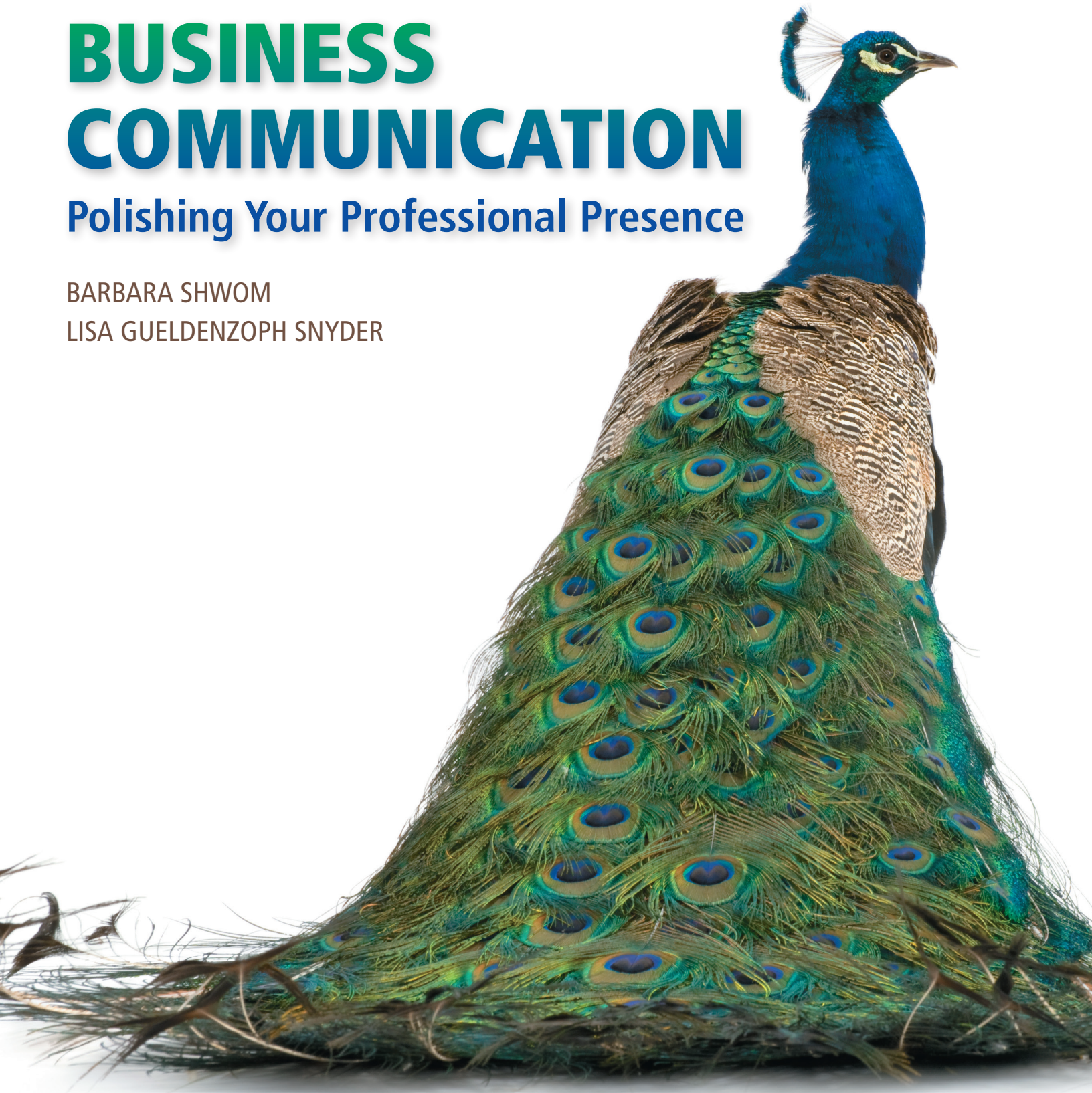


BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Polishing Your Professional Presence

BARBARA SHWOM

LISA GUELLENZOPH SNYDER



How to Write Effective Business Email

Despite the growth of newer forms of communication—such as social media and chat—the number of business emails sent each year continues to grow.* To ensure you produce effective emails, apply the **ACE model**—even for short, informal messages.



Analyze your purpose, audience, and content before you begin writing.

Compose by organizing the content, creating a first draft, and designing a professional format.

Evaluate by revising, editing, proofreading, and—when possible—incorporating feedback.

This reference guide provides advice about how to write an effective business email start to finish, from entering the recipients on the “To” line to ending with a complimentary closing and signature block.

Recipients

What are the To, Cc, and Bcc lines used for?

- **To:** The “To” line is for the primary audience of your message—the people to whom the email is directed and who will be addressed in the salutation.
- **Cc:** The “Cc” (“courtesy copy”) line is for the secondary audience of your message—people who may need to know the information but are not the primary audience. For example, you might Cc your supervisor as an FYI or your assistant to help you follow up.
- **Bcc:** The “Bcc” (“blind courtesy copy”) line is used in two circumstances: (1) when you have a long distribution list that you don’t want to show and (2) when you need to send the message to someone without the knowledge of the primary (or secondary) audience. In this second situation, you could alternatively forward your sent message with an explanation.

Subject Line

How do you write a good subject line?

- Keep the subject line short, but meaningful.
- If the subject line needs to be longer than five words, begin the subject line with the most important information so the recipients can determine whether

they need to read your email now or later. Examples: “Meeting request,” “Important: Buy your plane tickets today,” and “Response needed: Is any money left in the account?”

Attachments

How should you announce that an attachment is included?

- If the recipient requested the information in the attachment, mention the attachment in the first paragraph.
- If you are including the attachment as supplemental information, mention the attachment in the body or closing of the message.

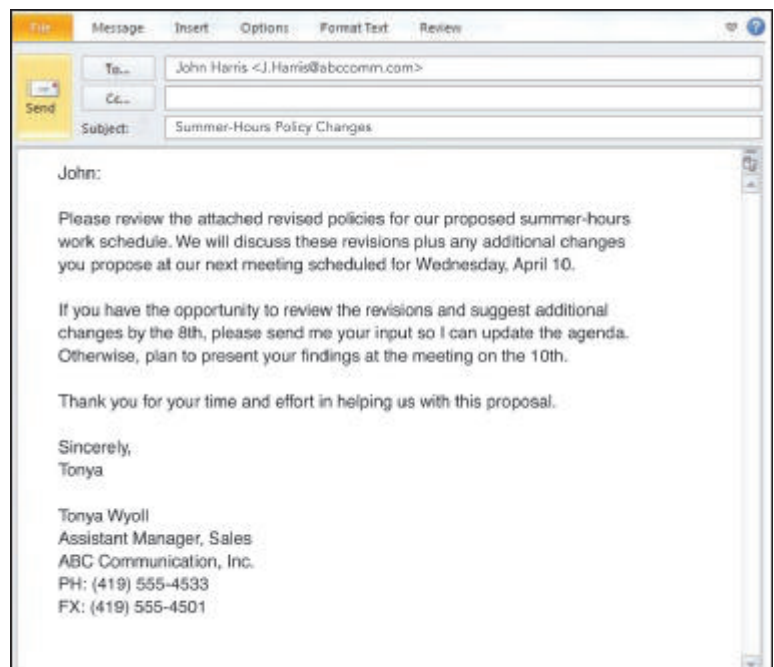
What guidelines should you use for attachments?

