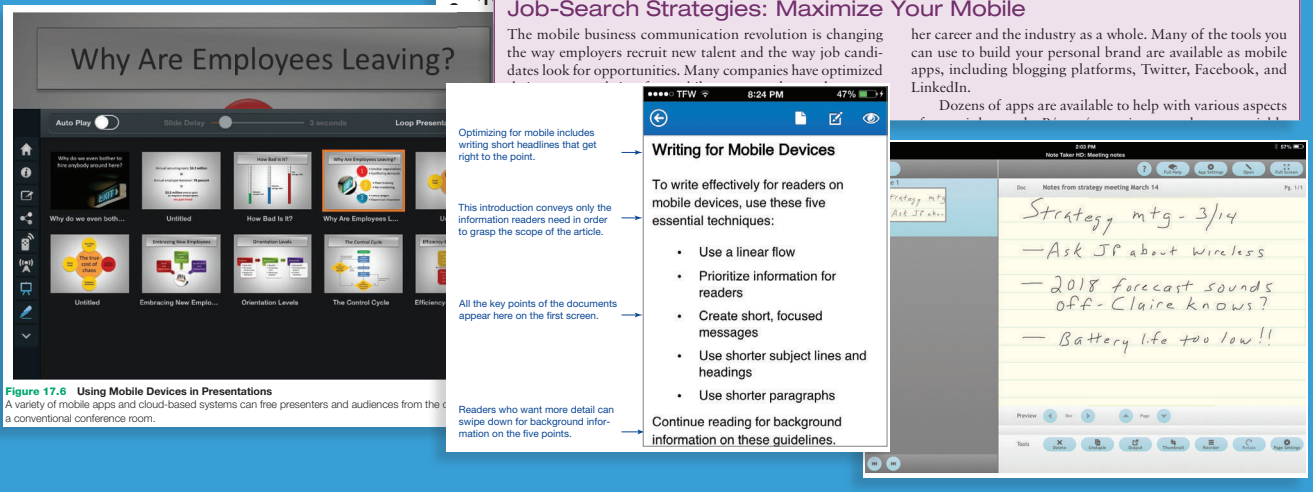
One obvious adaptation to make for audiences using mobile devices is to modify the design and layout of your messages.

DESIGNING MESSAGES FOR MOBILE DEVICES

In addition to making your content mobile-friendly using the writing tips in Chapter 4, you should also consider the design of your messages.

(see page 100)

The Unique Demands of Mobile Business Communication



THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION

Communication Bots

The bots are back. Automated bots (short for *robots*) made a small wave in the world of communication, but they are now making a big splash.

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION

The Internet of Things

The *Internet of Things* (IoT) refers to the billions of devices now connected to the Internet.

The *Internet of Things* (IoT) refers to the billions of devices now connected to the Internet. These devices are often simple sensors that can collect data and send it to a central location. This data can then be used to make decisions about the physical world. For example, a smart thermostat can learn your preferences and adjust the temperature accordingly. Or, a smart car can detect when you are running low on gas and suggest a nearby gas station.

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION

Real-Time Translation

If you've ever tried to converse in a language other than your native tongue, you know how frustrating it can be.

Real-time translation technology is making it easier than ever to communicate across language barriers. This technology uses artificial intelligence to translate spoken or written words in real time. For example, you can now use a smartphone app to translate a foreign language into your own language as you speak. This technology is also being used in the workplace to help non-native speakers understand meetings and presentations.

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION

Emotion Recognition Software

Assessing an audience's emotional response is an important step in judging the success of many communication efforts. If you're presenting a new idea to upper management, for example, you can try to read facial clues and other nonverbal signals to determine whether the executives seem excited, annoyed, bored, or anywhere in between.

But what if you're not there in person and your message has to stand on its own? How can you judge the audience's reaction?

Intriguing Glimpses into the Future of Business Communication

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the many thousands of instructors and students who use Bovée and Thill texts to develop career-enhancing skills in business communication. We appreciate the opportunity to play a role in your education, and we wish you the very best with your careers.

Courtland L. Bovée

John V. Thill

Brief Contents

Preface xvii
Prologue xxxvii

PART 1	Understanding the Foundations of Business Communication	1
	1 Professional Communication in a Digital, Social, Mobile World	3
	2 Collaboration, Interpersonal Communication, and Business Etiquette	37
	3 Communication Challenges in a Diverse, Global Marketplace	69
PART 2	Applying the Three-Step Writing Process	95
	4 Planning Business Messages	97
	5 Writing Business Messages	125
	6 Completing Business Messages	153
PART 3	Digital, Social, and Visual Media	179
	7 Digital Media	181
	8 Social Media	205
	9 Visual Media	229
PART 4	Brief Messages	263
	10 Writing Routine and Positive Messages	265
	11 Writing Negative Messages	293
	12 Writing Persuasive Messages	329
PART 5	Reports and Proposals	361
	13 Finding, Evaluating, and Processing Information	363
	14 Planning Reports and Proposals	387
	15 Writing and Completing Reports and Proposals	415
PART 6	Developing and Delivering Business Presentations	457
	16 Developing Presentations in a Social Media Environment	459
	17 Enhancing Presentations with Slides and Other Visuals	485
PART 7	Writing Employment Messages and Interviewing for Jobs	511
	18 Building Careers and Writing Résumés	513
	19 Applying and Interviewing for Employment	545
	APPENDIX A Format and Layout of Business Documents	578
	APPENDIX B Documentation of Report Sources	592
	APPENDIX C Correction Symbols	598
	Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage	601
	Brand, Organization, Name, and Website Index	630
	Subject Index	633

Contents

Preface **xvii**
Prologue **xxxvii**

PART 1

Understanding the Foundations of Business Communication 1

1 Professional Communication in a Digital, Social, Mobile World 3

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **JetBlue** 3

Understanding Why Communication Matters 4

- Communication Is Important to Your Career 4
- Communication Is Important to Your Company 5
- What Makes Business Communication Effective? 6

Communicating as a Professional 6

- Understanding What Employers Expect from You 8
- Communicating in an Organizational Context 9
- Adopting an Audience-Centered Approach 9

Exploring the Communication Process 10

- The Basic Communication Model 10
- The Social Communication Model 15

The Mobile Revolution 16

- The Rise of Mobile as a Communication Platform 17
- How Mobile Technologies Are Changing Business Communication 17

Using Technology to Improve Business Communication 19

- Keeping Technology in Perspective 20
- Guarding Against Information Overload 20
- Using Technological Tools Productively 20
- Reconnecting with People 21

Committing to Ethical and Legal Communication 26

- Distinguishing Ethical Dilemmas from Ethical Lapses 26
- Ensuring Ethical Communication 27
- Ensuring Legal Communication 29

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **JetBlue** 30

- Quick Learning Guide 31
- Test Your Knowledge 33
- Apply Your Knowledge 33
- Practice Your Skills 33
- Expand Your Skills 34

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION The Internet of Things 14

DIGITAL + SOCIAL + MOBILE: TODAY'S COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT It's All Fun and Games—and Effective Business Communication 21

2 Collaboration, Interpersonal Communication, and Business Etiquette 37

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Cemex** 37

Communicating Effectively in Teams 38

- Advantages and Disadvantages of Teams 38
- Characteristics of Effective Teams 39
- Group Dynamics 40

Collaborating on Communication Efforts 43

- Guidelines for Collaborative Writing 43
- Technologies for Collaborative Writing 43
- Giving—and Responding to—Constructive Feedback 46

Making Your Meetings More Productive 46

- Preparing for Meetings 47
- Conducting and Contributing to Efficient Meetings 47
- Putting Meeting Results to Productive Use 48

Using Meeting Technologies 50

Improving Your Listening Skills 51

- Recognizing Various Types of Listening 51
- Understanding the Listening Process 52
- Overcoming Barriers to Effective Listening 52

Improving Your Nonverbal Communication Skills 54

- Recognizing Nonverbal Communication 54
- Using Nonverbal Communication Effectively 55

Developing Your Business Etiquette 56

- Business Etiquette in the Workplace 56
- Business Etiquette in Social Settings 59
- Business Etiquette Online 59
- Business Etiquette Using Mobile Devices 60

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Cemex** 61

- Quick Learning Guide 62
- Test Your Knowledge 64
- Apply Your Knowledge 64
- Practice Your Skills 64
- Expand Your Skills 66

ETHICS DETECTIVE Solving the Case of the Missing Team 39

THE ART OF PROFESSIONALISM Being a Team Player 42

COMMUNICATING ACROSS CULTURES Whose Skin Is This, Anyway? 58

3 Communication Challenges in a Diverse, Global Marketplace 69

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Kaiser Permanente** 69

Understanding the Opportunities and Challenges of Communication in a Diverse World 70

- Opportunities in a Global Marketplace 70
- Advantages of a Diverse Workforce 71
- The Challenges of Intercultural Communication 71

Developing Cultural Competency 72

- Understanding the Concept of Culture 72
- Overcoming Ethnocentrism and Stereotyping 73

Recognizing Variations in a Diverse World 74

- Contextual Differences 74
- Legal and Ethical Differences 74
- Social Differences 75
- Nonverbal Differences 76
- Age Differences 76
- Gender Differences 77
- Religious Differences 78
- Ability Differences 78

Adapting to Other Business Cultures 79

- Guidelines for Adapting to Any Business Culture 79
- Guidelines for Adapting to U.S. Business Culture 79

Improving Intercultural Communication Skills 80

- Studying Other Cultures 81
- Studying Other Languages 81
- Respecting Preferences for Communication Style 81
- Writing Clearly 83
- Speaking and Listening Carefully 84
- Using Interpreters, Translators, and Translation Software 87
- Helping Others Adapt to Your Culture 89

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Kaiser Permanente** 89

- Quick Learning Guide 90
- Test Your Knowledge 91
- Apply Your Knowledge 91
- Practice Your Skills 91
- Expand Your Skills 92

COMMUNICATING ACROSS CULTURES Us Versus Them: Generational Conflict in the Workplace 77

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION Real-Time Translation 82

PART 2

Applying the Three-Step Writing Process 95

4 Planning Business Messages 97

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Wolff Olins** 97

Understanding the Three-Step Writing Process 98

- Optimizing Your Writing Time 99
- Planning Effectively 99

Analyzing the Situation 99

- Defining Your Purpose 100
- Developing an Audience Profile 100

Gathering Information 102

Uncovering Audience Needs 103

Finding Your Focus 103

Providing Required Information 103

Selecting the Best Combination of Media and Channels 105

- The Most Common Media and Channel Options 105
- Factors to Consider When Choosing Media and Channels 109

Organizing Your Information 112

- Defining Your Main Idea 113
- Limiting Your Scope 113
- Choosing Between Direct and Indirect Approaches 114
- Outlining Your Content 115
- Building Reader Interest with Storytelling Techniques 117

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Wolff Olins** 120

Quick Learning Guide 121

Test Your Knowledge 122

Apply Your Knowledge 122

Practice Your Skills 122

Expand Your Skills 124

ETHICS DETECTIVE Solving the Case of the Missing Safety Warning 104

THE ART OF PROFESSIONALISM Maintaining a Confident, Positive Outlook 109

5 Writing Business Messages 125

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **She Takes on the World** 125

Adapting to Your Audience: Being Sensitive to Audience Needs 126

- Using the “You” Attitude 126
- Maintaining Standards of Etiquette 127
- Emphasizing the Positive 128
- Using Bias-Free Language 129

Adapting to Your Audience: Building Strong Relationships 130

- Establishing Your Credibility 130
- Projecting Your Company’s Image 131

Adapting to Your Audience: Controlling Your Style and Tone 132

- Creating a Conversational Tone 132
- Using Plain Language 134
- Selecting the Active or Passive Voice 134

Composing Your Message: Choosing Powerful Words 135

- Understanding Denotation and Connotation 136
- Balancing Abstract and Concrete Words 136
- Finding Words That Communicate Well 137

Composing Your Message: Creating Effective Sentences 139

- Choosing from the Four Types of Sentences 139
- Using Sentence Style to Emphasize Key Thoughts 140

Composing Your Message: Crafting Unified, Coherent Paragraphs 141

- Creating the Elements of a Paragraph 141
- Choosing the Best Way to Develop Each Paragraph 143

Writing Messages for Mobile Devices 144

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **She Takes on the World** 146

Quick Learning Guide 147
 Test Your Knowledge 149
 Apply Your Knowledge 149
 Practice Your Skills 149
 Expand Your Skills 151

THE ART OF PROFESSIONALISM Being Dependable and Accountable 132

6 Completing Business Messages 153

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Type Together** 153

Revising Your Message: Evaluating the First Draft 154

Evaluating Your Content, Organization, Style, and Tone 154
 Evaluating, Editing, and Revising the Work of Others 157

Revising to Improve Readability 157

Varying Your Sentence Length 158
 Keeping Your Paragraphs Short 158
 Using Lists to Clarify and Emphasize 159
 Adding Headings and Subheadings 160

Editing for Clarity and Conciseness 160

Editing for Clarity 160
 Editing for Conciseness 162

Producing Your Message 164

Designing for Readability 164
 Formatting Formal Letters and Memos 167
 Designing Messages for Mobile Devices 168

Proofreading Your Message 169

Distributing Your Message 170

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Type Together** 171

Quick Learning Guide 172
 Test Your Knowledge 174
 Apply Your Knowledge 174
 Practice Your Skills 174
 Expand Your Skills 177

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION Haptic Technologies 164

PART 3 Digital, Social, and Visual Media 179

7 Digital Media 181

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Slack** 181

Digital Media for Business Communication 182

Digital and Social Media Options 182
 Compositional Modes for Digital and Social Media 183
 Optimizing Content for Mobile Devices 185

Email 186

Planning Email Messages 187
 Writing Email Messages 187
 Completing Email Messages 189

Messaging 190

Advantages and Disadvantages of Messaging 190
 Guidelines for Successful Messaging 191

Website Content 192

Organizing Website Content 192
 Drafting Website Content 195

Podcasting 196

Understanding the Business Applications of Podcasting 196
 Adapting the Three-Step Process for Successful Podcasting 196

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Slack** 197

Quick Learning Guide 198
 Test Your Knowledge 199
 Apply Your Knowledge 199
 Practice Your Skills 199
 Expand Your Skills 201

DIGITAL + SOCIAL + MOBILE: TODAY'S COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT Will Emoticons Give Your Career a Frowny Face? 188

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION Telepathic Communication 193

8 Social Media 205

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Starbucks** 205

Writing Strategies for Social Media 206

Social Networks 207

Business Communication Uses of Social Networks 208
 Strategies for Business Communication on Social Networks 212

Information- and Content-Sharing Sites 212

User-Generated Content Sites 213
 Content Curation Sites 213
 Community Q&A Sites 214

Blogging 214

Understanding the Business Applications of Blogging 215
 Adapting the Three-Step Process for Successful Blogging 217

Microblogging 219

Wikis 221

Understanding the Wiki Philosophy 221
 Adapting the Three-Step Process for Successful Wiki Writing 221

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Starbucks** 222

Quick Learning Guide 223
 Test Your Knowledge 224
 Apply Your Knowledge 224
 Practice Your Skills 224
 Expand Your Skills 225

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality 213

DIGITAL + SOCIAL + MOBILE: TODAY'S COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT Community Manager: Keeping a Company Connected to Its Stakeholders 215

9 Visual Media 229

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **GoPro** 229

Understanding Visual Communication 230

The Power of Images 230
 The Visual Evolution in Business Communication 231
 Visual Design Principles 232
 The Ethics of Visual Communication 233

Identifying Points to Illustrate 236

Selecting Visuals for Presenting Data 237

Tables 237
 Line and Surface Charts 238

Bar Charts, Pictograms, and Gantt Charts	240
Scatter and Bubble Diagrams	242
Pie Charts	242
Data Visualization	242
Selecting Visuals for Presenting Information, Concepts, and Ideas	244
Flowcharts and Organization Charts	244
Maps	244
Illustrations, Diagrams, and Photographs	246
Infographics	246
Producing and Integrating Visuals	247
Creating Visuals	247
Integrating Visuals with Text	247
Verifying the Quality of Your Visuals	249
Visual Media on Mobile Devices	249
Producing Business Videos	251
Step 1: Preproduction	251
Step 2: Production	253
Step 3: Postproduction	254
COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT GoPro	255
Quick Learning Guide	256
Test Your Knowledge	258
Apply Your Knowledge	258
Practice Your Skills	258
Expand Your Skills	260
THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION Gestural Computing	232
ETHICS DETECTIVE Solving the Case of the Hidden Numbers	235

PART 4

Brief Messages 263

10 Writing Routine and Positive Messages 265

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT Productivity Report	265
Strategy for Routine Requests	266
Stating Your Request up Front	266
Explaining and Justifying Your Request	267
Requesting Specific Action in a Courteous Close	267
Common Examples of Routine Requests	267
Asking for Information and Action	267
Asking for Recommendations	269
Making Claims and Requesting Adjustments	269
Strategy for Routine and Positive Messages	271
Starting with the Main Idea	272
Providing Necessary Details and Explanation	272
Ending with a Courteous Close	273
Common Examples of Routine and Positive Messages	274
Answering Requests for Information and Action	274
Granting Claims and Requests for Adjustment	274
Providing Recommendations and References	274
Sharing Routine Information	276
Announcing Good News	277
Fostering Goodwill	279

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Productivity Report** 281

Quick Learning Guide	282
Test Your Knowledge	283
Apply Your Knowledge	283
Practice Your Skills	283
Expand Your Skills	285

ETHICS DETECTIVE Solving the Case of the Imaginary Good News 272

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION Communication Bots 278

11 Writing Negative Messages 293

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Hailo** 293

Using the Three-Step Writing Process for Negative Messages 294

Step 1: Planning a Negative Message	294
Step 2: Writing a Negative Message	296
Step 3: Completing a Negative Message	296

Using the Direct Approach for Negative Messages 297

Opening with a Clear Statement of the Bad News	297
Providing Reasons and Additional Information	297
Closing on a Respectful Note	299

Using the Indirect Approach for Negative Messages 299

Opening with a Buffer	299
Providing Reasons and Additional Information	300
Continuing with a Clear Statement of the Bad News	301
Closing on a Respectful Note	302

Maintaining High Standards of Ethics and Etiquette 302

Sending Negative Messages on Routine Business Matters 304

Making Negative Announcements on Routine Business Matters	304
Rejecting Suggestions and Proposals	305
Refusing Routine Requests	305
Handling Bad News About Transactions	305
Refusing Claims and Requests for Adjustment	306

Sending Negative Organizational News 308

Communicating Under Normal Circumstances	308
Responding to Negative Information in a Social Media Environment	309
Communicating in a Crisis	311

Sending Negative Employment Messages 311

Refusing Requests for Employee References and Recommendation Letters	312
Refusing Social Networking Recommendation Requests	312
Rejecting Job Applications	313
Giving Negative Performance Reviews	314
Terminating Employment	315

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Hailo** 316

Quick Learning Guide	317
Test Your Knowledge	319
Apply Your Knowledge	319
Practice Your Skills	319
Expand Your Skills	321

ETHICS DETECTIVE Solving the Case of the Deceptive Soft Sell 303

12 Writing Persuasive Messages 329

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Red Ants Pants** 329

Using the Three-Step Writing Process for Persuasive Messages 330

Step 1: Planning Persuasive Messages 330

Step 2: Writing Persuasive Messages 333

Step 3: Completing Persuasive Messages 333

Developing Persuasive Business Messages 334

Strategies for Persuasive Business Messages 334

Avoiding Common Mistakes in Persuasive Communication 338

Common Examples of Persuasive Business Messages 340

Developing Marketing and Sales Messages 342

Planning Marketing and Sales Messages 343

Writing Conventional Marketing and Sales Messages 344

Writing Promotional Messages for Social Media 344

Creating Promotional Messages for Mobile Devices 346

Maintaining High Standards of Ethics, Legal Compliance, and Etiquette 346

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Red Ants Pants** 348

Quick Learning Guide 349

Test Your Knowledge 351

Apply Your Knowledge 351

Practice Your Skills 351

Expand Your Skills 352

ETHICS DETECTIVE Solving the Case of the Incredible Credibility 334

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION Emotion Recognition Software 343

PART 5 Reports and Proposals 361

13 Finding, Evaluating, and Processing Information 363

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Strategyzer** 363

Planning Your Research 364

Maintaining Ethics and Etiquette in Your Research 365

Familiarizing Yourself with the Subject 365

Identifying Information Gaps 366

Prioritizing Research Needs 366

Conducting Secondary Research 366

Evaluating Sources 366

Locating Sources 367

Documenting Your Sources 372

Conducting Primary Research 372

Gathering Information with Surveys 372

Gathering Information with Interviews 373

Processing Data and Information 375

Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing 375

Analyzing Numeric Data 376

Applying Your Findings 377

Summarizing Your Research 378

Drawing Conclusions 378

Making Recommendations 379

Managing Information 379

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Strategyzer** 380

Quick Learning Guide 381

Test Your Knowledge 383

Apply Your Knowledge 383

Practice Your Skills 383

Expand Your Skills 385

DIGITAL + SOCIAL + MOBILE: TODAY'S COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT Research on the Go with Mobile Devices 371

14 Planning Reports and Proposals 387

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Warby Parker** 387

Applying the Three-Step Writing Process to Reports and Proposals 388

Analyzing the Situation 389

Gathering Information 392

Selecting the Best Media and Channels 392

Organizing Your Information 393

Planning Informational Reports 395

Organizational Strategies for Informational Reports 396

Creating Successful Business Plans 396

Planning Analytical Reports 397

Organizational Strategies for Analytical Reports 399

Effective Analytical Reports: An Example 402

Planning Proposals 403

Organizational Strategies for Proposals 404

Effective Proposals: An Example 405

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Warby Parker** 410

Quick Learning Guide 411

Test Your Knowledge 412

Apply Your Knowledge 412

Practice Your Skills 412

Expand Your Skills 414

ETHICS DETECTIVE Solving the Case of the Overblown Proposal 405

15 Writing and Completing Reports and Proposals 415

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **WPP** 415

Writing Reports and Proposals: Adapting to Your Audience 416

Being Sensitive to Your Audience's Needs 416

Building Strong Relationships with Your Audience 418

Controlling Your Style and Tone 418

Drafting Report Content 418

Drafting Proposal Content 421

Completing Reports and Proposals 424

Producing Formal Reports and Proposals 424

Distributing Reports and Proposals 426

Writing Requests for Proposals 429

REPORT WRITER'S NOTEBOOK Analyzing a Formal Report 431

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **WPP** 446

Quick Learning Guide 447
 Test Your Knowledge 448
 Apply Your Knowledge 448
 Practice Your Skills 448
 Expand Your Skills 449

PART 6

Developing and Delivering Business Presentations 457

16

Developing Presentations in a Social Media Environment 459

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Barnett International** 459

Planning a Presentation 460

Analyzing the Situation 461
 Selecting the Best Combination of Media and Channels 463
 Organizing a Presentation 464

Crafting Presentation Content 467

Adapting to Your Audience 468
 Developing Your Presentation 469

Delivering a Presentation 472

Choosing Your Presentation Method 473
 Practicing Your Delivery 473
 Preparing to Speak 474
 Overcoming Anxiety 474
 Handling Questions Responsively 476

Incorporating Technology in Your Presentation 477

Embracing the Backchannel 477
 Giving Presentations Online 477

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Barnett International** 479

Quick Learning Guide 480
 Test Your Knowledge 482
 Apply Your Knowledge 482
 Practice Your Skills 482
 Expand Your Skills 483

COMMUNICATING ACROSS CULTURES Making Sure Your Message Doesn't Get Lost in Translation 463

THE ART OF PROFESSIONALISM Recovering from Disasters 475

17

Enhancing Presentations with Slides and Other Visuals 485

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Duarte** 485

Planning Your Presentation Visuals 486

Selecting the Type of Visuals to Use 486
 Verifying Your Design Plans 488

Choosing Structured or Free-Form Slides 489

Advantages and Disadvantages of Structured Slides 489
 Advantages and Disadvantages of Free-Form Slides 490

Designing Effective Slides 490

Designing Slides Around a Key Visual 491
 Selecting Design Elements 491
 Maintaining Design Consistency 494

Creating Effective Slide Content 494

Writing Readable Content 495
 Creating Charts and Tables for Slides 496
 Adding Animation and Multimedia 496
 Integrating Mobile Devices in Presentations 498

Completing Slides and Support Materials 499

Creating Navigation and Support Slides 500
 Creating Effective Handouts 502

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Duarte** 503

Quick Learning Guide 504
 Test Your Knowledge 506
 Apply Your Knowledge 506
 Practice Your Skills 506
 Expand Your Skills 507

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION Holograms 487

THE ART OF PROFESSIONALISM Being a Team Player 498

PART 7

Writing Employment Messages and Interviewing for Jobs 511

18

Building Careers and Writing Résumés 513

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **Burning Glass** 513

Finding the Ideal Opportunity in Today's Job Market 514

Writing the Story of You 515
 Learning to Think Like an Employer 515
 Researching Industries and Companies of Interest 515
 Translating Your General Potential into a Specific Solution for Each Employer 517
 Taking the Initiative to Find Opportunities 517
 Building Your Network 518
 Seeking Career Counseling 520
 Avoiding Mistakes 520

Planning Your Résumé 520

Analyzing Your Purpose and Audience 522
 Gathering Pertinent Information 522
 Selecting the Best Media and Channels 522
 Organizing Your Résumé Around Your Strengths 522
 Addressing Areas of Concern 523

Writing Your Résumé 524

Keeping Your Résumé Honest 524
 Adapting Your Résumé to Your Audience 524
 Composing Your Résumé 525

Completing Your Résumé 532

Revising Your Résumé 532
 Producing Your Résumé 532
 Proofreading Your Résumé 535
 Distributing Your Résumé 535

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **Burning Glass** 537

Quick Learning Guide 538
 Test Your Knowledge 539
 Apply Your Knowledge 539
 Practice Your Skills 539
 Expand Your Skills 540

DIGITAL + SOCIAL + MOBILE: TODAY'S COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT Job-Search Strategies: Maximize Your Mobile 518

THE ART OF PROFESSIONALISM Striving to Excel 520

19 Applying and Interviewing for Employment 545

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT **VMWare** 545

Submitting Your Résumé 546

- Writing Application Letters 546
- Following Up After Submitting a Résumé 552

Understanding the Interviewing Process 552

- The Typical Sequence of Interviews 552
- Common Types of Interviews 553
- Interview Media 554
- What Employers Look for in an Interview 555
- Preemployment Testing and Background Checks 555

Preparing for a Job Interview 556

- Learning About the Organization and Your Interviewers 556
- Thinking Ahead About Questions 557
- Boosting Your Confidence 559
- Polishing Your Interview Style 559
- Presenting a Professional Image 560
- Being Ready When You Arrive 562

Interviewing for Success 563

- The Warm-Up 563
- The Question-and-Answer Stage 563
- The Close 564
- Interview Notes 565

Following up After the Interview 566

- Follow-Up Message 566
- Message of Inquiry 566
- Request for a Time Extension 566
- Letter of Acceptance 566
- Letter Declining a Job Offer 568
- Letter of Resignation 569

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AT **VMWare** 570

Quick Learning Guide 571

Test Your Knowledge 572

Apply Your Knowledge 572

Practice Your Skills 572

Expand Your Skills 573

COMMUNICATING ACROSS CULTURES Successfully Interviewing Across Borders 561

APPENDIX A

Format and Layout of Business Documents 578

First Impressions 578

- Paper 578
- Customization 578
- Appearance 578

Letters 579

- Standard Letter Parts 579
- Additional Letter Parts 583
- Letter Formats 584

Envelopes 586

- Addressing the Envelope 586
- Folding to Fit 587
- International Mail 588

Memos 590

Reports 590

- Margins 590
- Headings 590
- Page Numbers 591

APPENDIX B

Documentation of Report Sources 592

Chicago Humanities Style 592

- In-Text Citation—Chicago Humanities Style 592
- Bibliography—Chicago Humanities Style 593

APA Style 595

- In-Text Citation—APA Style 595
- List of References—APA Style 595

MLA Style 595

- In-Text Citation—MLA Style 595
- List of Works Cited—MLA Style 596

APPENDIX C

Correction Symbols 598

Content and Style 598

Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage 599

Proofreading Marks 600

Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage 601

Diagnostic Test of English Skills 601

Assessment of English Skills 603

Essentials of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage 603

1.0 Grammar 603

- 1.1 Nouns 603
- 1.2 Pronouns 605
- 1.3 Verbs 607
- 1.4 Adjectives 611
- 1.5 Adverbs 612
- 1.6 Other Parts of Speech 613
- 1.7 Sentences 614

2.0 Punctuation 618

- 2.1 Periods 618
- 2.2 Question Marks 618
- 2.3 Exclamation Points 618
- 2.4 Semicolons 618
- 2.5 Colons 618
- 2.6 Commas 619
- 2.7 Dashes 620
- 2.8 Hyphens 620
- 2.9 Apostrophes 621
- 2.10 Quotation Marks 621
- 2.11 Parentheses and Brackets 622
- 2.12 Ellipses 622

3.0 Mechanics 622

- 3.1 Capitalization 622
- 3.2 Underscores and Italics 624
- 3.3 Abbreviations 624
- 3.4 Numbers 624
- 3.5 Word Division 625

4.0 Vocabulary 626

- 4.1 Frequently Confused Words 626
- 4.2 Frequently Misused Words 627
- 4.3 Frequently Misspelled Words 628
- 4.4 Transitional Words and Phrases 629

**Brand, Organization, Name,
and Website Index 630****Subject Index 633**

Real-Time Updates—Learn More

Real-Time Updates—Learn More is a unique feature you will see strategically located throughout the text, connecting you with dozens of carefully selected online media items. These elements—categorized by the icons shown below representing interactive websites, online videos, infographics, PowerPoint presentations, podcasts, PDF files, and articles—complement the text’s coverage by providing contemporary examples and valuable insights from successful professionals.



REAL-TIME UPDATES

LEARN MORE BY READING THIS ARTICLE

Google’s research into effective teamwork	40
Three factors that distinguish smart teams	41
Ten tips to help resolve workplace conflict	41
The benefits of mobile collaboration	46
Legal aspects of religion in the workplace	78
Study the seven habits of effective intercultural communicators	86
Building credibility online	130
Ten tips for conversational writing	133
Practical tips for more effective sentences	141
Improve your document designs by learning the fundamentals of typography	167
Should you email, text, or pick up the phone?	183
Telling compelling stories on social media	184
The security worries behind the surge in business messaging	191
How social media have changed business communication	206
Tips for ensuring a positive Twitter experience	220
Four communication challenges where visuals can be more effective than text	236
New thinking on data visualization	243
Using Snapchat for business communication	252
Using Twitter for routine customer communication	273
Simple rules for writing effective thank-you notes	280
A better way to say no	294
In-depth advice on issuing an apology	299
These templates make it easier to turn down recommendation requests	312
IBM crowdsources a replacement for its annual performance reviews	314
Open doors with these seven magic words	333
Using stories to persuade	337
Building audience relationships with content marketing	346
Launch that new business idea with solid research	375
Seven steps to successful proposals	404
Build your company with effective responses to RFPs	422
Engage the audience for a more successful presentation	462

Don’t let anxiety hold back your presentations	474
Two secrets to presenting like a pro	475
Design tips from presentation pro Garr Reynolds	490
Give your audience “soft breaks” to keep them alert and engaged	496
Smart strategies to explain gaps in your work history	524
Tempted to twist the truth on your resume?	524
Does your résumé shout “I’m unprofessional”?	532
Make friends with the résumé robots	533
Don’t let these mistakes cost you an interview	535
The ultimate interview preparation checklist	556
Prepare your answers to these tough interview questions	558
Details that can make or break a job interview	560



REAL-TIME UPDATES

LEARN MORE BY LISTENING TO THESE PODCASTS

Tips for proofing your papers	169
Get daily tips on using social media in your business	208
Expert tips for successful phone interviews	563



REAL-TIME UPDATES

LEARN MORE BY WATCHING THESE VIDEO

The fundamentals of emotional intelligence	10
The Internet of Things	14
Dining etiquette simplified	59
More advice from communication coach Gina Barnett	461
How to establish an emotional connection with any audience	468
Get started with Prezi	486
Nancy Duarte’s low-tech approach to slide design	496
Five TED talks that will help you prepare for interviews	554



REAL-TIME UPDATES

LEARN MORE BY READING THIS PDF

Dig deep into audience needs with this planning tool	101
Get detailed advice on using bias-free language	130
Starbucks’s social media guidelines	208
Crafting your “wow” statement	397



REAL-TIME UPDATES

LEARN MORE BY VIEWING THIS PRESENTATION

Exploring the potential of wearable technologies	17
Smart advice for brainstorming sessions	113
Get helpful tips on creating an outline for any project	115
Simple tips for a professional interview look	562