- **Size:** Try to keep attachments to 10 Mb or less. Many email applications impose a size limit on attachments. For larger files, ensure your audience can receive them, or upload your files to an online service like DropBox or Google Drive and include a link in your email.
- **Format:** If the recipient needs to modify the attachment, send it in its original format, such as a Word or Excel file. However, if you don’t want the recipient to modify the file, send it as a PDF, which also reduces the file size.
- **Name:** Give your file a name that will be meaningful to the recipient. For example, if you are attaching a résumé, do not name the file *resume.pdf*. Instead, include your name in the file name (e.g., *Richards, Keisha - resume.pdf*).

Salutation

What’s the best salutation to use? And how do you punctuate salutations?

- When writing to co-workers you know well, use just their first name or precede it with “Hi” as a friendly gesture. Punctuate this in one of two ways. You can use a comma to separate the greeting from the person’s name and add a colon at the end (“Hi, John:”). Alternatively, you can use just a comma at the end (“Hi John,”).



How to Write Effective Business Email (continued)

- When writing to superiors, colleagues you don't know well, or people outside your organization, use good judgment based on how you would address the recipient in person. In formal situations, last names may be appropriate ("Dear Mr. Smith:" or "Hello, Mr. Smith:"). Note that no comma separates "Dear" from the name. End with a colon or comma, depending on the level of formality.

Body of the Message

How long can an email message be?

- **Be concise.** Keep email messages relatively short, preferably without requiring the reader to scroll to read the entire message. Exceptions include email reports, which can be much longer than typical email messages.
- **Use attachments.** If a routine email has to be long, summarize the entire message in a paragraph and attach the lengthy content as a separate document.

How do you format an email for easy reading?

- **Put your main point in the first paragraph.** If you believe your audience needs background information before the main point, begin by stating your purpose before providing background. Example: "I am writing for your advice about how to handle a sensitive situation."
- **Use paragraph headings.** If the message includes several topics, use informative headings that help the audience quickly find the information they need.
- **Use bulleted or numbered lists.** Use bullets or numbers to outline lists of information to help the audience see the elements or understand the sequence of information.

What's the best writing style and tone to use?

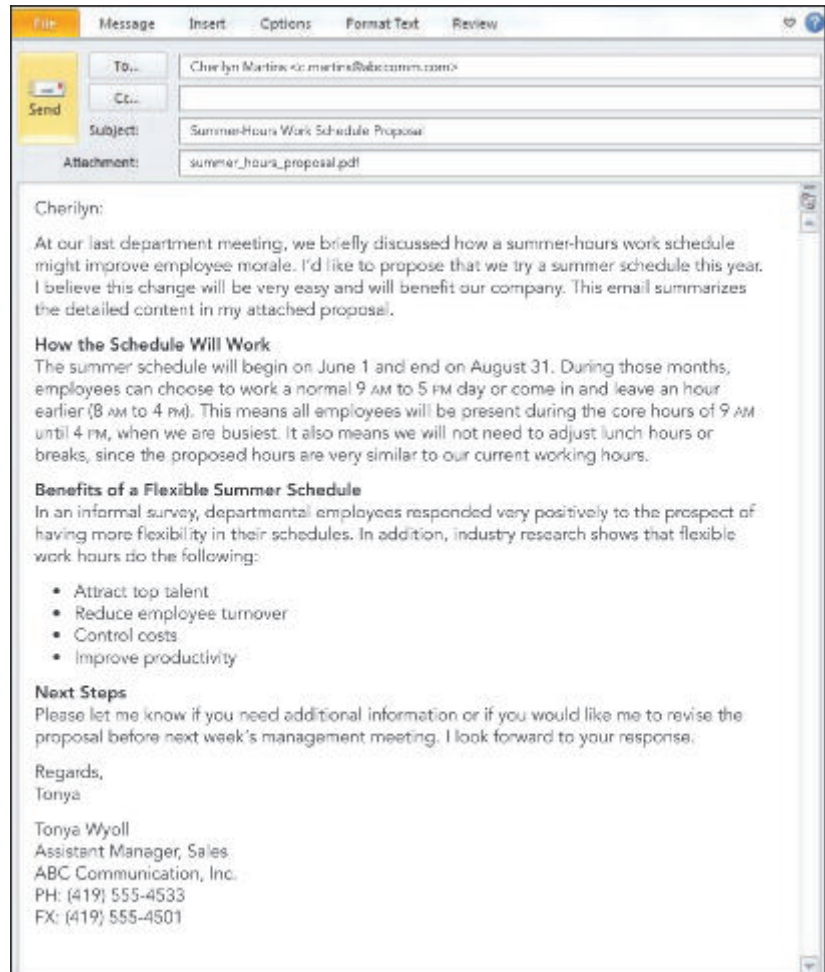
- Ensure that all business emails sound professional, no matter who your audience. Remember that your recipient may forward your email to others in the company.
- Choose a level of formality based on how well you know the audience and on the content of the message. A routine message to a colleague confirming tomorrow's meeting location would be less formal than an email to a potential client finalizing a meeting to negotiate a contract.

How much of the prior conversation needs to be included in an email thread?

- **When responding,** maintain the entire thread to help participants track the conversation.
- **When forwarding email to others,** consider how much of the thread is necessary. Before forwarding, read through the thread to eliminate comments that weren't intended for others to see.
- **When changing topics,** change the subject line or start a new thread.

How do you make an email message easy to read on a smart phone?

- Make the main idea easy to find by getting directly to the point in the first paragraph.
- Keep the message short and avoid larger-than-normal fonts.



Closing

How should an email message end?

- End the message with a friendly sentence to promote goodwill. Include a call for action and any dates or deadlines, when appropriate.
- Sign off with a complimentary closing and your name. Match the formality of the closing with the salutation. "Thanks" or "Best" are less formal than "Sincerely" or "Best regards." End the complimentary closing with a comma, and place your name on the next line.

Signature Block

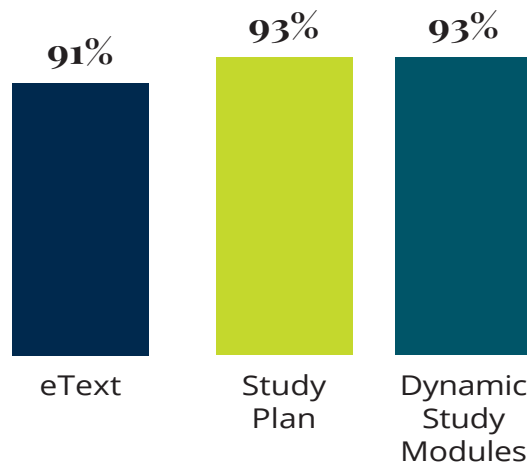
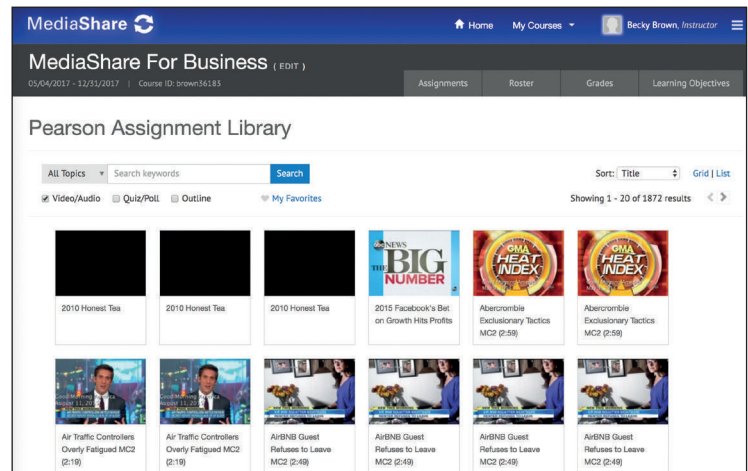
What should be included in a signature block? Are signature blocks necessary for all emails?