REAL-TIME UPDATES

LEARN MORE BY EXPLORING THIS INTERACTIVE WEBSITE

Take a closer look at how the United States is changing	71
How are your global travel skills?	81
Mine the web to piece together stories on any topic	119
Grammar questions? Click here for help	136
Wondering how to get started with business research?	369
Use this powerful tool for easier online searches	370
Explore one of the best annual reports ever published	416
See how well your résumé matches a target job description	525
How much are you worth?	551
Prepare for your next interview with these Pinterest pins	552



REAL-TIME UPDATES

LEARN MORE BY READING THIS INFOGRAPHIC

How not to behave in 15 countries	72
Seven common hand gestures that will stir up trouble in other cultures	76
Social shaming in today's business landscape	212
The color of persuasion	344



REAL-TIME UPDATES

LEARN MORE BY VISITING THIS WEBSITE

Check out the cutting edge of business communication	5
Guidelines for trouble-free blogging	29
Looking for jobs at diversity-minded companies?	71
Explore the Corporate Equality Index	78
Expert advice on making technologies usable	144
Editing and proofreading tips, with an error treasure hunt	158

See the newest designs from some of the brightest minds in typography	167
Examples of effective one-page web design	193
Intrigued by the challenge of designing effective websites?	195
Big companies that blog well	215
Data visualization and infographics gateway	243
Ideas for using Instagram for business communication	246
Ten tools for creating infographics	246
Great advice for getting started in digital video	253
Insight into mobile strategies for routine communication	267
LinkedIn's advice for college students	269
Get expert tips on writing (or requesting) a letter of recommendation	276
Is there any truth to that rumor?	309
Best practices in mobile marketing	346
Get clear answers to murky copyright questions	365
Use Google more effectively	370
Step-by-step advice for developing a successful business plan	396
Get practical advice on developing research reports	421
Quick tips for a variety of speaking situations	471
Advice and free templates for more effective slideuments	491
The latest tools and trends in presentations	494
Converting your résumé to a CV	522
Find the keywords that will light up your résumé	526
Addressing international correspondence	582



REAL-TIME UPDATES

LEARN MORE BY VISITING THIS WIKI

Get the latest news on gamification	21
-------------------------------------	----

Preface

Major Changes and Improvements in This Edition

Here are the major changes in the 14th Edition of *Business Communication Today*:

- Twelve new chapter-opening vignettes with accompanying end-of-chapter individual and team challenges:
 - Kaiser Permanente’s strategic approach to communicating with its diverse stakeholder groups (Chapter 3)
 - Wolff Orlis’s use of storytelling in business communication, including using an award-winning novelist as its chief storytelling officer (Chapter 4)
 - Type Together’s contemporary typeface designs, emphasizing readability in business documents and other messages (Chapter 6)
 - Slack’s workplace messaging system, which is changing the way many organizations communicate (Chapter 7)
 - Jill Duffy’s advice for handling the daily deluge of routine messages more productively (Chapter 10)
 - Strategyzer’s revolutionary alternative to the traditional annual report, now embraced by thousands of entrepreneurs (Chapter 13)
 - Warby Parker’s whimsical and audience-focused approach to annual reports (Chapter 14)
 - WPP’s use of web interactivity to create one of the most readable annual reports ever published (Chapter 15)
 - Gina Barnett’s “whole-body” public speaking advice, which can help all business professionals improve their onstage presence (Chapter 16)
 - Nancy Duarte’s timeless advice for creating audience-friendly presentation slides (Chapter 17)
 - Burning Glass’s application of artificial intelligence to the critical job-search challenge of matching employer needs and employee skill sets (Chapter 18)
 - VMware’s enthusiastic embrace of social media to transform its approach to employee recruiting (Chapter 19)
- A new highlight box theme, *The Future of Communication*, giving students a glimpse into some fascinating technologies that could reshape the practice of business communication in the coming years: the Internet of Things, real-time translation, haptic communication, telepathy, virtual and augmented reality, gestural computing, smart communication bots, emotion recognition, and holograms
- More than 70 new or redesigned business communication examples and figures. The 14th Edition includes
 - 78 annotated model documents
 - 26 examples of mobile communication in business communication
 - 25 examples of social media in business communication
- Revised annotations for all the before/after model document pairs, making it easier for students to see the specific changes made to transform ineffective messages into effective ones
- Updated coverage of the advantages and disadvantages of teams (Chapter 2), overcoming resistance (Chapter 2), gender differences (Chapter 3), digital messaging

(Chapter 7), the business communication uses of social networks (Chapter 8), content curation (Chapter 8), and effective and ethical apologies (Chapter 11)

- 24 New communication cases
- More than three dozen new end-of-chapter questions and exercises

Preparing the Next Generation of Professional Communicators with the Most Current and Most Comprehensive Text in the Field

Communication is the most valuable skill that graduates can bring into the workforce, and it is one of the six cornerstones of true professionalism emphasized in *Business Communication Today*. The business communication course is uniquely positioned to help students develop as professionals because it addresses such vital topics as respect, credibility, dependability, ethical decision making, and collaboration.

An essential part of being a professional is being conversant in the methods and practices of the contemporary workplace. To this end, *Business Communication Today* presents the full range of on-the-job skills that today's communicators need, from writing conventional printed reports to using the latest digital, social, mobile, and visual media (including a concise primer on producing digital business video). Each chapter adapts the fundamentals of effective writing to specific workplace challenges and media applications, so students will be better prepared to succeed from their first day on the job.

Although it stays on the leading edge of workplace practices and communication tools, *Business Communication Today* never loses sight of the fact that communication



is a human activity in the deepest sense. It emphasizes the importance of developing a strong sense of etiquette, recognizing ethical dilemmas, advancing ethical communication, and respecting the rights and needs of audience members at every stage of the writing process.

By integrating all the key skills and insights that students need in order to succeed in today's dynamic workplace, *Business Communication Today* is an unmatched resource for preparing the next generation of business professionals.

Why Business Communication Instructors Continue to Choose Bovée and Thill

- **Market-leading innovation.** For more than three decades, Bovée and Thill texts have pioneered coverage of emerging trends and their implications for business communication. Bovée and Thill were the first authors in the field to give in-depth coverage to digital media, social media, and mobile communication.
- **Up-to-date coverage that reflects today's business communication practices and employer expectations.** Technology, globalization, and other forces have dramatically changed the practice of business communication in recent years, even to the point of altering how people read and how messages should be constructed. To prepare students for today's workplace, a business communication course needs to address contemporary skills, issues, and concepts.
- **Practical advice informed by deep experience.** Beyond the research and presentation of new ideas and tools, Bovée and Thill are among the most active and widely followed users of social media in the entire field of business communication. They don't just write about new concepts; they have years of hands-on experience with social media, blogging, content curation, search technologies, and other important tools. They are active participants in more than 45 social media sites.



Scooped by **Bovee & Thill's Online Magazines for Business Communication**

Business Communication Instruction: How Students Can Learn More Through Online Media



From www.youtube.com - June 15, 7:58 PM

Business Communication Instruction: How Students Can Learn More "Learn More" media items (more than 60 in all) integrate Bovee & Thill textbooks with online materials.

- **Engaging coverage of real companies and contemporary issues in business communication.** Bovée and Thill texts emphasize companies and issues students already know about or are likely to find intriguing. For example, cases in recent editions have addressed Comic-Con, location-based social networking, employer restrictions on social media, the use of Twitter in the job-search process, video gaming, alternative energy, and the challenges of reading and writing on smartphones.
- **Integrated learning.** In sharp contrast to texts that tack on coverage of social media and other new topics, Bovée and Thill continually revise their coverage to fully integrate the skills and issues that are important in today's workplace. This integration is carried through chapter-opening vignettes, chapter content, model documents, end-of-chapter questions, communication cases, and test banks to make sure students practice the skills they'll need, not just read about them in some anecdotal fashion.
- **Added value with unique, free resources for instructors and students.** From the groundbreaking Real-Time Updates to *Business Communication Headline News* to videos specially prepared for instructors, Bovée and Thill adopters can take advantage of an unmatched array of free resources to enhance the classroom experience and keep course content fresh. Please see pages xxix–xxx for a complete list.

In-Depth Coverage of Digital, Social, and Mobile Media Topics in the 14th Edition

Business Communication Today offers in-depth coverage of new and emerging media skills and concepts. These tables show where you can find major areas of coverage, figures, and communication cases that expose students to professional use of social media, mobile media, and other new technologies.

Major Coverage of Digital, Social, and Mobile Media

Topic	Page
Backchannel in presentations	477
Blogging and microblogging	214–220
Collaboration technologies	43–46
Community Q&A websites	214
Compositional modes for digital media	183–185
Content curation	213–214
Creating content for social media	212
Data visualization	242–244
Digital, social, and mobile media options	182–183
Email	186–189
Infographics	246
Instant messaging, text messaging, and workgroup messaging	190–192
Interview media	554–555
Meeting technologies	50–51
Mobile devices in presentations	498
Mobile etiquette	60
Mobile media	16–18, 108–109
Online and social media résumés	534–535

(continued)

Topic	Page
Online etiquette	59–60
Podcasting	196–197
Social communication model	15–16
Social networking	207–212
User-generated content	213
Web writing	195–197
Wikis	221
Writing and designing messages for mobile devices	22–25, 169
Writing persuasive messages for mobile media	346
Writing persuasive messages for social media	344–346

**Figures and Model Documents Highlighting Digital, Social,
and Mobile Media (not including email, IM, or PowerPoint slides)**

Title	Figure	Page
The Social Communication Model	1.7	15
Mobile Communication Tools	1.8	16
Wearable Technology	1.9	17
Mobile Communication: Opportunities and Challenges	1.10	19
Unethical Communication	1.11	27
Ethical Communication	1.12	28
Powerful Tools for Communicating Effectively	Feature	22–25
Shared Online Workspaces	2.2	44
Collaboration on Mobile Devices	2.3	45
Capturing Key Decisions and Discoveries from a Meeting	2.5	49
Virtual Meetings	2.6	50
Telepresence	2.7	51
Mobile Language Tools	3.3	83
Writing for Multilingual Audiences	3.5	88
Using Audience Analysis to Plan a Message	4.2	101
Media and Channel Choices: Written + Digital	4.4	107
Mind Mapping	4.5	114
Business Communicators Innovating with Mobile	Feature	110–111
Fostering a Positive Relationship with an Audience	5.1	127
Building Credibility	5.2	131
Plain Language at Creative Commons	5.3	135
Making Effective Word and Phrase Choices	5.4	137
Writing for Mobile Devices	5.6	145
Designing for Readability	6.3	165
Designing for Mobile Devices	6.4	168
Compositional Modes: Status Updates and Announcements	7.1	185
Augmented Reality	7.2	186
Reader-Friendly Web Design	7.5	194
Writing for the Web	7.6	195
Mobile Podcasting	7.7	197
Community Building via Social Media	8.1	207
Business Applications of Blogging	8.2	217

(continued)

**Figures and Model Documents Highlighting Digital, Social,
and Mobile Media (not including email, IM, or PowerPoint slides) (Continued)**

Title	Figure	Page
Business Applications of Microblogging	8.3	219
Business Communicators Innovating with Social Media	Feature	210–211
Data Visualization	9.10	244
Geographic Information Systems	9.12	245
Infographics	9.13	247
Visual Displays on Mobile Devices	9.14	250
Framing Your Shots: Finding the Right Range	9.16	253
Framing Your Shots: Finding the Right Balance	9.17	254
Announcing Good News	10.6	278
Goodwill Messages	10.7	279
Internal Message Providing Bad News About Company Operations	11.6	310
Appealing to Audience Needs	12.1	331
Promotional Messages in Social Media	12.6	345
Executive Dashboards	14.3	393
Executive Summary	15.2	425
Nonlinear Presentations	16.3	465
Using Mobile Devices in Presentations	17.6	499
Mobile Job-Search Tools	18.2	519
Job Task Simulations	19.4	555
Interview Simulators	19.5	560

**Communication Cases Involving Digital, Social, Mobile,
or Video Media (not including email, IM, or PowerPoint slides)**

Case	Media	Page
7.27	Mobile media	202
7.29	Web writing	203
7.30	Web writing, mobile media	203
7.31	Web writing	203
7.32	Podcasting	203
7.33	Podcasting	203
8.24	Social networking	226
8.25	Social networking	226
8.26	Social networking	226
8.27	Blogging	226
8.28	Blogging	226
8.29	Blogging, mobile media	226
8.30	Blogging	227
8.31	Microblogging	227
8.32	Microblogging	227
8.33	Microblogging	227
8.34	Wiki writing	227
10.30	Blogging	286
10.42	Podcasting	288
10.43	Blogging	288

(continued)

Case	Media	Page
10.45	Microblogging	288
10.47	Social networking	289
10.48	Web writing	289
10.49	Blogging	289
10.50	Social networking	290
10.51	Social networking	290
11.35	Microblogging	322
11.40	Microblogging	323
11.41	Blogging	323
11.43	Podcasting	324
11.45	Social networking	324
11.48	Microblogging	325
11.49	Blogging	325
11.50	Blogging	325
11.51	Blogging	325
11.52	Social networking	326
11.53	Social networking	326
11.56	Mobile media	326
12.37	Microblogging	354
12.38	Blogging	354
12.51	Web writing	357
12.52	Web writing/mobile skills	357
12.53	Podcasting	357
12.55	Web writing	357
12.56	Web writing	358
12.57	Social networking	358
12.58	Microblogging	358
12.59	Social networking	358
12.60	Microblogging	358
18.24	Video	542
19.29	Video	574
19.31	Microblogging	574
19.33	Blogging	574

Extending the Value of Your Textbook with Free Multimedia Content

Business Communication Today's unique Real-Time Updates system automatically provides weekly content updates, including interactive websites, infographics, podcasts, PowerPoint presentations, online videos, and articles. You can subscribe to updates chapter by chapter, so you get only the material that applies to your current chapter. Visit real-timeupdates.com/bct14 to subscribe.

1 Read messages from the authors and access over 175 media items available only to instructors. (Students have access to their own messages, assignments, and media items.)

2 Click on any chapter to see the updates and media items for that chapter.

3 Scan headlines and click on any item of interest to read the article or download the media item. Every item is personally selected by the authors to complement the text and support in-class activities.

4 Media items are categorized by type so you can quickly find podcasts, videos, infographics, PowerPoints, and more.

5 Subscribe via RSS to individual chapters to get updates automatically for the chapter you're currently teaching.

The screenshot shows the Bovée & Thill's Real-Time Updates website. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, Articles, Podcasts, Videos, PowerPoints, PDFs, Web, Wikis, Register, Interactive Media, Infographics, Web Search, Contact Us, and Login. The main content area is divided into sections: BUSINESS COMMUNICATION TODAY, 14TH ED., CHAPERS, BREAKING NEWS, INSTRUCTORS, and a list of media items categorized by type (All, Articles, Infographics, Interactive Media, PDFs, Podcasts, PowerPoint, Video, Web, Wikis). The 'INSTRUCTORS' section includes links for Instructor Messages and Quickly Find PowerPoint Slides on Specific Business Communication Topics. The 'MEDIA' section lists various items with brief descriptions and author information. The 'SUBSCRIBE VIA RSS' section allows users to subscribe to individual chapters. The 'SEARCH' section includes a search bar and a 'Most Popular' section.

For Instructors: Features and Resources to Enhance the Course Experience

TARGET AUDIENCE

Everyone who teaches business communication is motivated to help students master the fundamentals of professional communication while also preparing them for the broader expectations they'll encounter in today's workplace. As the field of business communication continues to expand and get more complex, however, balancing those two objectives continues to get more difficult. Basing your course on a textbook that hasn't kept up with contemporary business media and professional practices puts both you and your students at a distinct disadvantage, and yet you obviously can't ignore basic writing skills.

With its treatment of business communication in the broadest sense (including digital video and managerial issues such as crisis communication), *Business Communication Today* is ideal for comprehensive business communication and managerial communication courses in any curriculum, in any format—in class, online, or hybrid.

For courses with a particular emphasis on written communication, you may find the authors' 16-chapter text *Excellence in Business Communication* to be an optimal fit. And for introductory courses that emphasize business English, the 14-chapter *Business Communication Essentials* offers balanced coverage of basic business English, communication strategies, and cutting-edge technologies. Its compact organization is particularly well suited to quarter calendars as well as to longer courses in which an instructor wants to have time available to supplement the text with service projects, business plan development, or other special activities.

Colleges and universities vary in the prerequisites established for the business communication course, but we advise at least one course in English composition. Some coursework in business studies will also give students a better perspective on communication challenges in the workplace. However, we have taken special care not to assume students have any in-depth business experience, so *Business Communication Today* works quite well for those with limited work experience or business coursework.