- At a minimum, include your first and last names, position title, company name, and phone number. If you believe the additional information is useful, also include your mailing address, fax number, and email address. If an email conversation continues with several replies, you do not need to include your signature block throughout the thread.

Endnote

*The Radicati Group, Inc. (2017). Email statistics report 2017–2021. Retrieved from <http://www.radicati.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Email-Statistics-Report-2017-2021-Executive-Summary.pdf>

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Dedication

We dedicate this book:

To our students at Northwestern and North Carolina A&T for challenging us to learn more every day, to stretch our perspectives, and to be better teachers.

To our colleagues in our universities, in the Association for Business Communication, and in business for providing valuable feedback and insight about best practices in polishing professional presence.

To you, who are learning and teaching from this book. We thank you for giving us the opportunity to contribute to your success.

—Barbara and Lisa

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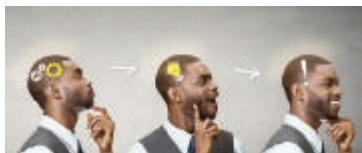
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Visual Walk-Through

NEW TO THIS EDITION

Every chapter contains new material designed to help you become a more powerful communicator.

- **New collaboration features:** Each chapter includes a new collaboration feature, helping you apply the chapter concepts when you work in teams—both local and virtual.
- **New end of chapter exercises:** New exercises are integrated with old favorites to provide a range of opportunities to practice the concepts you learn.
- **New videos:** On MyLab Business Communication, you'll find two engaging videos for each chapter. One video offers insight from the authors and the other video is a "how to" animation that brings abstract concepts to life.
- **New @work features:** Nine new end-of-chapter company profiles showcase how businesses are addressing the challenges of business communication. Seven new "new hires" tell us how they put their communication skills to work.
- **New figures and new models:** New models include a new formal report that both illustrates concepts and addresses an authentic business challenge—developing an organic restaurant. You will also find new PowerPoint models and a new graphical white paper from Welch's Global Ingredients.
- **Updated appendix on documentation and reference styles:** The new appendix includes guidance for the MLA 8th edition.

SOLVING TEACHING AND LEARNING CHALLENGES

A memorable model

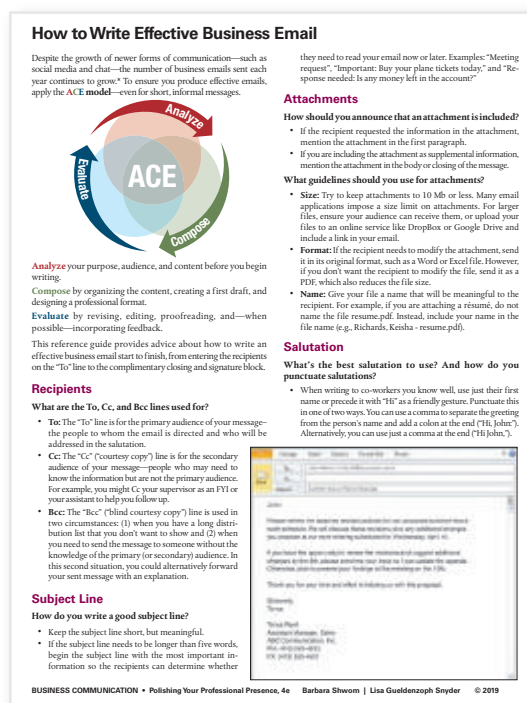
At the heart of the book is a flexible communication process called ACE—Analyzing, Composing, and Evaluating—that applies to any situation, from simple email messages to formal business presentations. As you go through the book, you continue to acquire knowledge about how to apply this framework and why it is important. There are many practice opportunities both in the book and in MyLab Business Communication.

"I anticipate using the ACE communication process beyond this course when I write emails, prepare papers, and apply for internships and jobs because the first impression of writing is very important."

—Andronico P., Student at the University of California—Santa Barbara



A perforated pull-out reference card on how to write business email is provided that you can use throughout the course and after the course ends.



Practical advice

The chapters are full of annotated examples that show you how to apply concepts to your own work.

“I like all the examples of the various communications, such as emails, memos, thank-you notes, etc. I use them as a guide when I am writing.”

—Kenneth P., Student at Middle Tennessee State University

INEFFECTIVE

Rebecca:
I was just reading the online version of *The Dallas Morning News*—as you know, we used to live there several years ago, and I like to keep up with the local news.
Anyway, I noticed an article about the Dallas Entrepreneur of the Year and was so surprised to see you won it this year! Congratulations! I'm sure it was well deserved.
Thanks,
Peter

Why is this message ineffective?

- It focuses on the writer rather than expressing congratulations to the recipient.
- The congratulations are mentioned as an afterthought.
- The phrase, “I’m sure it was well deserved,” suggests that others may doubt whether the recipient deserved the award.
- The casual closing of “thanks” does not match the purpose of the message.

EFFECTIVE

Hi, Rebecca:
Congratulations on receiving the Dallas Entrepreneur of the Year Award! I read about it in the online version of *The Dallas Morning News*, which I still read online even though I've moved from Dallas. I was so happy for you when I saw the photo of you holding the plaque.
I know the award was well deserved. The time and effort you put into your work is exceptional.
Regards,
Peter
Peter Ferguson
Sales & Marketing
Belmont Paper Products
23560 Michigan Street
Middle Plains, MN 56773
(218) 555-6730
(218) 555-6731 Fax
(800) 555-6731 Toll Free

To create an effective congratulatory message:

- Begin directly by congratulating the recipient for his or her achievement or important event.
- Express confidence that the accomplishment was well deserved.
- Include relevant supporting comments that personalize the message.
- As with all messages, end with an appropriate complimentary closing, such as “Regards.”

Business focus

An “@WORK” section in each chapter highlights contemporary businesses and professionals who are implementing the core concepts of each chapter.

The New Hires @Work feature helps you imagine yourself as part of a larger business communication community. At the beginning of each chapter, and on select pages within each chapter, a recent graduate describes communication challenges on the job and how communication skills help meet those challenges.

New Hires @Work

Shannon Rocheleau
Western Michigan University
Business Services Credit Specialist @ Consumers Credit Union

When I worked as a member services representative in the Credit Union call center, I learned how to listen carefully and match my communication style with the person to whom I was talking. If callers get to the point immediately, I provided information promptly. If they began by chatting, I chatted, too. And if callers seemed to need a lot of support, I knew not to apply pressure. Instead, I gave them time to decide and then provided reassurance when they made a decision. Great member service involves understanding your audience.

Photo courtesy of Shannon Rocheleau

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PRESENTATIONS @ WORK *SwipeSense*

Solid Model Drawing of SwipeSense

Within the first five years after graduating college, Mert Isari and Yur Malina—the CEO and COO of SwipeSense—had achieved the kind of success that most young entrepreneurs only dream of. Their company was a finalist in the 2013 *Wall Street Journal* Startup of the Year competition. They had been featured in the *Harvard Business Review*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Chicago Tribune*, and they had signed their first big customer, a major hospital network. They had also raised over \$12 million in investor money. What accounts for their success?

First, they have an innovative product that meets a need. SwipeSense is a “hand-washing 2.0”—a hand-sanitization device that medical professionals clip on their scrubs and swipe to dispense hand sanitizer. Combined with real-time data analytics, SwipeSense drastically increases hand hygiene in hospitals and reduces hospital-acquired infections.

But to achieve this success, they also had to spend a lot of time in front of people, delivering presentations. Isari and Malina made investment pitches to potential funders, sales presentations to medical professionals and hospital executives, and conference presentations to other entrepreneurs and designers. They have even developed a 60-second **elevator pitch** that they can deliver to anyone at any time. Based on their experience, they offer the following advice to all presenters:

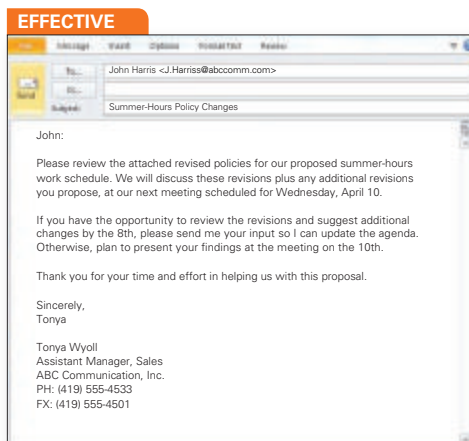
- **Know your purpose.** Different presentations have different purposes. “In a sales presentation we’re highlighting SwipeSense as a company and a product. In an investor presentation, the entrepreneur is the star of the show.” These two purposes require different approaches.
- **Know your audience.** The presentation needs to resonate with the specific audience, so it’s good to do a little homework in advance. Different people care about different things. “If there are a lot of chief financial officers in the room, then the presentation has to focus on the financial piece, including cost savings. If we are presenting to chief nursing officers, then it’s important to discuss clinical acceptance and the implementation cycle.”

Mert Isari Delivering an Investor Presentation

- **Arrive early.** Isari says he always arrives early to a presentation, shakes hands with as many people as he can, and gives them a summary of the presentation in advance. This tactic serves two purposes. First, he can see what people respond to and tailor his presentation to resonate with their concerns. Second, this initial conversation primes people to remember when they hear his message for a second time during the presentation.
- **Be adaptable.** Because you’re never certain what will interest the audience, you need to be flexible and adaptable. Isari says he may come into a presentation with six things he can talk about. But, as he talks about the first two points, he pays attention to the audience’s body language and their eye contact. He says, “Those kinds of visual cues inform me which of the remaining four ideas I should share with the group.”
- **Be confident but humble.** Especially in an investor pitch, you need to convince the person sitting on the other side of the table that your team—and only your team—are the perfect people to execute this business idea. “To get investors to believe in you, you need to be confident, look people in the eye, and be clear about how you will achieve your goals. But you also need to be a bit humble. No one likes people who are full of themselves.”
- **Be credible.** To be persuasive in a presentation, you need to convince your audience you know what you are talking about, and that means you need solid sources to back up your claims. Isari says, “There needs to be some third-party validation of the claims you are making. People will call you out if they don’t believe you, and it’s tough to respond if you don’t have evidence. In addition to citing studies in a footnote, sometimes we will actually have the scientific paper with us, with key evidence highlighted. In the presentation, I’ll pull out the study, put it in front of the audience, and show them the highlighted paragraph. No one reads the study, but I’ve made a statement that I’ve done my homework. People get the message that I am credible, and at that point the conversation is easier.”

Source: Based on an interview with Mert Isari.

Examples of authentic business documents and presentations help you see the principles of the book at work.



Integrated knowledge

Business communication involves more than just writing and speaking well. A competent business communicator must also be ethical, collaborative, and open to new technologies and new cultures. Every chapter of this book includes an in-depth focus on ethics, technology, culture, and collaboration. To build your skills in these areas, you will see end-of-chapter exercises linked to each feature that challenge you to think critically about these topics and provide you with hands-on practice. You can complete many of these exercises at MyLab and receive instant feedback.



ETHICS

REPRESENTING DATA ETHICALLY

Businesses rely on data to make informed decisions. To support those decisions, graphs must display data ethically and not mislead the audience. Graphs can mislead in many ways. For example, they can manipulate the scale, distort perspective, and show data out of context. Even if graph designers do not intend to be dishonest, they may make design choices that result in bad graphs. As Naomi Robbins, an expert in data visualization, says, "The designers of many of the graphs we see daily pay more attention to grabbing the audience's attention than to communicating clearly and accurately. They choose design options that they think

look better but are actually graphical mistakes, since they mislead or confuse their readers."²¹

Because ethical representation of data is so important, many organizations have developed guides to data ethics.²² The following guidelines are among the most important to follow in business communication. The graphs on the left are potentially misleading. The versions on the right correct the errors.

For an ETHICS exercise, go to Exercise 21 on page 406.



TECHNOLOGY

HOW TO USE SOFTWARE FEATURES TO HELP FORMAT FORMAL REPORTS

Microsoft Word and other word processing programs offer powerful features that help you format formal reports. The following features will save you time and improve the professional look of your work. To learn about other features, use your program's help files.

- **Automated styles.** Word has a number of different text styles that control fonts, sizes, colors, and placement on the page. You can use one style for normal paragraphs, another for headings, a third for quotations, and a fourth for captions. Using styles rather than manually formatting paragraphs offers an important advantage: If you mark text as a specific style and then decide to change that style, the change occurs to all the marked text throughout the document.
- **Automated headings.** Word offers a set of styles called *Heading 1*, *Heading 2*, and *Heading 3*. You can customize those styles with any font and size. If you use these heading styles in your report, you can take advantage of Word's automated table of contents feature.

- **Automated page numbering, using both Roman and Arabic numerals.** You can control the placement of page numbers in your document by inserting headers or footers. You can further control page numbers by using Word's "Insert Section Break" feature and formatting the page numbers differently for each section. For example, you can create a title page with no page number. Then insert a section break and use small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, and so on) for the page numbering on the table of contents page and executive summary. Insert another section break and begin the numbering again with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, and so on), with the introduction counting as page 1, even though sequentially it is not the first page of the file.
- **Automated footnotes, endnotes, citations, bibliographies.** Most word processing applications allow you to insert and number footnotes, endnotes, and citations automatically. As you add, remove, or cut and paste text in your draft, your note numbers automatically change to reflect their new position. Note, however, that some citation formats assign one style for the first use of a citation and a different style for all subsequent occurrences. So if you move text around, make sure to double-check your footnote styles in the final



CULTURE

MAKING REPORTS READER-FRIENDLY FOR INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCES

Reports often have larger audiences than typical correspondence, such as emails. A useful report may be distributed broadly throughout an organization and to colleagues or clients around the world. If the report is not confidential, it may even be shared with the general public.

If you work in an international organization or an organization that disseminates information globally, you need to think about how to make your reports accessible to international audiences—even those who speak English. The number of English speakers is growing worldwide, as English is taught to more people and at an earlier age in both Europe and Asia.¹ As a result, English has become the international *lingua franca* of business—the common language used by native speakers of different languages.²

However, not all these English speakers are fluent in the language. Although almost 2 billion people speak English worldwide, only 25 percent of those people speak English as a first language.³ If any members of your audience are in the remaining 75 percent, will they understand long sentences and eloquent word choices? How can you make your reports as easy as possible for everyone in your audience to read?

Professionals in the field of international technical communication have developed a number of guidelines to use when preparing English documents for readers who are not native English speakers. Even if your communication is not technical, use the following guidelines adapted from the *Global English Style Guide*.⁴

- **Use simple English.** English arguably has more words than any other language. Studies published by *Science*⁵ and the *Global Language Monitor*⁶ estimate the current number of words at

more than a million. Although this breadth of word choice makes English a very precise language, many of your readers

will not be familiar with all the vocabulary words. To avoid slang and clichés, and check the text when you evaluate your writing. "Local regulations prohibit installation," instead, say "Acme must get

- **Do not vary terms needlessly.** Use one term and its derivatives. For example, if you are talking about a committee, consistently call them "autonomous" rather than occasionally calling them "self-governing." This repetition minimizes reader confusion.
- **Eliminate the "fat" from content** by providing only the information that is essential. Eliminating extra details and words makes your writing more concise. An international audience may find this wordy sentence: "It is respectfully requested that a committee be formed by A. G. Willington into potential wrongdoing on the part of the executive board." They could more easily understand: "We recommend that A. G. executive board's recent actions."