A TOTAL TEACHING AND LEARNING SOLUTION

Business Communication Today has helped more than 2 million students master essential skills for succeeding in the workplace. This 14th Edition continues that tradition by offering an unmatched set of tools that simplify teaching, promote active learning, and stimulate critical thinking. These components work together at four levels to provide seamless coverage of vital knowledge and skills: previewing, developing, enhancing, and reinforcing.

Previewing

Each chapter provides clear learning objectives that prepare students for the material to come and provide a framework for the chapter content. New in this edition, each learning objective aligns with a major heading in the chapter, and this structure is carried through to the end-of-chapter and online activities, making it easier for instructors and students to gauge learning progress.

After the learning objectives, a compelling Communication Close-Up vignette featuring a successful professional role model shows students how the material they will encounter in the chapter is put to use in actual business situations.

Developing

Chapter content develops, explains, and elaborates on concepts with a carefully organized presentation of textual and visual material. The three-step process of planning, writing, and completing is clearly explained and reinforced throughout the course. Some texts introduce a writing process model and then rarely, if ever, discuss it again, giving students few opportunities to practice it and leaving them to wonder just how important

the process really is. *Business Communication Today* adapts the three-step process to every category of messages in every medium, from traditional letters and reports to email, blogs, IM, podcasts, wikis, and online videos.

Enhancing

Contemporary examples show students the specific elements that contribute to—or detract from—successful messages. *Business Communication Today* has an unmatched portfolio of realistic examples for students to emulate. In addition, Real-Time Updates—Learn More connects students with dozens of carefully selected online media elements that provide examples and insights from successful professionals.

Business Communication Today also extends students' awareness beyond the functional aspects of communication, with thorough and well-integrated coverage of business etiquette and ethics—vital issues that some texts raise briefly and then quickly forget. In light of employer concerns about the etiquette shortcomings of today's new hires and the continuing struggles with business ethics, we integrate ethics and etiquette throughout the book and give students numerous opportunities to ponder ethical dilemmas and practice communication etiquette.

Reinforcing

Hundreds of realistic exercises and activities help students practice vital skills and put newfound knowledge to immediate use. Unique features include downloadable Word documents, podcasts, PowerPoint presentations for students to analyze, and the innovative Bovée and Thill wiki simulator. Interactive Document Makeovers, pioneered by Bovée and Thill, let students experience firsthand the elements that make a document successful, giving them the insights they need in order to analyze and improve their own business messages. More than 140 communication cases, featuring dozens of real companies, encourage students to think about contemporary business issues as they put their skills to use in a variety of media, including blogging, social networking, and podcasting.

At every stage of the learning experience, *Business Communication Today* provides the tools instructors and students need to succeed.

Features that Help Students Build Essential Knowledge and Skills	Previewing	Developing	Enhancing	Reinforcing
Learning objectives (beginning of chapter)	•			
Communication Close-up (beginning of chapter)	•			
Concise presentations of fundamentals (within chapter)		•		
Managerial and strategic perspectives on key topics (within chapter)		•		
Three-step writing process discussion and diagrams (within chapter)		•		
Real-life examples (within chapter)			•	
Annotated model documents (within chapter)			•	
Highlight boxes (within chapter)			•	
Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage (end of book)			•	
Learn More media resources (online)			•	
MyBCommLab (online)			•	•
Real-Time Updates (online)			•	•
Marginal notes for quick review (within chapter)				•
Checklists (within chapter)				•
Communication Challenges (end of chapter)				•
Quick Learning Guide (end of chapter)				•
Test Your Knowledge questions (end of chapter)				•
Apply Your Knowledge questions (end of chapter)				•

(continued)

Features that Help Students Build Essential Knowledge and Skills	Previewing	Developing	Enhancing	Reinforcing
Practice Your Skills activities and exercises (end of chapter)				•
Expand Your Skills web activities (end of chapter/online)				•
Bovée and Thill wiki simulator (online)				•
Cases (following Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 18, and 19)				•
Document Makeovers (online)				•

FULL SUPPORT FOR AACSB LEARNING STANDARDS

The American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) is a not-for-profit corporation of educational institutions, corporations, and other organizations devoted to the promotion and improvement of higher education in business administration and accounting. A collegiate institution offering degrees in business administration or accounting may volunteer for AACSB accreditation review. The AACSB makes initial accreditation decisions and conducts periodic reviews to promote continuous quality improvement in management education. Pearson Education is a proud member of the AACSB and is pleased to provide advice to help you apply AACSB Learning Standards.

Curriculum quality is one of the most important criteria for AACSB accreditation. Although no specific courses are required, the AACSB expects a curriculum to include learning experiences in the following areas:

- Written and oral communication
- Ethical understanding and reasoning
- Analytical thinking
- Information technology
- Interpersonal relations and teamwork
- Diverse and multicultural work environments
- Reflective thinking
- Application of knowledge

Throughout *Business Communication Today*, you'll find student exercises and activities that support the achievement of these important goals, and the questions in the accompanying test bank are tagged with the appropriate AACSB category.

UNMATCHED COVERAGE OF ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

The Bovée and Thill series continues to lead the field with unmatched coverage of communication technologies, reflecting the expectations and opportunities in today's workplace:

- Applicant tracking systems
- Assistive technologies
- Automated reputation analysis
- Backchannel
- Blogs
- Cloud computing
- Community Q&A websites
- Computer animation
- Content curation
- Crowdsourcing
- Crowdspeaking
- Data visualization
- Digital documents (PDFs)
- Digital whiteboards
- Email
- Emoticons
- Emotion recognition software
- Enterprise instant messaging
- E-portfolios
- Extranets
- Gamification
- Geographic information systems
- Gestural computing
- Graphics software
- Groupware and shared online workspaces
- Haptic communication
- Holograms
- Infographics
- Information architecture
- Instant messaging
- Intellectual property rights
- Interactivity
- Internet of Things
- Internet telephony (Skype)
- Interview simulators
- Intranets
- Knowledge management systems
- Linked and embedded documents
- Location-based social networking
- Microblogs
- Mobile business apps
- Multimedia documents
- Multimedia presentations
- Multimedia résumés

- Newsfeeds
- Online brainstorming systems
- Online research techniques
- Online survey tools
- Online video
- Podcasts
- PowerPoint animation
- Really Simple Syndication (RSS)
- Real-time translation
- Screencasts
- Search and metasearch engines
- Search engine optimization (SEO)
- Security and privacy concerns in digital media
- Sentiment analysis
- Smart communication bots
- Social bookmarking
- Social commerce
- Social media
- Social media résumés
- Social networking
- Tagging
- Teleconferencing and telepresence
- Telepathy
- Text messaging
- Translation software
- User-generated content
- Video interviews
- Video résumés
- Videoconferencing
- Virtual and augmented reality
- Virtual communities
- Virtual meetings
- Virtual whiteboards
- Web content management systems
- Webcasts
- Web directories
- Website accessibility
- Wikis
- Workforce analytics
- Workplace messaging systems

COURSE PLANNING GUIDE

Although *Business Communication Today* follows a conventional sequence of topics, it is structured so that you can address topics in whatever order best suits your needs. For instance, if you want to begin by reviewing grammar, sentence structure, and other writing fundamentals, you can ask students to read Chapter 5, Writing Business Messages, and then the Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage. Conversely, if you want to begin with employment-related communication, you can start with the Prologue, Building a Career with Your Communication Skills, followed by Chapters 18 and 19.

The following table suggests a sequence and a schedule for covering the chapters in the textbook, with time allocations based on the total number of class hours available.

Chapter/Section Number and Title		Hours Devoted to Each Chapter/Section		
		30-Hour Course	45-Hour Course	60-Hour Course
Prologue	Building a Career with Your Communication Skills	1	1	1
1	Professional Communication in a Digital, Social, Mobile World	1	1	1
2	Collaboration, Interpersonal Communication, and Business Etiquette	1	1	2
3	Communication Challenges in a Diverse, Global Marketplace	1	2	3
4	Planning Business Messages	2	3	4
5	Writing Business Messages	2	3	4
6	Completing Business Messages	2	3	4
	Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage	1	2	2
A	Format and Layout of Business Documents	1	1	1
7	Digital Media	1	2	3
8	Social Media	1	2	3
9	Visual Media	1	1	2
10	Writing Routine and Positive Messages	2	2	3
11	Writing Negative Messages	2	2	3
12	Writing Persuasive Messages	2	2	3
13	Finding, Evaluating, and Processing Information	1	2	3
14	Planning Reports and Proposals	1	2	3
15	Writing and Completing Reports and Proposals	1	2	3
B	Documentation of Report Sources	1	1	2
16	Developing Presentations in a Social Media Environment	1	3	3

(continued)

Chapter/Section Number and Title	Hours Devoted to Each Chapter/Section		
	30-Hour Course	45-Hour Course	60-Hour Course
17 Enhancing Presentations with Slides and Other Visuals	1	1	1
18 Building Careers and Writing Résumés	2	3	3
19 Applying and Interviewing for Employment	1	3	3

INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES AND SUPPORT OPTIONS

Business Communication Today is backed by an unmatched selection of resources for instructors and students, many of which were pioneered by the authors and remain unique in the field.

Online Communities and Media Resources

Instructors are welcome to take advantage of the many free online resources provided by Bovée and Thill:

- Sponsorship of Teaching Business Communication instructors' communities (open to all) and Bovée & Thill's Inner Circle for Business Communication (for adopters only) on LinkedIn and Facebook
- Instructor tips and techniques in Bovée and Thill's Business Communication Blog and Twitter feed
- The Bovée & Thill channel on YouTube, with videos that offer advice on teaching the new elements of business communication
- The unique Real-Time Updates content-updating service (see page xxiv)
- The popular Business Communication Headline News service (see page xxix–xxx)
- A variety of videos and PowerPoint presentations on SlideShare
- More than 500 infographics, videos, articles, podcasts, and PowerPoints on Business Communication Pictorial Gallery on Pinterest
- The Ultimate Guide to Resources for Teaching Business Communication

We also invite you to peruse Bovée & Thill's Online Magazines for Business Communication on Scoop.it:

- Business Communication 2.0: Social Media and Digital Communication
- Teaching a Modern Business Communication Course
- How the Mobile Revolution Is Changing Business Communication
- Teaching Business Communication and Workplace Issues
- Teaching Business Communication and Interpersonal Communication
- Teaching Business Presentations in a Business Communication Course
- Teaching Business Communication and Employment
- Teaching Visual Communication in a Business Communication Course
- Exclusive Teaching Resources for Business Communication Instructors

Links to all these services and resources can be found at blog.businesscommunicationnetwork.com/resources.

Business Communication Headline News

Stay on top of hot topics, important trends, and new technologies with Business Communication Headline News (bchn.businesscommunicationnetwork.com), the most comprehensive business communication site on the Internet. Every weekday during the school year, we offer fresh lecture content and provide a wide range of research and teaching tools on the website, including a custom web search function that we created expressly for business communication research.

Take advantage of the newsfeeds to get late-breaking news in headlines with concise summaries. You can scan incoming items in a matter of seconds and simply click through to read the full articles that interest you. All articles and accompanying multimedia resources are categorized by topic and chapter for easy retrieval at any time.

This free service for adopters offers numerous ways to enhance lectures and student activities:

- Keep current with the latest information and trends in the field
- Easily update your lecture notes with fresh material
- Create visuals for your classroom presentations
- Supplement your lectures with cutting-edge handouts
- Gather podcasts, online video, and other new media examples to use in the classroom
- Enhance your research projects with the newest data
- Compare best practices from other instructors
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of your teaching by reading about new teaching tips and techniques

At the website, you also get free access to these powerful instructional resources:

- **Business Communication Web Search**, featuring a revolutionary approach to searching developed by the authors that automatically formats more than 325 specific types of online search requests. The tool uses a simple and intuitive interface engineered to help business communication instructors find precisely what they want, whether it's PowerPoint files, PDF files, Microsoft Word documents, Excel files, videos, podcasts, or more.
- **Real-Time Updates** are newsfeeds and content updates tied directly to specific points throughout the text. Each content update is classified by the type of media featured: interactive website, infographic, article, video, podcast, PowerPoint, or PDF. Additional sections on the site include Instructor Messages and Instructor Media (both password protected), Student Messages, and Student Assignments.

You can subscribe to Business Communication Headline News and get delivery by email, RSS newsreader, mobile phone, instant messenger, MP3, Twitter, Facebook, and a host of other options.

Bovée & Thill Business Communication Blog

The Bovée & Thill Business Communication Blog (blog.businesscommunicationnetwork.com/) offers original articles that help instructors focus their teaching to help students learn more efficiently and effectively. Articles discuss a wide variety of topics, including new topics instructors should be teaching their students, resources instructors can use in their classes, solutions to common teaching challenges, and great examples and activities instructors can use in class.

Authors' Email Hotline for Faculty

Integrity, excellence, and responsiveness are our hallmarks. That means providing you with textbooks that are academically sound, creative, timely, and sensitive to instructor and student needs. As an adopter of *Business Communication Today*, you are invited to use our Email Hotline (hotline@boveeandthillbusinesscommunicationblog.com) if you ever have a question or concern related to the text or its supplements.

Instructor's Resource Center

At the Instructor Resource Center, www.pearsonhighered.com/irc, instructors can access a variety of digital and presentation resources available with this text in downloadable format. As a registered faculty member, you can download resource files and receive immediate access and instructions for installing course management content on your campus server.

If you ever need assistance, our dedicated technical support team is ready to help with the media supplements that accompany this text. Visit support.pearson.com/getsupport for answers to frequently asked questions and toll-free user support phone numbers.

The following supplements are available to adopting instructors (for detailed descriptions, please visit www.pearsonhighered.com/educator):

- Instructor's Resource Manual
- Test Bank
- TestGen® Computerized Test Bank (and various conversions)
- PowerPoint Presentations

For Students: How This Course Will Help You

No matter what profession you want to pursue, the ability to communicate will be an essential skill—and a skill that employers expect you to have when you enter the workforce. This course introduces you to the fundamental principles of business communication and gives you the opportunity to develop your communication skills. You'll discover how business communication differs from personal and social communication, and you'll see how today's companies are using blogs, social networks, podcasts, virtual worlds, wikis, and other technologies. You'll learn a simple three-step writing process that works for all types of writing and speaking projects, both in college and on the job. Along the way, you'll gain valuable insights into ethics, etiquette, listening, teamwork, and nonverbal communication. Plus, you'll learn effective strategies for the many types of communication challenges you'll face on the job, from routine messages about transactions to complex reports and websites.

Few courses can offer the three-for-the-price-of-one value you get from a business communication class. Check out these benefits:

- **In your other classes.** The communication skills you learn in this class can help you in every other course you take in college. From simple homework assignments to complicated team projects to class presentations, you'll be able to communicate more effectively with less time and effort.
- **During your job search.** You can reduce the stress of searching for a job and stand out from the competition. Every activity in the job-search process relies on communication. The better you can communicate, the more successful you'll be at landing interesting and rewarding work.
- **On the job.** After you get that great job, the time and energy you have invested in this course will continue to yield benefits year after year. As you tackle each project and every new challenge, influential company leaders—the people who decide how quickly you'll get promoted and how much you'll earn—will be paying close attention to how well you communicate. They will observe your interactions with colleagues, customers, and business partners. They'll take note of how well you can collect data, find the essential ideas buried under mountains of information, and convey those points to other people. They'll observe your ability to adapt to different audiences and circumstances. They'll be watching when you encounter tough situations that require careful attention to ethics and etiquette. The good news: Every insight you gain and every skill you develop in this course will help you shine in your career.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE

Although this course explores a wide range of message types and seems to cover quite a lot of territory, the underlying structure of the course is actually rather simple. You'll learn a few basic concepts, identify some key skills to use and procedures to follow—and then practice, practice, practice. Whether you're writing a blog posting in response to one of the real-company cases or drafting your own résumé, you'll be practicing the same skills again and again. With feedback and reinforcement from your instructor and your classmates, your confidence will grow and the work will become easier and more enjoyable.

The following sections offer advice on approaching each assignment, using your textbook, and taking advantage of some other helpful resources.

APPROACHING EACH ASSIGNMENT

In the spirit of practice and improvement, you will have a number of writing (and possibly speaking) assignments throughout this course. These suggestions will help you produce better results with less effort:

- **First, don't panic!** If the thought of writing a report or giving a speech sends a chill up your spine, you're not alone. Everybody feels that way when first learning business communication skills, and even experienced professionals can feel nervous

about major projects. Keeping three points in mind will help. First, every project can be broken down into a series of small, manageable tasks. Don't let a big project overwhelm you; it's nothing more than a bunch of smaller tasks. Second, remind yourself that you have the skills you need in order to accomplish each task. As you move through the course, the assignments are carefully designed to match the skills you've developed up to that point. Third, if you feel panic creeping up on you, take a break and regain your perspective.