For CULTURE exercises, go to Critical page 401 and Exercise 7 on page 402.



COLLABORATION

WRITING A REPORT AS A TEAM

In the course of your career, you might be tasked to write a report as part of a team, especially for long and comprehensive reports. There are many ways to write collaboratively, and what your team chooses to do will depend on factors such as the date the report is due, the size of the team, the location of team members, and the specific expertise of team members. Here are some things to keep in mind when approaching collaborative report writing at work. These same considerations can help you plan a better collaborative process in school also.

- **Team structure.** Before starting the writing process, it is helpful to establish the team's structure and assign members different responsibilities, according to their skills and expertise. Sometimes this might be decided for you from the outset; for instance, your manager might be part of your team and automatically take on the role of final reviewer before the report is submitted. Or some members may be on the team because they are subject matter experts who will provide data but do less actual writing. But in teams where hierarchy and job scope are less clear, it might take a preliminary discussion to go over everyone's skill sets and see how they can best serve the team.¹³ At work, you do not need to assume that the team writing means that everyone should play an equal role on the team, which is what typically happens in school. Remember that in school, the goal is that all students learn from the report-writing process. At work, the goal is to ensure that the process leads to an excellent report.
- **Writing procedure.** Research in collaborative writing shows that writing teams approach their tasks in many different ways.¹⁴ Sometimes they work in parallel, with the entire team planning the document and dividing the work into subtasks

- **Communication protocol.** Writing can be a very solitary exercise, especially for writers who are not used to working on extensive projects in groups. But in group projects, it is unwise for writers to work without consulting each other. So, at the start of a project, it is important to discuss how team members will check in and communicate with each other, and what kind of discussion is appropriate for what stage of the writing process. For instance, a team on a months-long project might decide to meet in person or via conference call every two weeks to assess its progress and email each other between meetings. A small team on a tight deadline might prefer to meet every other day and use text messaging in addition to email. You might even consider discussing limits on informal communication to avoid disrupting each other's writing process.¹⁷

- **Feedback and editing.** In the process of collaborative report writing, you will likely receive feedback on your work or have your work edited by someone else in your team. You might also be expected to provide feedback on a team member's writing. Today, this back-and-forth is easier than ever before using groupware or platforms with commenting and change-tracking functions (for example, Microsoft Word and Google Docs). However, as information science professors Birnholtz and Ibara point out, these digital platforms are often "impoverished environments" for communication where "people [may] overinterpret certain cues," possibly leading to "exaggerated interpretations or impressions" and affecting "how credit and blame are attributed."¹⁸ For instance, heavily editing someone else's work directly when that person expected a say in the changes could be construed

Hands-on practice

Exercises for all key concepts

The book’s main headings are structured as numbered study questions. These questions are answered in subheadings throughout the section. The end-of-chapter summary and “Key Concept Exercises” are also grouped by both the study question and the subheadings. This structure helps you focus on the key points of the chapter, assess what you know, and complete exercises that help you polish your skills.

CASE SCENARIO

Culinary Adventure Tour Presentation

This case scenario will help you review the chapter material by applying it to a specific situation.

Planning a Presentation

Stephanie Lo graduated from college with a major in French and a minor in communication. She was very happy to get a job with JourneyFree, LLC, a company that specializes in organizing educational tours for students, professionals, and other groups. Ultimately, Stephanie would like to become a tour leader, but for now she is the assistant to the vice president of Tour Operations, Rachel Jones. Stephanie’s role is to work on marketing communications.

Stephanie’s first project required that she use all her strengths—developing communications to market JourneyFree’s newest product, a culinary tour of France, specifically designed for culinary arts and nutrition teachers in high schools and trade schools. In addition to advertising online and sending brochures to high schools, Stephanie’s supervisor, Rachel, plans to visit school districts in major cities and present the program to superintendents, principals, department chairs, and teachers. She will give a brief and colorful slide presentation and offer samplings of the French food that culinary arts teachers will experience on the tour.

Thirty culinary arts teachers have invited Rachel to give a presentation next week, so she needs a slide presentation fast. She asks Stephanie to design and develop a draft of the presentation. Together they work out the following outline:

- The Educational Experience
- Trip Overview
- Trip Logistics and Costs
- About JourneyFree, LLC
- Q&A

Rachel and Stephanie also discuss the audience and key selling points to make in the presentation. The next day, Stephanie puts together a draft of presentation slides. She is planning to meet Rachel to review the slides and to discuss the talking points that will go with the slides.

Stephanie would like your help in analyzing the audience, evaluating the presentation, and composing the content for the presentation. After the slides, you will find questions designed to help you think systematically about the presentation, using the ACE approach. Answer the questions to review the key concepts in the chapter.

France: A Seven-Day Culinary Adventure Tour



Rachel Jones
Vice President, Operations
JOURNEYFREE, LLC

Why this tour will help culinary teachers

- Explore range of French culinary arts over a fun-filled seven-day journey through France
- Diversify and expand knowledge of culinary teachers in your vocational high schools
- Foster a stronger connection between teachers and French gastronomic culture



Case scenarios in every chapter

Each chapter concludes with a realistic case scenario that relates to the content of the chapter. This feature is an excellent tool for reviewing the chapter content to ensure that you have learned it and can apply it.

Grammar exercises test your knowledge

Appendix C includes a complete grammar text that you can use for reference or for independent review. You can test your knowledge with exercises at the end of each chapter. Answers are in Appendix D.

SPELLING ALERT! MISUSE OF APOSTROPHE

Do not confuse *their/they're*, *your/you're*, or *its/it's*. Possessive pronouns are never formed with an apostrophe, but contractions ending in -s always are.

They're the lawyers who handle corporate mergers in *their* law firm. (contraction of *they are*; possessive pronoun)

Your application is due if *you're* interested in being considered for the job. (possessive pronoun; contraction of *you are*)

You can't tell a book by *its* cover, although *it's* tempting to try. (possessive pronoun; contraction of *it is*)

GRAMMAR ALERT! SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT ERROR

Verbs must agree with their subjects in person and number. The subject cannot be in a prepositional phrase. Find the true subject and make the verb agree.

Incorrect The members of the Federal Reserve Board sets interest rates. (Verb *sets* is incorrect because subject *members* is plural.)

Correct The *members* of the Federal Reserve Board set interest rates.

Contractions should be separated and matched with the correct person.

Incorrect He don't want to be late, and I don't either. (Verb form *don't* or *do not* disagrees with third-person singular subject *he*.)

Correct He *doesn't* want to be late, and I don't either. OR He *does not* want to be late, and I do not either.

Also see "Subject-Verb Agreement" in *Common Sentence Errors*.

1.1.2. Action and Being Words: Verbs

Verbs express action, occurrence, or state of being.

Action Stock prices rose in late December.

Occurrence That often happens at the end of the year.

State of Being The phenomenon is known as the "year-end bump."

a. **Verb forms.** Verbs change form to show **time (tense), person, number, voice, and mood**, as illustrated in **Table C.6**.

b. **Expletives** are introductory words such as *there* or *it* followed by a linking verb (*is, are, was, were*).

It is probable that Jean won't attend.

There were six people on the conference call.