- **Focus on one task at a time.** A common mistake writers make is trying to organize and express their ideas while simultaneously worrying about audience reactions, grammar, spelling, formatting, page design, and a dozen other factors. Fight the temptation to do everything at once; otherwise, your frustration will soar and your productivity will plummet. In particular, don't worry about grammar, spelling, and word choices during your first draft. Concentrate on the organization of your ideas first, then the way you express those ideas, and then the presentation and production of your messages. Following the three-step writing process is an ideal way to focus on one task at a time in a logical sequence.
- **Give yourself plenty of time.** As with every other school project, putting things off to the last minute creates unnecessary stress. Writing and speaking projects in particular are much easier if you tackle them in small stages with breaks in between, rather than trying to get everything done in one frantic blast. Moreover, there will be instances when you simply get stuck on a project, and the best thing to do is walk away and give your mind a break. If you allow room for breaks in your schedule, you'll minimize the frustration and spend less time overall on your homework, too.
- **Step back and assess each project before you start.** The writing and speaking projects you'll have in this course cover a wide range of communication scenarios, and it's essential that you adapt your approach to each new challenge. Resist the urge to dive in and start writing without a plan. Ponder the assignment for a while, consider the various approaches you might take, and think carefully about your objectives before you start writing. Nothing is more frustrating than getting stuck halfway through because you're not sure what you're trying to say or you've wandered off track. Spend a little time planning, and you'll spend a lot less time writing.
- **Use the three-step writing process.** Those essential planning tasks are the first step in the three-step writing process, which you'll learn about in Chapter 4 and use throughout the course. This process has been developed and refined by professional writers with decades of experience and thousands of projects ranging from short blog posts to 500-page textbooks. It works, so take advantage of it.
- **Learn from the examples and model documents.** This textbook offers dozens of realistic examples of business messages, many with notes along the sides that explain strong and weak points. Study these and any other examples that your instructor provides. Learn what works and what doesn't, then apply these lessons to your own writing.
- **Learn from experience.** Finally, learn from the feedback you get from your instructor and from other students. Don't take the criticism personally; your instructor and your classmates are commenting about the work, not about you. View every bit of feedback as an opportunity to improve.

Using This Textbook Package

This book and its accompanying online resources introduce you to the key concepts in business communication while helping you develop essential skills. As you read each chapter, start by studying the learning objectives. They will help you identify the most important concepts in the chapter and give you a feel for what you'll be learning. Each learning objective corresponds to one major heading within the chapter, so you can easily find the information it relates to. After the learning objectives, a compelling Communication Close-Up vignette featuring a successful company or professional shows you how the material you will encounter in the chapter is put to use in actual business situations.

At the end of each chapter, the Summary of Learning Objectives gives you the chance to quickly verify your grasp of important concepts. Following that, you'll see two sets of

questions that will help you test and apply your knowledge, and two sets of projects that will help you practice and expand your skills. Nine chapters also feature communication cases, which are more involved projects that require you to plan and complete a variety of messages and documents. All these activities are tagged by learning objective, so if you have any questions about the concepts you need to apply, just revisit that part of the chapter.

Several chapters have activities with downloadable media such as presentations and podcasts; if your instructor assigns these elements, follow the instructions in the text to locate the correct files.

In addition to the 19 chapters of the text itself, here are some special features that will help you succeed in the course and on the job:

- **Prologue: Building a Career with Your Communication Skills.** This section (immediately following this Preface) helps you understand today's dynamic workplace, the steps you can take to adapt to the job market, and the importance of creating an employment portfolio and building your personal brand.
- **Handbook.** The Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage (see page 601) is a convenient reference of essential business English.
- **Real-Time Updates.** You can use this unique newsfeed service to make sure you're always kept up to date on important topics. Plus, at strategic points in every chapter, you will be directed to the Real-Time Updates website to get the latest information about specific subjects. To sign up, visit real-timeupdates.com/bct14.
- **Business Communication Web Search.** With our unique web search approach, you can quickly format more than 325 specific types of online searches. This tool uses a simple and intuitive interface engineered to help you find precisely what you want, whether it's PowerPoint files, PDF files, Microsoft Word documents, Excel files, videos, podcasts, videos, or social bookmarks. Check it out at websearch.businesscommunicationnetwork.com.

About the Authors

Courtland L. Bovée and John V. Thill have been leading textbook authors for more than two decades, introducing millions of students to the fields of business and business communication. Their award-winning texts are distinguished by proven pedagogical features, extensive selections of contemporary case studies, hundreds of real-life examples, engaging writing, thorough research, and the unique integration of print and electronic resources. Each new edition reflects the authors' commitment to continuous refinement and improvement, particularly in terms of modeling the latest practices in business and the use of technology.

Professor Bovée has 22 years of teaching experience at Grossmont College in San Diego, where he has received teaching honors and was accorded that institution's C. Allen Paul Distinguished Chair. Mr. Thill is a prominent communications consultant who has worked with organizations ranging from Fortune 500 multinationals to entrepreneurial start-ups. He formerly held positions with Pacific Bell and Texaco.

Courtland Bovée and John Thill were recently awarded proclamations from the governor of Massachusetts for their lifelong contributions to education and for their commitment to the summer youth baseball program that is sponsored by the Boston Red Sox.



Acknowledgments

The 14th Edition of *Business Communication Today* reflects the professional experience of a large team of contributors and advisors. We express our thanks to the many individuals whose valuable suggestions and constructive comments influenced the success of this book.

REVIEWERS OF MODEL DOCUMENTS

Thank you to these professors for their thoughtful reviews of model documents: Zenobein Adams, Cleveland State University and Cuyahoga Community College; Judy

Bello, Lander University; Scott Buechler, Elon University; Herb Brown, Appalachian State University; Terry Engebretsen, Idaho State University; Linda Gregory, Seminole State College of Florida; Kathleen Norris, Loyola Marymount University; Elisabeth Power, Saint Martin's University; Joanne M. Slutsky, University at Buffalo; Melvin Charles Washington, Howard University; and Gail Yosh, Montclair State University.

REVIEWERS OF PREVIOUS EDITIONS

Thank you to the following professors: Lydia E. Anderson, Fresno City College; Victoria Austin, Las Positas College; Faridah Awang, Eastern Kentucky University; Jeanette Baldrige, University of Maine at Augusta; Diana Baran, Henry Ford Community College; JoAnne Barbieri, Atlantic Cape Community College; Kristina Beckman, John Jay College; Judy Bello, Lander University; Carol Bibby, Triton College; Nancy Bizal, University of Southern Indiana; Yvonne Block, College of Lake County; Edna Boroski, Trident Technical College; Nelvia M. Brady, Trinity Christian College; Arlene Broeker, Lincoln University; David Brooks, Indiana University Southeast; Carol Brown, South Puget Sound Community College; Domenic Bruni, University of Wisconsin; Jeff Bruns, Bacone College; Gertrude L. Burge, University of Nebraska; Sharon Burton, Brookhaven College; Robert Cabral, Oxnard College; Dorothy Campbell, Brevard Community College; Linda Carr, University of West Alabama; Alvaro Carreras Jr., Florida International University; Sharon Carson, St. Philip's College; Rick Carter, Seattle University; Dacia Charlesworth, Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne; Jean Chenu, Genesee Community College; Connie Clark, Lane Community College; Alvin Clarke, Iowa State University; Jerrie Cleaver, Central Texas College; Clare Coleman, Temple University; Michael P. Collins, Northern Arizona University; M. Cotton, North Central Missouri College; Pat Cowherd, Campbellsville University; Pat Cuchens, University of Houston–Clear Lake; Walt Dabek, Post University; Cathy Daly, California State University–Sacramento; Linda Davis, Copiah–Lincoln Community College; Christine R. Day, Eastern Michigan University; Harjit Dosanjh, North Seattle Community College; Amy Drees, Defiance College; Cynthia Drexel, Western State College of Colorado; Lou Dunham, Spokane Falls Community College; Donna Everett, Morehead State University; Donna Falconer, Anoka–Ramsey Community College; Kate Ferguson Marsters, Gannon University; Darlynn Fink, Clarion University of Pennsylvania; Bobbi Fisher, University of Nebraska–Omaha; Laura Fitzwater, Community College of Philadelphia; Lynda K. Fuller, Wilmington University; Matthew Gainous, Ogeechee Technical College; Yolande Gardner, Lawson State Community College; Gina Genova, University of California–Santa Barbara; Lonny Gilbert, Central State University; Camille Girardi-Levy, Siena College; Nancy Goehring, Monterey Peninsula College; Dawn Goellner, Bethel College; Robert Goldberg, Prince George's Community College; Jeffrey Goldberg, MassBay Community College; Helen Grattan, Des Moines Area Community College; Barbara Grayson, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff; Deborah Griffin, University of Houston–Clear Lake; Alice Griswold, Clarke College; Bonnie Grossman, College of Charleston; Lisa Gueldenzoph, North Carolina A&T State University; Wally Guyot, Fort Hays State University; Valerie Harrison, Cuyamaca College; Tim Hartge, The University of Michigan–Dearborn; Richard Heiens, University of South Carolina–Aiken; Maureece Heinert, Sinte Gleska University; Leighanne Heisel, University of Missouri–St. Louis; Gary Helfand, University of Hawaii–West Oahu; Cynthia Herrera, Orlando Culinary Academy; Kathy Hill, Sam Houston State University; Pashia Hogan, Northeast State Tech Community College; Sarah Holmes, New England Institute of Technology; Ruth Hopkins Zajdel, Ohio University–Chillicothe; Sheila Hostetler, Orange Coast College; Michael Hricik, Westmoreland County Community College; Rebecca Hsiao, East Los Angeles College; Mary Ann Hurd, Sauk Valley Community College; Pat Hurley, Leeward Community College; Harold Hurry, Sam Houston State University; Marcia James, University of Wisconsin–Whitewater; Frank Jaster, Tulane University; Jonatan Jelen, Parsons The New School For Design; Irene Joannette Gallio, Western Nevada Community College; Edgar Dunson Johnson III,

Augusta State University; Mark Johnson, Rhodes State College; Joanne Kapp, Siena College; Jeanette A. Karjala, Winona State University; Christy L. Kinnion, Lenior Community College; Deborah Kitchin, City College of San Francisco; Lisa Kirby, North Carolina Wesleyan College; Claudia Kirkpatrick, Carnegie Mellon University; Betty Kleen, Nicholls State University; Fran Kranz, Oakland University; Jana Langemach, University of Nebraska–Lincoln; Joan Lantry, Jefferson Community College; Kim Laux, Saginaw Valley State University; Kathryn J. Lee, University of Cincinnati; Anita Leffel, The University of Texas, San Antonio; Ruth Levy, Westchester Community College; Nancy Linger, Moraine Park Technical College; Jere Littlejohn, University of Mississippi; Dana Loewy, California State University–Fullerton; Jennifer Loney, Portland State University; Susan Long, Portland Community College; Sue Loomis, Maine Maritime Academy; Thomas Lowderbaugh, University of Maryland–College Park; Jayne Lowery, Jackson State Community College; Lloyd Matzner, University of Houston–Downtown; Ron McNeel, New Mexico State University at Alamogordo; Dr. Bill McPherson, Indiana University of Pennsylvania; Phyllis Mercer, Texas Woman’s University; Donna Meyerholz, Trinidad State Junior College; Annie Laurie I. Meyers, Northampton Community College; Catherine “Kay” Michael, St. Edward’s University; Kathleen Miller, University of Delaware; Gay Mills, Amarillo College; Julie Mullis, Wilkes Community College; Pamela Mulvey, Olney Central College; Jimidene Muphey, Clarendon College; Cindy Murphy, Southeastern Community College; Dipali Murti-Hali, California State University–Stanislaus; Shelley Myatt, University of Central Oklahoma; Cora Newcomb, Technical College of the Lowcountry; Ron Newman, Crafton Hills College; Linda Nitsch, Chadron State College; Leah Noonan, Laramie County Community College; Mabry O’Donnell, Marietta College; Diana Oltman, Central Washington University; Ranu Paik, Santa Monica College; Lauren Paisley, Genesee Community College; Patricia Palermo, Drew University; John Parrish, Tarrant County College; Diane Paul, TVI Community College; John T. Pauli, University of Alaska–Anchorage; Michael Pennell, University of Rhode Island; Sylvia Beaver Perez, Nyack College; Melinda Phillabaum, Indiana University; Ralph Phillips, Geneva College; Laura Pohopien, Cal Poly Pomona; Diane Powell, Utah Valley State College; Christine Pye, California Lutheran University; Norma Pygon, Triton College; Dave Rambow, Wayland Baptist University; Richard David Ramsey, Southeastern Louisiana University; Charles Riley, Tarrant County College–Northwest Campus; Jim Rucker, Fort Hays State University; Dr. Suzan Russell, Lehman College; Danielle Scane, Orange Coast College; Calvin Scheidt, Tidewater Community College; Nancy Schneider, University of Maine at Augusta; Brian Sheridan, Mercyhurst College; Melinda Shirey, Fresno City College; Bob Shirilla, Colorado State University; Joyce Simmons, Florida State University; Gordon J. Simpson, SUNY Cobleskill; Peggy Simpson, Dominican University; Eunice Smith, Bismarck State College; Jeff Smith, University of Southern California; Lorraine M. Smith, Fresno City College; Harvey Solganick, LeTourneau University–Dallas campus; Stephen Soucy, Santa Monica College; Linda Spargo, University of Mississippi; W. Dees Stallings, Park University; Sally Stanton, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee; Mark Steinbach, Austin Community College; Angelique Stevens, Monroe Community College; Steven Stovall, Wilmington College; Alden Talbot, Weber State University; Michele Taylor, Ogeechee Technical College; Wilma Thomason, Mid-South Community College; Ed Thompson, Jefferson Community College; Ann E. Tippet, Monroe Community College; Lori Townsend, Niagara County Community College; Lani Uyeno, Leeward Community College; Wendy Van Hatten, Western Iowa Tech Community College; Jay Wagers, Richmond Community College; John Waltman, Eastern Michigan University; Jie Wang, University of Illinois at Chicago; Chris Ward, The University of Findlay; Dorothy Warren, Middle Tennessee State University; Glenda Waterman, Concordia University; Kellie Welch, Jefferson Community College; Bradley S. Wesner, Nova Southeastern University; Mathew Williams, Clover Park Technical College; Beth Williams, Stark State College of Technology; Brian Wilson, College of Marin; and Sandra D. Young, Orangeburg–Calhoun Technical College.

REVIEWERS OF DOCUMENT MAKEOVERS

We sincerely thank the following reviewers for their assistance with the Document Makeover feature: Lisa Barley, Eastern Michigan University; Marcia Bordman, Gallaudet University; Jean Bush-Bacelis, Eastern Michigan University; Bobbye Davis, Southern Louisiana University; Cynthia Drexel, Western State College of Colorado; Kenneth Gibbs, Worcester State College; Ellen Leathers, Bradley University; Diana McKowen, Indiana University; Bobbie Nicholson, Mars Hill College; Andrew Smith, Holyoke Community College; Jay Stubblefield, North Carolina Wesleyan College; and Dawn Wallace, Southeastern Louisiana University.

MYLAB CONTRIBUTORS

George Bernard, Seminole State College of Florida; Gina L. Genova, University of California, Santa Barbara; Nancy Nygaard, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee; Storm Russo, Valencia College; and Susan C. Schanne, Eastern Michigan University.

PERSONAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We extend a heartfelt thanks to our many friends, acquaintances, and business associates who provided materials or agreed to be interviewed so that we could bring the real world into the classroom.

A very special acknowledgment goes to George Dovel, whose superb writing skills, distinguished background, and wealth of business experience assured this project of clarity and completeness. Also, recognition and thanks to Jackie Estrada for her outstanding skills and excellent attention to details. Her creation of the “Peak Performance Grammar and Mechanics” material is especially noteworthy.

We also feel it is important to acknowledge and thank the Association for Business Communication, an organization whose meetings and publications provide a valuable forum for the exchange of ideas and for professional growth.

In addition, we thank Susan Schanne of Eastern Michigan University, Christine Laursen of Red Rocks Community College, and Laura A. LeDoux of Fullerton College for their assistance in preparing supplements for this new edition.

We extend our warmest appreciation to the devoted professionals at Pearson Higher Education for their commitment to producing high-value, student-focused texts, including Donna Battista, Vice President, Business Publishing; Stephanie Wall, Director of Portfolio Management; Daniel Tylman, Portfolio Manager; Ashley Santora, Managing Producer, Business; Linda Albelli, Editorial Assistant; Jeff Holcomb, Director of Production, Business; Becky Brown, Product Marketer; and Lenny Ann Kucenski, Field Marketing Manager. We are also grateful to Nicole Suddeth and Julie Kidd of SPi Global.

Courtland L. Bovée
John V. Thill

Prologue

BUILDING A CAREER WITH YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Using This Course to Help Launch Your Career

This course will help you develop vital communication skills that you'll use throughout your career—and those skills can help you launch an interesting and rewarding career, too. This brief prologue sets the stage by helping you understand today's dynamic workplace, the steps you can take to adapt to the job market, and the importance of creating an employment portfolio and building your personal brand. Take a few minutes to read it while you think about the career you hope to create for yourself.

UNDERSTANDING THE CHANGING WORLD OF WORK

Even as the U.S. economy recovers from the Great Recession and employment levels improve, you're likely to encounter some challenges as you start or continue with your business career. As companies around the world try to gain competitive advantages and cost efficiencies, employment patterns will vary from industry to industry and region to region.

The ups and downs of the economic cycle are not the only dynamic elements that will affect your career, however. The nature of employment itself is changing, with a growing number of independent workers and loosely structured *virtual organizations* that engage these workers for individual projects or short-term contracts, rather than hiring employees. In fact, one recent study predicted that independent workers will outnumber conventional employees in the United States by 2020.¹

This new model of work offers some compelling advantages for workers and companies alike. Companies can lower their fixed costs, adapt more easily to economic fluctuations and competitive moves, and get access to specialized talent for specific project needs.² Workers can benefit from the freedom to choose the clients and projects that interest them the most, the flexibility to work as much or as little as they want, and (thanks to advances in communication technology) access to compelling work even if they live far from major employment centers such as New York City or California's Silicon Valley.³

On the other hand, this new approach also presents some significant challenges for all parties. These flexibilities and freedoms can create more complexity for workers and managers, diminished loyalties on both sides, uncertainty about the future, issues with skill development and training, and problems with accountability and liability.⁴ Many of these challenges involve communication, making solid communication skills more important than ever.

These changes could affect you even if you pursue traditional employment throughout your career. Within organizations, you're likely to work with a combination of "inside" employees and "outside" contractors, which can affect the dynamics of the workplace. And the availability of more independent workers in the talent marketplace gives employers more options and more leverage, so full-time employees may find themselves competing against freelancers, at least indirectly.

As you navigate this uncertain future, keep two vital points in mind. First, don't wait for your career to just happen: Take charge of your career and stay in charge of it. Explore all your options and have a plan, but be prepared to change course as opportunities and



Are you comfortable working on your own? Independent workers have become an important part of the global workforce.

threats appear on the horizon. Second, don't count on employers to take care of you. The era of lifetime employment, in which an employee committed to one company for life with the understanding it would return the loyalty, is long gone. From finding opportunities to developing the skills you need in order to succeed, it's up to you to manage your career and look out for your own best interests.

How Employers View Today's Job Market

From an employer's perspective, the employment process is always a question of balance. Maintaining a stable workforce can improve practically every aspect of business performance, yet many employers want the flexibility to shrink and expand payrolls as business conditions change. Employers obviously want to attract the best talent, but the best talent is more expensive and more vulnerable to offers from competitors, so there are always financial trade-offs to consider.

Employers also struggle with the ups and downs of the economy. When unemployment is low, the balance of power shifts to employees, and employers have to compete in order to attract and keep top talent. When unemployment is high, the power shifts back to employers, who can afford to be more selective and less accommodating. In other words, pay attention to the economy; at times you can be more aggressive in your demands, but at other times you need to be more accommodating.

Companies view employment as a complex business decision with lots of variables to consider. To make the most of your potential, regardless of the career path you pursue, you need to view employment in the same way.

What Employers Look for in Job Applicants

Given the complex forces in the contemporary workplace and the unrelenting pressure of global competition, what are employers looking for in the candidates they hire? The short answer: a lot. Like all "buyers," companies want to get as much as they can for the money they spend. The closer you can present yourself as the ideal candidate, the better your chances of getting a crack at the most exciting opportunities.

Specific expectations vary by profession and position, of course, but virtually all employers look for the following general skills and attributes:⁵

- **Communication skills.** The reason this item is listed first isn't that you're reading a business communication textbook. Communication is listed first because it is far and away the most commonly mentioned skill set when employers are asked about



Communication skills will benefit your career, no matter what path or profession you pursue.

what they look for in employees. Improving your communication skills will help in every aspect of your professional life.

- **Interpersonal and team skills.** You will have many individual responsibilities on the job, but chances are you won't work alone very often. Learn to work with others and help them succeed as you succeed.
- **Intercultural and international awareness and sensitivity.** Successful employers tend to be responsive to diverse workforces, markets, and communities, and they look for employees with the same outlook.
- **Data collection, analysis, and decision-making skills.** Employers want people who know how to identify information needs, find the necessary data, convert the data into useful knowledge, and make sound decisions.
- **Digital, social, and mobile media skills.** Today's workers need to know how to use common office software and to communicate using a wide range of digital media and systems.
- **Time and resource management.** If you've had to juggle multiple priorities during college, consider that great training for the business world. Your ability to plan projects and manage the time and resources available to you will make a big difference on the job.
- **Flexibility and adaptability.** Stuff happens, as they say. Employees who can roll with the punches and adapt to changing business priorities and circumstances will go further (and be happier) than employees who resist change.
- **Professionalism.** Professionalism is the quality of performing at the highest possible level and conducting oneself with confidence, purpose, and pride. True professionals strive to excel, continue to hone their skills and build their knowledge, are dependable and accountable, demonstrate a sense of business etiquette, make ethical decisions, show loyalty and commitment, don't give up when things get tough, and maintain a positive outlook.

Adapting to Today's Job Market

Adapting to the workplace is a lifelong process of seeking the best fit between what you want to do and what employers (or clients, if you work independently) are willing to pay you to do. It's important to think about what you want to do during the many thousands of hours you will spend working, what you have to offer, and how to make yourself more attractive to employers.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

Economic necessities and the vagaries of the marketplace will influence much of what happens in your career, of course, and you may not always have the opportunity to do the kind of work you would really like to do. Even if you can’t get the job you want right now, though, start your job search by examining your values and interests. Doing so will give you a better idea of where you want to be eventually, and you can use those insights to learn and grow your way toward that ideal situation. Consider these questions:

- **What would you like to do every day?** Research occupations that interest you. Find out what people really do every day. Ask friends, relatives, alumni from your school, and contacts in your social networks. Read interviews with people in various professions to get a sense of what their careers are like.
- **How would you like to work?** Consider how much independence you want on the job, how much variety you like, and whether you prefer to work with products, machines, people, ideas, figures, or some combination thereof.
- **How do your financial goals fit with your other priorities?** For instance, many high-paying jobs involve a lot of stress, sacrifices of time with family and friends, and frequent travel or relocation. If location, lifestyle, intriguing work, or other factors are more important to you, you may well have to sacrifice some level of pay to achieve them.
- **Have you established some general career goals?** For example, do you want to pursue a career specialty such as finance or manufacturing, or do you want to gain experience in multiple areas with an eye toward upper management?
- **What sort of corporate culture are you most comfortable with?** Would you be happy in a formal hierarchy with clear reporting relationships? Or do you prefer less structure? Teamwork or individualism? Do you like a competitive environment?

You might need some time in the workforce to figure out what you really want to do or to work your way into the job you really want, but it’s never too early to start thinking about where you want to be. Filling out the assessment in Table 1 might help you get a clearer picture of the nature of work you would like to pursue in your career.

TABLE 1 Career Self-Assessment

Activity or Situation	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	No Preference
1. I want to work independently.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
2. I want variety in my work.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
3. I want to work with people.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
4. I want to work with technology.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
5. I want physical work.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
6. I want mental work.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
7. I want to work for a large organization.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
8. I want to work for a nonprofit organization.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
9. I want to work for a small business.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
10. I want to work for a service business.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
11. I want to start or buy a business someday.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
12. I want regular, predictable work hours.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
13. I want to work in a city location.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
14. I want to work in a small town or suburb.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
15. I want to work in another country.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
16. I want to work outdoors.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
17. I want to work in a structured environment.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
18. I want to avoid risk as much as possible.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
19. I want to enjoy my work, even if that means making less money.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
20. I want to become a high-level corporate manager.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO OFFER?

Knowing what you want to do is one thing. Knowing what a company is willing to pay you to do is another thing entirely. You may already have a good idea of what you can offer employers. If not, some brainstorming can help you identify your skills, interests, and characteristics. Start by jotting down achievements you're proud of and experiences that were satisfying, and think carefully about what specific skills these achievements demanded of you. For example, leadership skills, speaking ability, and artistic talent may have helped you coordinate a successful class project. As you analyze your achievements, you may well begin to recognize a pattern of skills. Which of them might be valuable to potential employers?

Next, look at your educational preparation, work experience, and extracurricular activities. What do your knowledge and experience qualify you to do? What have you learned from volunteer work or class projects that could benefit you on the job? Have you held any offices, won any awards or scholarships, mastered a second language? What skills have you developed in nonbusiness situations that could transfer to a business position?

Take stock of your personal characteristics. Are you aggressive, a born leader? Or would you rather follow? Are you outgoing, articulate, great with people? Or do you prefer working alone? Make a list of what you believe are your four or five most important qualities. Ask a relative or friend to rate your traits as well.

If you're having difficulty figuring out your interests, characteristics, or capabilities, consult your college career center. Many campuses administer a variety of tests that can help you identify interests, aptitudes, and personality traits. These tests won't reveal your "perfect" job, but they'll help you focus on the types of work best suited to your personality.

HOW CAN YOU MAKE YOURSELF MORE VALUABLE?

While you're figuring out what you want from a job and what you can offer an employer, you can take positive steps toward building your career. First, look for volunteer projects, temporary jobs, freelance work, or internships that will help expand your experience base and skill set.⁶ You can look for freelance projects on Craigslist and numerous other websites; some of these jobs have only nominal pay, but they do provide an opportunity for you to display your skills. Also consider applying your talents to *crowdsourcing* projects, in which companies and nonprofit organizations invite the public to contribute solutions to various challenges.

These opportunities help you gain valuable experience and relevant contacts, provide you with important references and work samples for your employment portfolio, and help you establish your personal brand (see the following sections).

Second, learn more about the industry or industries in which you want to work and stay on top of new developments. Join networks of professional colleagues and friends who can help you keep up with trends and events. Many professional societies have student chapters or offer students discounted memberships. Take courses and pursue other educational or life experiences that would be difficult while working full time.

BUILDING AN EMPLOYMENT PORTFOLIO

Employers want proof that you have the skills to succeed on the job, but even if you don't have much relevant work experience, you can use your college classes to assemble that proof. Simply create and maintain an *employment portfolio*, which is a collection of projects that demonstrate your skills and knowledge. You can create a *print portfolio* and an *e-portfolio*; both can help with your career effort. A print portfolio gives you something tangible to bring to interviews, and it lets you collect project results that might not be easy to show online, such as a handsomely bound report. An e-portfolio is a multimedia presentation of your skills and experiences.⁷ Think of it as a website that contains your résumé, work samples, letters of recommendation, relevant videos or podcasts you have recorded, any blog posts or articles you have written, and other information about

you and your skills. The portfolio can be burned on a CD or DVD for physical distribution or, more commonly, it can be posted online—whether on a personal website, your college’s site (if student pages are available), or a specialized portfolio hosting site such as Behance. To see a selection of student e-portfolios from colleges around the United States, go to real-timeupdates.com/bct14, select Student Assignments, and locate the link to student e-portfolios.

Throughout this course, pay close attention to the assignments marked “Portfolio Builder” (they start in Chapter 7). These items will make particularly good samples of not only your communication skills but also your ability to understand and solve business-related challenges. By combining these projects with samples from your other courses, you can create a compelling portfolio when you’re ready to start interviewing. Your portfolio is also a great resource for writing your résumé because it reminds you of all the great work you’ve done over the years. Moreover, you can continue to refine and expand your portfolio throughout your career; many professionals use e-portfolios to advertise their services.

As you assemble your portfolio, collect anything that shows your ability to perform, whether it’s in school, on the job, or in other venues. However, you *must* check with employers before including any items that you created while you were an employee, and check with clients before including any *work products* (anything you wrote, designed, programmed, and so on) they purchased from you. Many business documents contain confidential information that companies don’t want distributed to outside audiences.

For each item you add to your portfolio, write a brief description that helps other people understand the meaning and significance of the project. Include such items as these:

- **Background.** Why did you undertake this project? Was it a school project, a work assignment, or something you did on your own initiative?
- **Project objectives.** Explain the project’s goals, if relevant.
- **Collaborators.** If you worked with others, be sure to mention that and discuss team dynamics if appropriate. For instance, if you led the team or worked with others long distance as a virtual team, point that out.
- **Constraints.** Sometimes the most impressive thing about a project is the time or budget constraints under which it was created. If such constraints apply to a project, consider mentioning them in a way that doesn’t sound like an excuse for poor quality. If you had only one week to create a website, for example, you might say that “One of the intriguing challenges of this project was the deadline; I had only one week to design, compose, test, and publish this material.”
- **Outcomes.** If the project’s goals were measurable, what was the result? For example, if you wrote a letter soliciting donations for a charitable cause, how much money did you raise?
- **Learning experience.** If appropriate, describe what you learned during the course of the project.

Keep in mind that the portfolio itself is a communication project, so be sure to apply everything you’ll learn in this course about effective communication and good design. Assume that potential employers will find your e-portfolio site (even if you don’t tell them about it), so don’t include anything that could come back to haunt you. Also, if you have anything embarrassing on Facebook, Twitter, or any other social networking site, remove it immediately.

To get started, first check with the career center at your college; many schools offer e-portfolio systems for their students. (Some schools now require e-portfolios, so you may already be building one.) You can also find plenty of advice online; search for “e-portfolio,” “student portfolio,” or “professional portfolio.”

BUILDING YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

Products and companies have brands that represent collections of certain attributes, such as the safety emphasis of Volvo cars, the performance emphasis of BMW, or the luxury emphasis of Cadillac. Similarly, when people who know you think about you, they have a particular set of qualities in mind based on your professionalism, your priorities, and the various skills and attributes you have developed over the years. Perhaps without even being conscious of it, you have created a *personal brand* for yourself.

As you plan the next stage of your career, start managing your personal brand deliberately. The branding specialist Mohammed Al-Taei defines personal branding succinctly as “a way of clarifying and communicating what makes you different and special.”⁸

You will have multiple opportunities to plan and refine your personal brand during this course. For example, Chapter 8 offers tips on business applications of social media, which are key to personal branding, and Chapters 18 and 19 guide you through the process of creating a résumé, building your network, and presenting yourself in interviews. To get you started, here are the basics of a successful personal branding strategy:⁹

- **Figure out the “story of you.”** Simply put, where have you been in life, and where are you going? Every good story has dramatic tension that pulls readers in and makes them wonder what will happen next. Where is your story going next? Chapter 18 offers more on this personal brand-building approach.
- **Clarify your professional theme.** Volvos, BMWs, and Cadillacs can all get you from point A to point B in safety, comfort, and style, but each brand emphasizes some attributes more than others to create a specific image in the minds of potential buyers. Similarly, you want to be seen as something more than just an accountant, a supervisor, a salesperson. What will your theme be? Brilliant strategist? Hard-nosed, get-it-done tactician? Technical guru? Problem solver? Creative genius? Inspirational leader?
- **Reach out and connect.** Major corporations spread the word about their brands with multimillion-dollar advertising campaigns. You can promote your brand at little or no cost. The secret is networking, which you’ll learn more about in Chapter 18. You build your brand by connecting with like-minded people, sharing information, demonstrating skills and knowledge, and helping others succeed.
- **Deliver on your brand’s promise—every time, all the time.** When you promote a brand, you make a promise—a promise that whoever buys that brand will get the benefits you are promoting. All of this planning and communication is of no value if you fail to deliver on the promises your branding efforts make. Conversely, when you deliver quality results time after time, your talents and professionalism will speak for you.

USING ALL THE JOB-SEARCH TOOLS AT YOUR DISPOSAL

As a final note, be sure to use all the job-search tools and resources available to you. For example, many companies now offer mobile apps that give you a feel for what it’s like to work there and let you search for job openings. A variety of apps and websites can help you find jobs, practice interviewing, and build your professional network.

We wish you great success in this course and in your career!