Expletives function more as signal expressions used for emphasis than as true conveyers of content. For example, *There were six people on the conference call* could as easily be expressed as *Six people were on the conference call*. Examine your writing to eliminate expletives, when possible. Although they can be used effectively to manage the pace and emphasis in a sentence, expletives can also add words that may not be necessary.

Wordy It is probable that Jean won't attend.

Revised Jean probably won't attend.

GRAMMAR ALERT! AGREEMENT ERROR WITH THERE

When a sentence begins with the expletive *there*, the verb is singular or plural depending on the number of the noun or pronoun that follows it. In other words, the verb must agree with the true grammatical subject of the sentence; *there* and *here* are adverbial modifiers and cannot be grammatical subjects.

Incorrect There was two possible solutions.

Correct There were two possible solutions.

To check for correct agreement between subject and verb, try putting the sentence in subject-verb word order: Two possible solutions were there.

TABLE C.6 Features of Verbs

FEATURE	VARIATIONS	EXAMPLE
Time (tense)	present, past, future	The stock market rose 58 points. Prices will increase.
Person	first, second, third	You and I think it is a bull market. He thinks it is a bear market.
Number	singular, plural	A rising tide raises all boats, but ill financial winds raise many fears.
Voice	Active voice: Subject performs action of verb. Passive voice: Subject receives action of verb.	Corporate losses caused a market decline. The market decline was caused by corporate losses.
Mood	Indicates whether action expresses a fact or question (indicative), gives a command (imperative), or expresses a condition contrary to fact (subjunctive).	Indicative: She saves part of every paycheck. Does she save part of every paycheck? Imperative: Save part of every paycheck. Subjunctive: If she were saving part of every paycheck, she would be financially secure. [But the fact is she is not saving, so she is not secure.]

DEVELOPING EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Communication skills top the list of what employers want, and working through this course gives you opportunity to practice your communication abilities, receive feedback, and polish your professional presence. However, the skills you will gain do not stop there. This course will also help you develop these other skills that employers value.

What	Why	How
Critical thinking	Critical thinking is foundational to problem solving.	Every chapter includes a set of questions that focus on critical thinking, and most of the end-of-chapter exercises are designed to engage your critical thinking abilities.
Collaboration	Today's workplace is team oriented, and collaboration is a core ability for team success.	Every chapter includes a collaboration feature and a set of collaborative exercises to practice your teamwork skills.
Ethical reasoning	Poor ethical decisions put the entire company at risk.	Every chapter includes an ethics feature and end-of-chapter questions that explicitly address ethical reasoning.
Ability to apply knowledge in new situations	Employers hire new employees expecting that those employees can translate the knowledge they have gained in school to the practical requirements of the job.	At the end of every chapter, a case scenario challenges you to apply the chapter concepts and skills to a new situation. Many of the end-of-chapter exercises provide similar opportunities.
Ability to use technology effectively	Communication technology is evolving quickly, and employers require that you adapt quickly to use new technology effectively.	Every chapter includes a technology feature and at least one end-of-chapter exercise for more practice with technology.
Data literacy	For data to be useful in making business decisions, employees must know how to analyze the data and communicate it effectively to a variety of audiences.	Exercises throughout the book give you the opportunity to communicate insights from data, use data to support arguments, and communicate data effectively in tables, graphs, and text.

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Supplements available to instructors @ www.pearsonhighered.com	Features of the Supplement
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Test Bank	More than 1,500 multiple-choice, true/false, short-answer, and graphing questions with these annotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulty level (1 for straight recall, 2 for some analysis, 3 for complex analysis)• Type (multiple-choice, true/false, short-answer, essay)• Question category (the type of knowledge required to solve the question)• AACSB learning standard (Written and Oral Communication; Ethical Understanding and Reasoning; Analytical Thinking; Information Technology; Interpersonal Relations and Teamwork; Diverse and Multicultural Work; Reflective Thinking; Application of Knowledge)
Computerized TestGen	TestGen allows instructors to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customize, save, and generate classroom tests• Edit, add, or delete questions from the Test Item Files• Analyze test results• Organize a database of tests and student results.
PowerPoints	Slides include Key images and tables in the textbook. PowerPoints meet accessibility standards for students with disabilities. Features include, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keyboard and Screen Reader access• Alternative text for images• High color contrast between background and foreground colors

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1

Developing Your Professional Presence



STUDY QUESTIONS

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Communication is a complex process
Communication is affected by context
Communication is more than transmission of messages

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Being adaptable

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I've built credibility in two ways: intelligent communication and dependability. The way you ask for something is just as important as what you're asking for. When I request a favor, I offer something in return. Even if there isn't much I can do for that person, he will remember (and appreciate!) the gesture. It's also important to be reliable. If somebody asks you to do something, do it—and get it back to her before the deadline. You earn more responsibility as you build a dependable reputation.



Photo courtesy of Ryan Croy

Chapter 1 | Introduction

What do employers look for in people they hire to be future leaders? Clearly, employers are looking for *competence*—your ability or potential to do the job you are hired to do. They are also looking for **credibility**. In other words, they want employees who have good character and real substance, who are trustworthy, and who will represent the organization well. Just as importantly, they are looking for *confidence*. That doesn't mean that they admire arrogance. Instead, it means they want employees and leaders who believe in themselves and have an attitude and style of communication that inspires confidence in others.

These three elements—competence, credibility, and confidence—form the core of **professional presence**.¹ Some people equate presence with the “wow” factor that allows you to make a great first impression, similar to the peacock that is the emblem of this book.² While that wow factor is certainly impressive, presence goes deeper than that. Presence emanates from within, reflecting your comfort with yourself and the rapport you develop with people around you. As social psychologist Amy Cuddy defines it, “presence is the state of being attuned to and able to comfortably express our true thoughts, feelings, values, and potential.”³ Presence manifests itself primarily through your ability to communicate—verbally and nonverbally—so that others recognize your competence, are eager to listen to what you have to say, trust you, and have confidence in you.

How do you develop professional presence? While you are in school, you undoubtedly have been developing your *competence* as you take courses in your major and other fields. Ideally, you have also been learning how to learn so that you can continue to increase your competence on the job. Your *credibility* is based in part on your character, which you have been developing since you were a child. You also earn credibility by doing good work, being trustworthy, and empathizing with others, which shows that you understand their needs and point of view. You develop *confidence* by believing in yourself and by learning communication skills that allow you to project that belief as you communicate your ideas. Confidence also comes from the knowledge that you can use your **critical thinking**, abilities to adapt what you have learned as new situations arise.

This book and this course are designed to help you polish your professional presence by developing the communication competencies that will set you apart from others, no matter what career you pursue. Communication is what makes presence possible. Think of this first chapter as a preview of the book. It will help you understand why communication is challenging, how you will benefit from learning to communicate well, what characteristics you will be able to demonstrate when you successfully complete this course, and how this course will help you develop other skills—beyond communication—that employers value.

SQ1

Why is it challenging to communicate well?