Endnotes

1. Ryan Kim, “By 2020, Independent Workers Will Be the Majority,” *GigaOm*, 8 December 2011, gigaom.com.
2. Darren Dahl, “Want a Job? Let the Bidding Begin,” *Inc.*, March 2011, 93–96; Thomas W. Malone, Robert J. Laubacher, and Tammy Johns, “The Age of Hyperspecialization,” *Harvard Business Review*, July–August 2011, 56–65; Jennifer Wang, “The Solution to the Innovator’s Dilemma,” *Entrepreneur*, August 2011, 24–32.
3. “LiveOps and Vision Perry Create New Work Opportunities for Rural Tennessee,” LiveOps press release, 18 July 2011, www.liveops.com; Malone et al., “The Age of Hyperspecialization.”
4. Adapted from Dahl, “Want a Job? Let the Bidding Begin”; Malone et al., “The Age of Hyperspecialization”; Wang, “The Solution to the Innovator’s Dilemma”; Marjorie Derven, “Managing the Matrix in the New Normal,” *T+D*, July 2010, 42–47.
5. Courtland L. Bovée and John V. Thill, *Business in Action*, 5th ed. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2010), 18–21; Randall S. Hansen and Katharine Hansen, “What Do Employers Really Want? Top Skills and Values Employers Seek from Job-Seekers,” *QuintCareers.com*, accessed 17 August 2010, www.quintcareers.com.
6. Nancy M. Somerick, “Managing a Communication Internship Program,” *Bulletin of the Association for Business Communication* 56, no. 3 (1993): 10–20.
7. Jeffrey R. Young, “‘E-Portfolios’ Could Give Students a New Sense of Their Accomplishments,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 8 March 2002, A31.
8. Mohammed Al-Tae, “Personal Branding,” Al-Tae blog, accessed 17 August 2010, altaeeblog.com.
9. Pete Kistler, “Seth Godin’s 7-Point Guide to Bootstrap Your Personal Brand,” Personal Branding blog, 28 July 2010, www.personalbrandingblog; Kyle Lacy, “10 Ways to Building Your Personal Brand Story,” Personal Branding blog, 5 August 2010, www.personalbrandingblog; Al-Tae, “Personal Branding”; Scot Herrick, “30 Career Management Tips—Marketing AND Delivery Support Our Personal Brand,” Cube Rules blog, 8 September 2007, cuberules.com; Alina Tugend, “Putting Yourself Out There on a Shelf to Buy,” *New York Times*, 27 March 2009, www.nytimes.com.

PART 1

Understanding the Foundations of Business Communication

CHAPTER **1** Professional Communication in a Digital,
Social, Mobile World

CHAPTER **2** Collaboration, Interpersonal Communication,
and Business Etiquette

CHAPTER **3** Communication Challenges in a Diverse,
Global Marketplace

No other skill can help your career in as many ways as communication. Discover what business communication is all about, why communication skills are essential to your career, how social and mobile technologies are revolutionizing business communication, and how to adapt your communication experiences in life and college to the business world. Improve your skills in such vital areas as team interaction, etiquette, listening, and nonverbal communication. Explore the advantages and the challenges of a diverse workforce and develop the skills that every communicator needs to succeed in today's global, multicultural business environment.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, you will be able to

- 1 Explain the importance of effective communication to your career and to the companies where you will work.
- 2 Explain what it means to communicate as a professional in a business context.
- 3 Describe the communication process model and the ways social media are changing the nature of business communication.
- 4 Outline the challenges and opportunities of mobile communication in business.
- 5 List four general guidelines for using communication technology effectively.
- 6 Define *ethics*, explain the difference between an ethical dilemma and an ethical lapse, and list six guidelines for making ethical communication choices.

MyBCommLab®

★ Improve Your Grade! More than 10 million students improved their results using Pearson MyLabs. Visit **mybcommmlab.com** for simulations, tutorials, and end-of-chapter problems.

COMMUNICATION CLOSE-UP AT JetBlue

twitter.com/jetblue

If you have ever worked in retail, customer service, or a similar job, you know what a challenge it can be to make sure each customer has a great experience with your company. Imagine the challenge of keeping 35 million customers happy. That's how many passengers JetBlue carries every year—an average of roughly 95,000 customers per day.

As a relatively new airline, taking its first flight in 2000, JetBlue has always tried to differentiate itself from the older carriers in the business. A great example is its pioneering use of Twitter as a customer service platform. JetBlue joined Twitter in 2007, only a year after the microblogging service launched and well before most companies were aware of its potential for business communication. The company views its website as the central hub of its online presence, but social media (the company is quite active on Facebook as well, with over a million likes) provide a vital connection between customers and the website. In fact, digital communication of all forms is so important that the company considers itself a digital brand.

The airline was also one of the first companies to truly get the *social* part of social media—that Twitter and other systems were about more than just pushing information outward. Morgan Johnstone, the JetBlue communications staffer who got the company started on Twitter, recognized early on the power of listening via social media. He wanted to hear what people



JetBlue's use of social media for customer support coincides perfectly with air travelers' use of mobile devices.

© AR Images/Alamy Stock Photo

were saying about the company, whether it was plea for help during travel, a compliment for a company employee, or even an unpleasant criticism. This interaction became so valuable to the company that it now has more than two dozen Twitter agents all ready to interact in real time with the 2 million travelers who follow the company. They answer questions, resolve problems and complaints, and even rebook flights on the spot if needed. (When a customer needs specific help, JetBlue's Twitter team usually takes the conversation private via direct messaging, and its Twitter homepage now encourages customer with service issues to phone or email for help.)

For a company that is all about moving people from point A to point B, it's no surprise that mobile communication has become an essential part of JetBlue's connection with its customers. Customers who ask for help or who post complaints on Twitter often do so via their mobile devices, whether they're on their way to catch a flight, stuck in an airport trying to rebook on a different flight, or even on board an aircraft waiting to take off. Mobile is now a core element in the company's communication strategy, with a mobile-friendly website and JetBlue smartphone apps. However the company innovates as it moves forward, its focus will be on using digital, social, and mobile communication to make sure customers have the best possible experience.¹

Understanding Why Communication Matters

1 LEARNING OBJECTIVE
Explain the importance of effective communication to your career and to the companies where you will work.

Communication is the process of transferring information and meaning between senders and receivers.

Whether it's as simple as a smile or as ambitious as JetBlue's social media program (profiled in the chapter-opening Communication Close-Up), **communication** is the process of transferring information and meaning between *senders* and *receivers*, using one or more media and communication channels. The essence of communication is sharing—providing data, information, insights, and inspiration in an exchange that benefits both you and the people with whom you are communicating.² As Figure 1.1 indicates, this sharing can happen in a variety of ways, including simple and successful transfers of information, negotiations in which the sender and receiver arrive at an agreed-on meaning, and unsuccessful attempts in which the receiver creates a different message than the one the sender intended.

You will invest a lot of time and energy in this course developing your communication skills, so it's fair to ask whether the effort will be worthwhile. This section outlines the many ways in which good communication skills are critical for your career and for any company you join.

COMMUNICATION IS IMPORTANT TO YOUR CAREER

Ambition and great ideas aren't enough; you need to be able to communicate with people to succeed in business.

Improving your communication skills may be the single most important step you can take in your career. You can have the greatest ideas in the world, but they're no good to your company or your career if you can't express them clearly and persuasively. Some jobs, such as sales and customer support, are primarily about communicating. In fields such as engineering or finance, you often need to share complex ideas with executives, customers, and colleagues, and your ability to connect with people outside your field can be as important as your technical expertise. If you have the entrepreneurial urge, you will need to communicate with a wide range of audiences—from investors, bankers, and government regulators to employees, customers, and business partners.

The changing nature of employment is putting new pressure on communication skills, too. Many companies now supplement their permanent workforces with independent contractors who are brought on for a short period or even just a single project. Chances are you will spend some of your career as one of these freelancers, working without the support network that an established company environment provides. You will have to “sell yourself” into each new contract, communicate successfully in a wide range of work situations, and take full responsibility for your career growth and success.

If you launch a company or move into an executive role in an existing organization, you can expect communication to consume the majority of your time. Top executives spend most of their workdays communicating, and businesspeople who can't communicate well don't stand much chance of reaching the top.

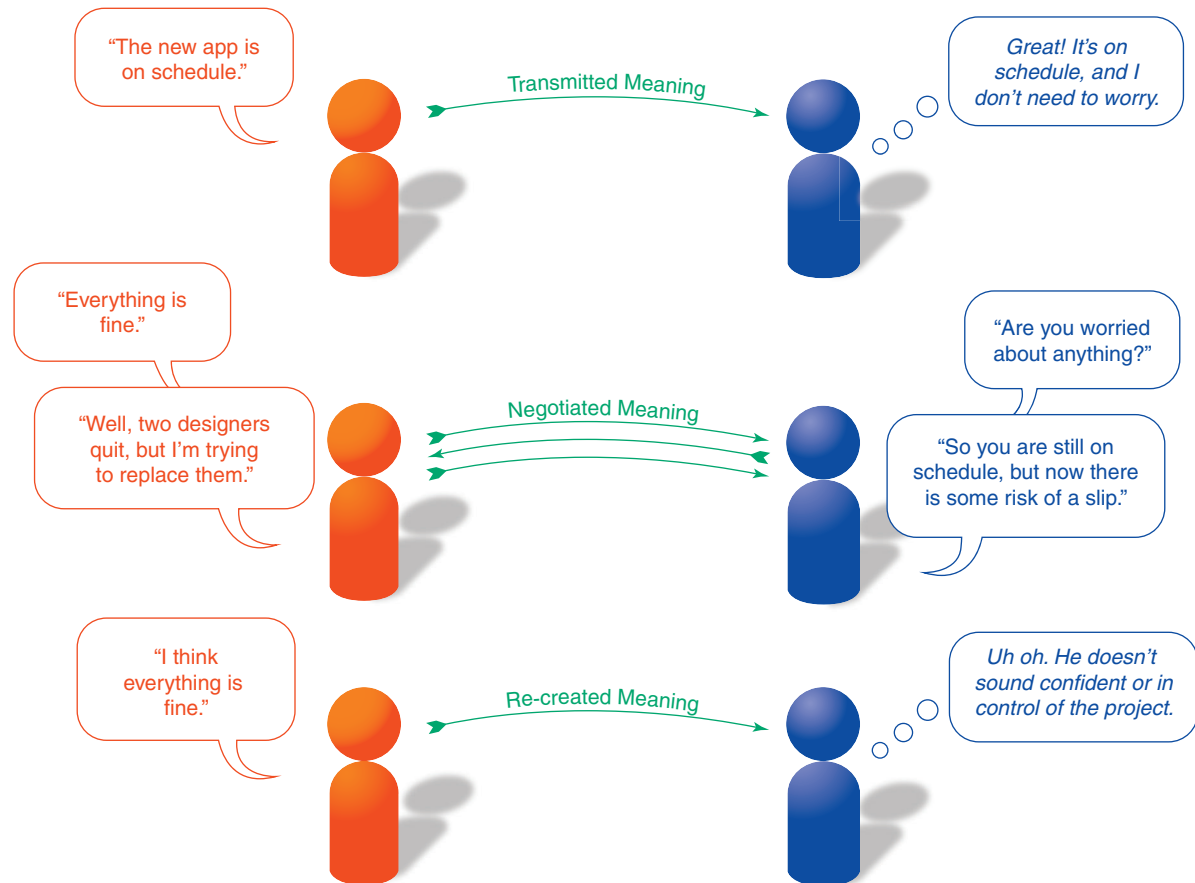



Figure 1.1 Sharing Information

These three exchanges between a software project manager (*left*) and his boss (*right*) illustrate the variety of ways in which information is shared between senders and receivers. In the top exchange, the sender's meaning is transmitted intact to the receiver, who accepts what the sender says at face value. In the middle exchange, the sender and receiver negotiate the meaning by discussing the situation. The negotiated meaning is that everything is fine so *far*, but the risk of a schedule slip is now higher than it was before. In the bottom exchange, the receiver has a negative emotional reaction to the word *think* and as a result creates her own meaning—that everything probably *is not* fine, despite what the sender says.

In fact, improving your communication skills may be the single most important step you can take in your career. The world is full of good marketing strategists, good accountants, good engineers, and good attorneys—but it is not full of good communicators. View this as an opportunity to stand out from your competition in the job market.

Employers sometimes express frustration at the poor communication skills of many employees—particularly recent college graduates who haven't yet learned how to adapt their communication styles to a professional business environment.³ If you learn to write well, speak well, listen well, and recognize the appropriate way to communicate in any situation, you'll gain a major advantage that will serve you throughout your career.⁴

Strong communication skills give you an advantage in the job market.



REAL-TIME UPDATES

LEARN MORE BY VISITING THIS WEBSITE

Check out the cutting edge of business communication

This Pinterest board created by the authors highlights some of the most important changes taking place in the field of business communication. Go to real-timeupdates.com/bct14 and select Learn More in the Students section.

COMMUNICATION IS IMPORTANT TO YOUR COMPANY

Aside from the personal benefits, communication should be important to you because it is important to your company. Effective communication helps businesses in numerous ways, by promoting⁵

- A stronger sense of trust between individuals and organizations
- Closer ties with important communities in the marketplace

Effective communication yields numerous business benefits.

- Opportunities to influence conversations, perceptions, and trends
- Increased productivity and faster problem solving
- Better financial results and higher return for investors
- Earlier warning of potential problems, from increasing business costs to critical safety issues
- Stronger decision making based on timely, reliable information
- Clearer and more persuasive marketing messages
- Greater employee engagement with their work, leading to higher employee satisfaction and lower employee turnover

WHAT MAKES BUSINESS COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVE?

Effective communication strengthens the connections between a company and all of its **stakeholders**—those groups affected in some way by the company’s actions: customers, employees, shareholders, suppliers, neighbors, the community, the nation, and the world as a whole.⁶ To make your communication efforts as effective as possible, focus on making them practical, factual, concise, clear, and persuasive:

Effective messages are *practical, factual, concise, clear, and persuasive*.

- **Provide practical information.** Give recipients useful information, whether it’s to help them perform a desired action or understand a new company policy.
- **Give facts rather than vague impressions.** Use concrete language, specific detail, and information that is clear, convincing, accurate, and ethical. Even when an opinion is called for, present compelling evidence to support your conclusion.
- **Present information in a concise, efficient manner.** Concise messages show respect for people’s time, and they increase the chances of a positive response. Do your best to simplify complex subjects to help your readers, and make sure you don’t inadvertently complicate simple subjects through careless writing.⁷ The ability to explain a complex subject in simple terms is immensely valuable, whether you’re training new employees or pitching a business plan to investors.
- **Clarify expectations and responsibilities.** Craft messages to generate a specific response from a specific audience. When appropriate, clearly state what you expect from audience members or what you can do for them.
- **Offer compelling, persuasive arguments and recommendations.** Show your readers precisely how they will benefit by responding to your message in the way you want them to.

Keep these five important characteristics in mind as you compare the ineffective and effective versions of the message in Figure 1.2.

Communicating as a Professional

2 LEARNING OBJECTIVE
Explain what it means to communicate as a professional in a business context.

You’ve been communicating your entire life, of course, but if you don’t have a lot of work experience yet, meeting the expectations of a professional environment might require some adjustment. A good place to start is to consider what it means to be a professional. **Professionalism** is the quality of performing at a high level and conducting oneself with purpose and pride. It means doing more than putting in the hours and collecting a paycheck: True professionals go beyond minimum expectations and commit to making meaningful contributions. Professionalism can be broken down into six distinct traits: striving to excel, being dependable and accountable, being a team player, demonstrating a sense of etiquette, making ethical decisions, and maintaining a positive outlook (see Figure 1.3 on page 8).

Communication is an essential part of being a successful professional.

A key message to glean from Figure 1.3 is how much these elements of professionalism depend on effective communication. For example, to be a team player, you have to be able to collaborate, resolve conflicts, and interact with a wide variety of personalities. Without strong communication skills, you won’t be able to perform to your potential, and others won’t recognize you as the professional you’d like to be.

Ineffective

Effective

(a) The vague subject line fails to alert people to the upcoming meeting.

(b) The greeting is cold and off-putting.

(c) The opening paragraph fails to provide necessary background information for anyone who missed the meeting.

(d) A negative, accusatory tone puts readers on the defensive, and the request for action fails to clarify who needs to do what by when.

(e) The meeting information includes the day, but not the date, which could lead to confusion.

(f) The wording here assumes that people who won't attend don't want to, which might not be true. The writer also fails to invite questions ahead of the meeting.

(g) The lack of a closing (such as "Thank you;") contributes to the harsh, abrupt tone.

(h) The writer fails to provide alternative contact information or invite questions about the meeting.