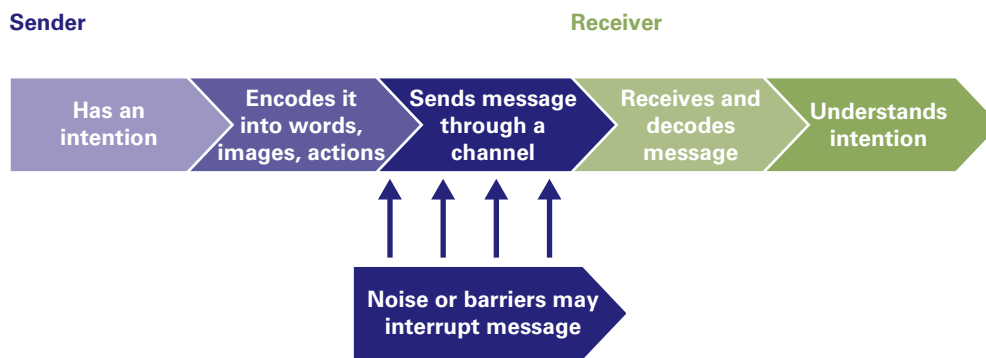
Professional presence depends on communicating well, and that is not an easy task. Even in its most basic form, **communication** is a complex process of encoding and decoding messages (information, ideas, and feelings). However, as communication theory has developed, our understanding of communication has evolved. Communication is more

than just the exchange of messages. It is the process by which people co-create and share meaning. Success in communication is affected by an array of factors that go beyond the language you use, including the physical, social, and cultural context in which you communicate; your relationship with your audience; and the audience's knowledge and expectations. The following sections provide more insight into why communication is so challenging.

Communication is a complex process

Communication experts have been developing models of the communication process for decades, and each new model provides additional insights into the complexities of communication. One of the earliest models, the *transmission model*, is illustrated in **Figure 1.1**. This model focused on a single communication exchange and portrayed communication as the linear transmission of a message from a sender to a receiver.⁴ A sender has an intention; selects a **medium** of communication; **encodes** that intention into words, images, or actions; and sends the message through that medium. The receiver gets that message and **decodes** it to understand its meaning, unless the message is blocked by some kind of noise or barrier.

FIGURE 1.1 An Early Model of the Communication Process: The Transmission Model



The concept of **barriers** helps explain why communication often fails. Barriers come in many forms. They may be *physiological*. For example, if you are speaking to someone who has a hearing loss or a migraine headache, he may not be able to listen effectively or interpret what you are saying. Barriers may be *psychological*. If you compliment someone who does not trust you, she may interpret that compliment as a subtle criticism. *Semantic barriers* occur when language is ambiguous or difficult to understand. If a colleague rushes into a meeting late and says to you, “I was held up at the train station,” you might ask if the robber had a gun, when your colleague simply meant that the train was delayed. *Language barriers* arise when senders and receivers do not have a shared language. Sometimes the problem is obvious: The sender speaks only Spanish and the receiver speaks only English. Other times the problem is less obvious. For example, employees who are new to a company or an industry may not yet understand the jargon people use.

Communication is affected by context

Despite its contributions to communication theory, the transmission model does not provide a full understanding of what happens when we communicate. For example, it does not take into account the iterative back-and-forth process that good communicators use to ensure understanding. Receivers become senders as they provide verbal and nonverbal **feedback**. The transmission model also does not account for the various contexts that affect a sender's encoding choices and a receiver's decoding process.

More recent models of communication address the complexities of feedback and context. For example, the *interaction model* of communication portrays communication as a dynamic process.⁵ Messages and meanings evolve as senders and receivers communicate

credibility An audience's belief that you have expertise and are trustworthy based on your knowledge, character, reputation, and behavior.

professional presence Your ability to project competence, credibility, and confidence in your communication.

critical thinking A disciplined approach to analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information to guide actions and decisions.

communication The process by which participants not only exchange messages (information, ideas, and feelings) but also co-create and share meaning.

medium The method you use to deliver a message (for example, telephone, face-to-face meeting, email, text message, or website).

encode To translate the meaning of a message into words, images, or actions.

decode To interpret the words, images, and actions of a message and attach meaning to them.

barrier An obstacle that gets in the way of effective communication.

feedback Any form of verbal or nonverbal response to a message.

context The external circumstances and forces that influence communication.

back and forth, giving each other feedback. The interaction model also introduced the concept of **context**—the external circumstances and forces that influence communication. This model considers the *physical context* in which communication takes place, including the physical distance between communicators as well as what’s going on around them. For example, shouting across a noisy room is different from whispering in someone’s ear. The model also considers *psychological context*: what’s going on in the communicators’ minds. Someone who fears losing a job may interpret a boss’s comment differently than someone who feels secure.

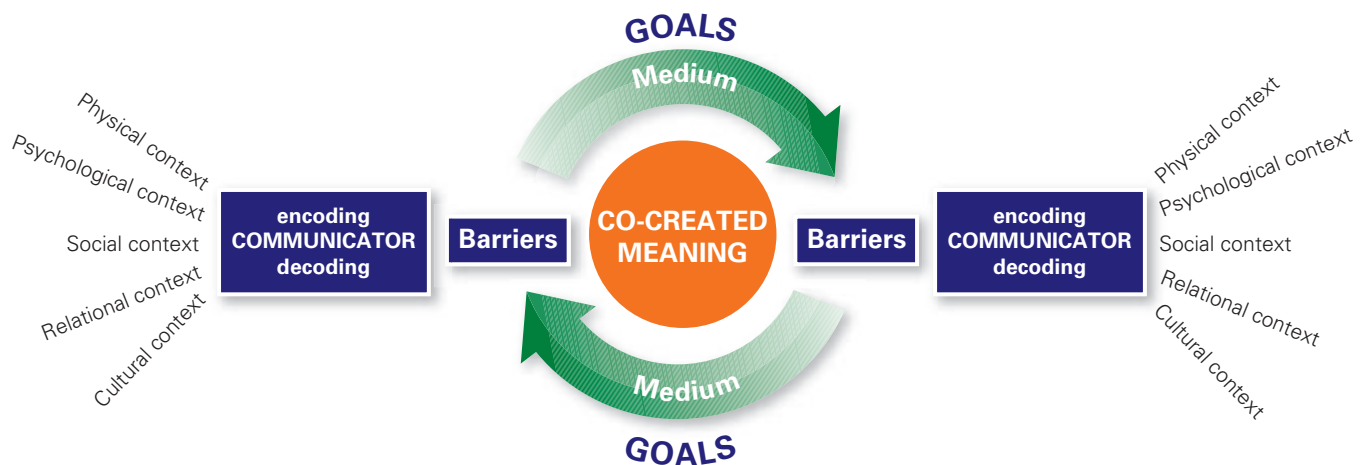
The *transactional model* of communication expands on the concept of context and recognizes that communication is influenced by a broader set of external forces: social, relational, and cultural.⁶ *Social context* refers to the set of learned behaviors and norms that guide communication choices. In some social contexts (such as a classroom), you may wait to be acknowledged before speaking. In other social contexts, you will talk more freely and may even interrupt someone else. *Relational context* arises from past history and current relationships with your audience. For example, if you have had a difficult relationship with someone, you may choose to email that person rather than talk face to face. *Cultural context* refers to the role that culture plays in influencing expectations about communication. For example, if you come from a culture that is comfortable being direct and straightforward, you may have difficulty communicating in a culture where people imply negative messages rather than communicate them directly.

Communication is more than transmission of messages

The transactional model of communication also offers a different view of *why* people communicate. Communication is more than an exchange of information. People also communicate to form and maintain relationships, to persuade others, to learn, to increase self-esteem, to develop new ideas, and to work collaboratively. Communication is the means by which we influence the world and create meaning.

The communication model illustrated in **Figure 1.2** builds on past models, incorporating the range of complexities recognized today. In a business communication class, you will learn to account for all of these complexities as you make and implement your communication decisions.

FIGURE 1.2 Updated Model of the Communication Process



SQ2

What are the benefits of being a good communicator?

As the previous section described, being an effective communicator is challenging. Not everyone is good at it. However, if you take advantage of this course to become a better communicator, you will benefit in several ways. In addition to enhancing your professional presence, you will also develop skills that will give you a competitive edge in the job market, contribute to your company’s success, and contribute to your personal success.