(a) An informative subject line helps people grasp important details immediately. →

(b) The greeting is friendly without being too casual. →

(c) The opening paragraph fills in missing information so that everyone can grasp the importance of the message. →

(d) This upbeat paragraph emphasizes the positive value of the meeting, and the request provides enough information to enable readers to respond. →

(e) The date eliminates scheduling uncertainty. →

(f) The writer offers everyone a chance to participate, without making anyone feel guilty about not being able to attend in person. The closing paragraph invites questions ahead of time so they don't derail the meeting. →

(g) Like the greeting, the close has a warm and personal tone, without being too casual. →

(h) The email signature provides additional information and alternative contact options. →

Figure 1.2 Effective Professional Communication

At first glance, the top email message here looks like a reasonable attempt at communicating with the members of a project team. However, compare it with the bottom version by referencing the notes lettered (a) through (h) to see just how many problems the original message really has.



Figure 1.3 Elements of Professionalism

To be respected as a true professional, develop these six qualities.

This section offers a brief look at the skills employers will expect you to have, the nature of communication in an organizational environment, and the importance of adopting an audience-centered approach.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT EMPLOYERS EXPECT FROM YOU

Employers expect you to possess a wide range of communication skills.

Today's employers expect you to be competent at a wide range of communication tasks. Fortunately, the skills employers expect from you are the same skills that will help you advance in your career:⁸

- Recognizing information needs, using efficient search techniques to locate reliable sources of information (particularly from online sources), and using gathered information ethically; this collection of skills is often referred to as *digital information fluency*⁹
- Organizing ideas and information logically and completely
- Expressing ideas and information coherently, persuasively, and concisely
- Actively listening to others
- Communicating effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and experiences
- Using communication technologies effectively and efficiently
- Following accepted standards of grammar, spelling, and other aspects of high-quality writing and speaking
- Communicating in a civilized manner that reflects contemporary expectations of business etiquette, even when dealing with indifferent or hostile audiences
- Communicating ethically, even when choices aren't crystal clear or you have to share news that people don't want to hear

- Managing your time wisely and using resources efficiently
- Using **critical thinking**, which is the ability to evaluate evidence completely and objectively in order to form logical conclusions and make sound recommendations

You'll have the opportunity to practice these skills throughout this course, but don't stop there. Successful professionals continue to hone communication skills throughout their careers.

COMMUNICATING IN AN ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

In addition to having the proper skills, you need to learn how to apply those skills in the business environment, which can be quite different from the social and scholastic environments you are accustomed to. Every organization has a **formal communication network**, in which ideas and information flow along the lines of command (the hierarchical levels) in the company's organization structure (see Figure 1.4). Throughout the formal network, information flows in three directions. *Downward communication* flows from executives to employees, conveying executive decisions and providing information that helps employees do their jobs. *Upward communication* flows from employees to executives, providing insight into problems, trends, opportunities, grievances, and performance, thus allowing executives to solve problems and make intelligent decisions. *Horizontal communication* flows between departments to help employees share information, coordinate tasks, and solve complex problems.¹⁰

Every organization also has an **informal communication network**, often referred to as the *grapevine* or the *rumor mill*, which encompasses all communication that occurs outside the formal network. Some of this informal communication takes place naturally as a result of employee interaction on the job and in social settings, and some of it takes place when the formal network doesn't provide information that employees want. In fact, the inherent limitations of formal communication networks helped spur the growth of social media in the business environment.

A company's formal communication network mirrors its organizational structure.

ADOPTING AN AUDIENCE-CENTERED APPROACH

An **audience-centered approach** involves understanding and respecting the members of your audience and making every effort to get your message across in a way that is meaningful to them. This approach is also known as adopting the “you” attitude, in contrast

An audience-centered approach involves understanding, respecting, and meeting the needs of your audience members.

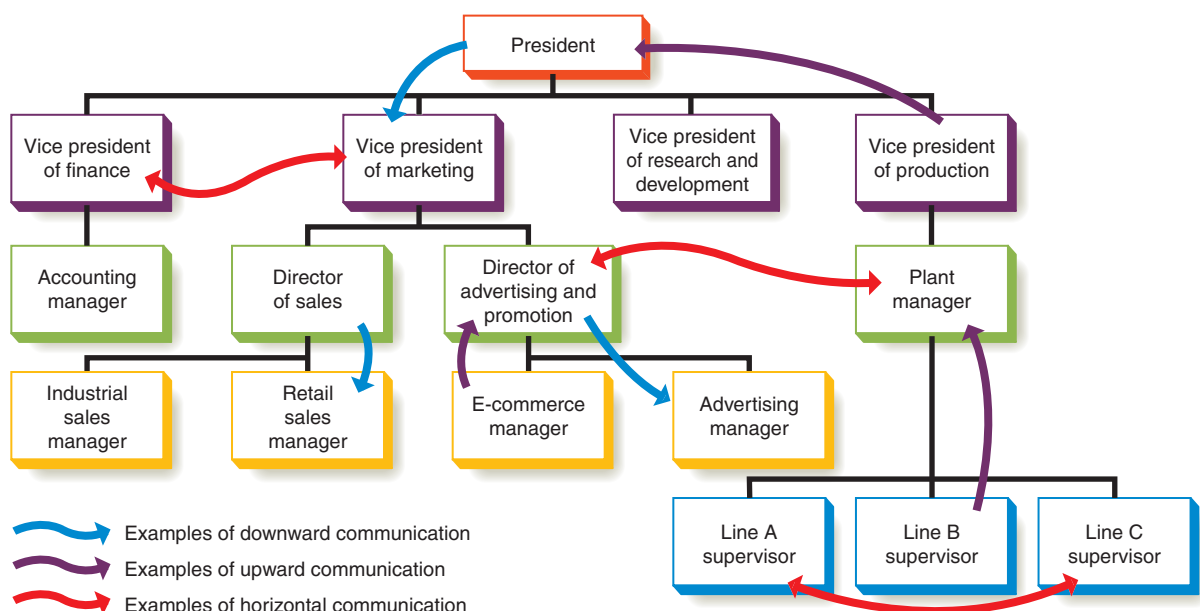


Figure 1.4 Formal Communication Network

The formal communication network is defined by the relationships between the various job positions in the organization. Messages can flow upward (from a lower-level employee to a higher-level employee), downward (from a higher-level employee to a lower-level employee), and horizontally (between employees at the same or similar levels across the organization).

REAL-TIME UPDATES

LEARN MORE BY WATCHING THIS VIDEO

The fundamentals of emotional intelligence

Understand the five elements that make up this essential quality for business success. Go to real-timeupdates.com/bct14 and select Learn More in the Students section.

Etiquette, the expected norms of behavior in a particular situation, can have a profound influence on your company's success and your career.

to messages that are about “me.” Learn as much as possible about the biases, education, age, status, style, and personal and professional concerns of your receivers. If you're addressing people you don't know and you're unable to find out more about them, try to project yourself into their position by using common sense and imagination. This ability to relate to the needs of others is a key part of *emotional intelligence*, a combination of emotional and social skills that is widely considered to be a vital characteristic of successful managers

and leaders.¹¹ The more you know about the people you're communicating with, the easier it is to concentrate on their needs—which, in turn, makes it easier for them to hear your message, understand it, and respond positively.

A vital element of audience-centered communication is **etiquette**, the expected norms of behavior in any particular situation. In today's hectic, competitive world, etiquette might seem a quaint and outdated notion. However, the way you conduct yourself and interact with others can have a profound influence on your company's success and your career. When executives hire and promote you, they expect your behavior to protect the company's reputation. The more you understand such expectations, the better chance you have of avoiding career-damaging mistakes. The principles of etiquette discussed in Chapter 2 will help you communicate with an audience-centered approach in a variety of business settings.

Exploring the Communication Process

3 LEARNING OBJECTIVE
Describe the communication process model and the ways social media are changing the nature of business communication.

Viewing communication as a process helps you identify steps you can take to improve your success as a communicator.

Even with the best intentions, communication efforts can fail. Messages can get lost or simply ignored. The receiver of a message can interpret it in ways the sender never imagined. In fact, two people receiving the same information can reach different conclusions about what it means.

Fortunately, by understanding communication as a process with distinct steps, you can improve the odds that your messages will reach their intended audiences and produce their intended effects. This section explores the communication process in two stages: first by following a message from one sender to one receiver in the basic communication model and then by expanding on that approach with multiple messages and participants in the social communication model.

THE BASIC COMMUNICATION MODEL

By viewing communication as a process (Figure 1.5), you can identify and improve the skills you need to be more successful. Many variations on this process model exist, but these eight steps provide a practical overview:

- **The sender has an idea.** Whether a communication effort will ultimately be effective starts right here and depends on the nature of the idea and the motivation for sending it.

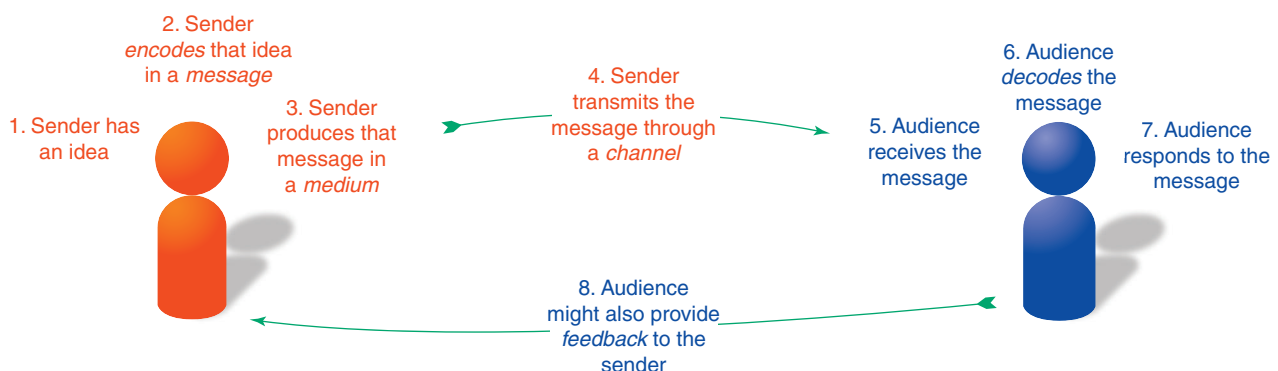


Figure 1.5 The Basic Communication Process

This eight-step model is a simplified view of how communication works in real life; understanding this basic model is vital to improving your communication skills.

For example, if your motivation is to offer a solution to a problem, you have a better chance of crafting a meaningful message than if your motivation is merely to complain about a problem.

- **The sender encodes the idea as a message.** When someone puts an idea into a **message**—which you can think of as the “container” for an idea—he or she is **encoding** it, or expressing it in words or images. Much of the focus of this course is on developing the skills needed to successfully encode your ideas into effective messages.
- **The sender produces the message in a transmittable medium.** With the appropriate message to express an idea, the sender now needs a **communication medium** to present that message to the intended audience. To update your boss on the status of a project, for instance, you might have a dozen or more media choices, from a phone call to an instant message to a slideshow presentation.
- **The sender transmits the message through a channel.** Just as technology continues to increase the number of media options at your disposal, it continues to provide new **communication channels** you can use to transmit your messages. The distinction between medium and channel can get a bit murky, but think of the medium as the *form* a message takes (such as a Twitter update) and the channel as the system used to *deliver* the message (such as a mobile phone).
- **The audience receives the message.** If the channel functions properly, the message reaches its intended audience. However, mere arrival at the destination is no guarantee that the message will be noticed or understood correctly. As “How Audiences Receive Messages” (page 12) explains, many messages are either ignored or misinterpreted as noise.
- **The audience decodes the message.** After a message is received, the receiver needs to extract the idea from the message, a step known as **decoding**. “How Audiences Decode Messages” (page 13) takes a closer look at this complex and subtle step in the process.
- **The audience responds to the message.** By crafting messages in ways that show the benefits of responding, senders can increase the chances that recipients will respond in positive ways. However, as “How Audiences Respond to Messages” (page 14) points out, whether a receiver responds as the sender hopes depends on the receiver (1) *remembering* the message long enough to act on it, (2) being *able* to act on it, and (3) being *motivated* to respond.
- **The audience provides feedback to the sender.** In addition to responding (or not responding) to the message, audience members may give **feedback** that helps the sender evaluate the effectiveness of the communication effort. Feedback can be verbal (using written or spoken words), nonverbal (using gestures, facial expressions, or other signals), or both. Just like the original message, however, this feedback from the receiver also needs to be decoded carefully. A smile, for example, can have many meanings.

Considering the complexity of this process—and the barriers and distractions that often stand between sender and receiver—it should come as no surprise that communication efforts often fail to achieve the sender’s objective. Fortunately, the better you understand the process, the more successful you’ll be.

The following sections take a closer look at two important aspects of the process: environmental barriers that can block or distort messages and the steps audiences take to receive, decode, and respond to messages.

Barriers in the Communication Environment

Within any communication environment, messages can be disrupted by a variety of **communication barriers**. These barriers include noise and distractions, competing messages, filters, and channel breakdowns:

- **Noise and distractions.** External distractions range from uncomfortable meeting rooms to computer screens cluttered with instant messages and reminders popping up all over the place. Internal distractions are thoughts and emotions that prevent audiences from focusing on incoming messages. The common habit of *multitasking*—attempting more than one task at a time—is practically guaranteed to create communication distractions. Multitasking dramatically increases the workload on

The medium is the form a message takes, whereas the channel is the system used to deliver the message.

A number of barriers can block or distort messages before they reach the intended audience.

your brain because you're forcing it to constantly switch between sets of rules and contexts, which requires it to reorient each time.¹² Rather than getting more done, research shows that chronic multitasking often reduces productivity and increases errors.¹³ As more communication takes place on mobile devices, the need to insulate yourself from noise and distractions will keep growing.

- **Competing messages.** Having your audience's undivided attention is a rare luxury. In most cases you must compete with other messages that are trying to reach your audience at the same time.
- **Filters.** Messages can be blocked or distorted by *filters*, any human or technological interventions between the sender and the receiver. Filtering can be both intentional (such as automatically filing incoming messages based on sender or content) or unintentional (such as an overly aggressive spam filter that deletes legitimate emails). As mentioned previously, the structure and culture of an organization can also inhibit the flow of vital messages. And in some cases the people or companies you rely on to deliver your message can distort it or filter it to meet their own needs.
- **Channel breakdowns.** Sometimes the channel simply breaks down and fails to deliver your message. A colleague you were counting on to deliver a message to your boss might have forgotten to do so, or a computer server might have crashed and prevented your blog from updating.

Minimizing barriers and distractions in the communication environment is everyone's responsibility.

Everyone in an organization can help minimize barriers and distractions. As a communicator, try to be aware of any barriers that could prevent your messages from reaching their intended audiences. As a manager, keep an eye out for any organizational barriers that could be inhibiting the flow of information. A small dose of common sense and courtesy goes a long way in any situation. Silence your phone before you step into a meeting. Don't talk across the tops of other people's cubicles. Be sensitive to volume when you're listening to music or podcasts or watching videos; even if you're wearing headphones, audio that leaks into your colleagues' spaces can disrupt their workflow and concentration.

Finally, take steps to insulate yourself from distractions. Don't let messages interrupt you every minute of the day. Instead, set aside time to attend to messages all at once so that you can focus the rest of the time. If the environment is noisy or busy, find ways to block out distractions, such as wearing noise-canceling headphones.

Inside the Mind of Your Audience

After a message works its way through the communication channel and reaches the intended audience, it encounters a whole new set of challenges. Understanding how audiences receive, decode, and respond to messages will help you create more effective messages.

To truly receive a message, audience members need to sense it, select it, then perceive it as a message.

How Audiences Receive Messages For an audience member to receive a message, three events need to occur: The receiver has to *sense* the presence of a message, *select* it from all the other messages clamoring for attention, and *perceive* it as an actual message (as opposed to random, pointless noise).¹⁴ You can appreciate the magnitude of this challenge by driving down any busy street in a commercial section of town. You'll encounter hundreds of messages—billboards, posters, store window displays, car stereos, pedestrians waving or talking on mobile phones, car horns, street signs, traffic lights, and so on. However, you'll sense, select, and perceive only a small fraction of these messages.

Today's business audiences are much like drivers on busy streets. They are inundated with so many messages and so much noise that they can miss or ignore many of the messages intended for them. Through this course, you will learn a variety of techniques to craft messages that get noticed. In general, follow these five principles to increase your chances of success:

- **Consider audience expectations.** Deliver messages using the media and channels that the audience expects. If colleagues expect meeting notices to be delivered by email, don't suddenly switch gears and start delivering the notices via blog postings without telling anyone. Of course, sometimes going *against* expectations can stimulate audience attention, which is why advertisers sometimes do wacky and creative things to

To improve the odds that your messages will be successfully perceived by your audience, pay close attention to expectations, ease of use, familiarity, empathy, and technical compatibility.