Effective business communicators have a competitive edge in the job market

Despite predictions that technology will make many professional jobs obsolete,⁷ research shows that certain categories of jobs have experienced significant job growth over the past several decades. The jobs growing most quickly are the kinds of jobs that you are training for by attending college—those that require a combination of cognitive skills and social skills, such as teamwork and communication.⁸ And the people most successful in these jobs are those who have developed strong social and communication skills.

Surveys and interviews of corporate recruiters make very clear that employers want to hire good communicators. The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) routinely surveys employers to determine the skills and qualities that they most value in employees. In a recent survey, employers rated the following communication-related skills in the top 10 skills that employers are looking for:

- Ability to work in a team structure
- Ability to verbally communicate with people both inside and outside the organization
- Ability to obtain and process information
- Ability to create and/or edit written reports

In fact, employers rated the first three of these skills as more important than technical knowledge.⁹

Communication also tops the list of the essential workplace skills identified by MBA alumni and recruiters surveyed by the Graduate Management Admission Council. In fact, 94% of alumni ranked communication as the most important skill—and identified communication as equally important at all levels of the organization. Job recruiters make a similar point, identifying oral communication, listening skills, written communication, and presentation skills in the top five desired skills.¹⁰ Echoing this point, a member of the Goldman Sachs recruiting team said that one trait she always looks for in every candidate is “strong communication skills.”¹¹ Other recruiters interviewed at a job fair similarly indicated that they wanted to recruit people with “communication and writing skills” as well as “more polish, confidence, and passion,” which are elements of nonverbal communication and professional presence.¹²

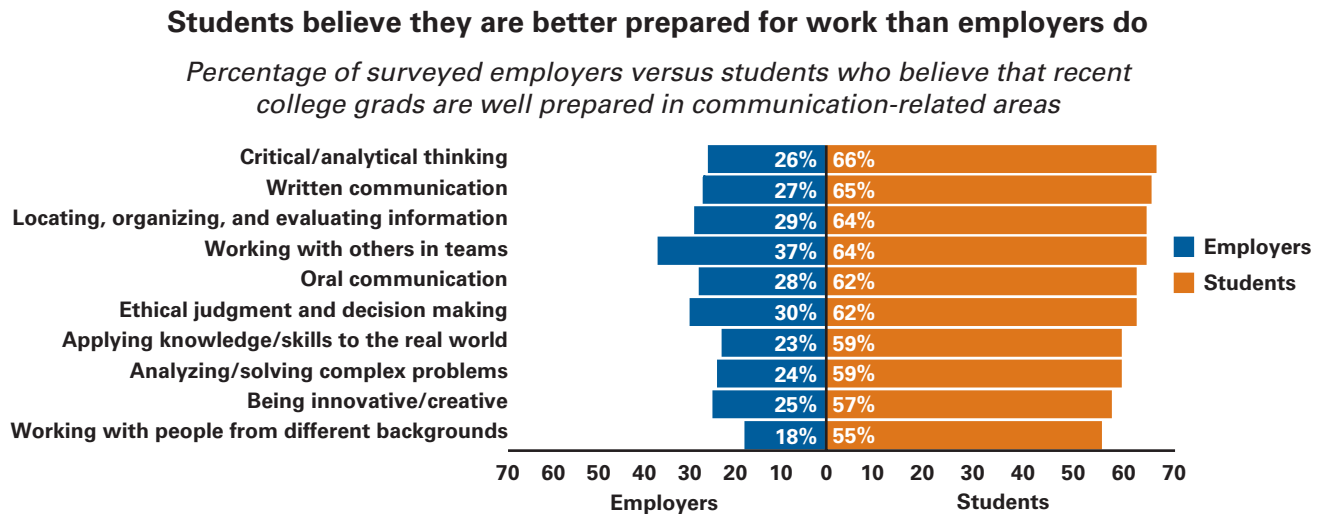
Ironically, although these communication skills are widely considered important, few people in the workplace have mastered them well enough to meet employers’ needs. A report produced collaboratively by American Express and Millennial Branding found that “managers have an overall negative view of young workers, and point to their lack of soft skills regarding communication and interpersonal interactions, time management abilities and willingness to work as a team.”¹³ Another industry report pinpointed critical thinking, writing, and public speaking as skills that managers want but find lacking in recent college grads.¹⁴ Similarly, corporate recruiters say that people with strong communication skills are very difficult to find.¹⁵

Why is it that well-educated students leave college without the communication skills that employers need? Research suggests that young workers do not sufficiently prepare themselves before entering the workforce because they do not recognize their deficits in these areas. A study conducted by Hart Research for the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AACU) finds a large gap between college students’ perception of their abilities and employers’ perceptions. In fact, students are more than twice as likely as an employer to think that they are well prepared to think critically, communicate orally and in writing, and work well in teams—skills that employers believe are crucial for job success. **Figure 1.3** on page 8 graphs the surprising results of the AACU survey.¹⁶

When employees come to the job with insufficient communication skills, employers need to provide on-the-job training—and that costs time and money. A study conducted by the American Management Association found that of the 721 senior-level professionals interviewed, 66 percent said they invested company resources in training their employees in communication skills—more than any other kind of professional activity.¹⁷

This bad news for the workforce may be good news for you. It means you have an opportunity to stand out in the crowd. If you are able to apply the range of skills you learn in this course, you will be a valuable asset to your business, which will increase your professional

FIGURE 1.3 How Employers' Perceptions of Student Preparedness Differ from Students' Perceptions



Adapted from Hart Research Associates (2015), p. 12.

success and perhaps even your income. You will also be able to use these skills to be more effective in your personal life.

Communication skills will contribute to your company's and your own success

Because communication is a valued commodity in the workplace, it can enhance your professional and personal success in a variety of ways.

Communication skills will make you a more valuable employee

Companies want good communicators because good communication is profitable: It *saves* money, and it *makes* money. Consider the following ways in which better communication skills can increase your value to a company:

- **Writing.** Clear, effective writing can save organizations hundreds of thousands of dollars, while ineffective communication can cost time and money. Although there are few documented studies of cost savings from improved writing, the findings that do exist are impressive. For example, Federal Express improved the readability of a ground-operations manual, making it so much easier for employees to read that the company saved an estimated \$400,000 in the first year due to increased efficiency.¹⁸

In the public sector, the state of Washington found it was losing tax revenue because businesses did not clearly understand an important letter explaining the requirements about a specific type of tax. After the state simplified the letter, the improved communication led to an additional \$800,000 of tax revenue being collected.¹⁹ When the Veterans Administration revised just one of its form letters, asking veterans to update their insurance beneficiary forms, the improved response rate was so significant that the organization estimated it saved more than \$4,000,000 because employees had to spend less time identifying and locating beneficiaries.²⁰

Even one good email can contribute to business success. Venture capitalist Varun Jain tells the story of writing an email to the CEO of a company in which he was interested in investing. Although he did not know the CEO and the company was not seeking early stage investments, the email was so effective that he got this response: "Well, Varun, I have to say, that was one of the best blind intro emails I've ever received from a VC. Well played." The CEO proposed a meeting date, the investment deal was ultimately finalized, and less than six months later, the company was acquired by General Motors for more than \$1 billion. Without that email, Jain's company would not have participated in the venture.²¹

If you are a good strategic writer, you can contribute to these kinds of financial benefits and impress your employer.

- **Listening and speaking.** Writing is not the only communication skill that makes you a more valuable employee. As a salesperson, you can bring in more sales if you know how to listen effectively to customers' needs, demonstrate how a product or service meets those needs, and close the sale at the end of a conversation. As a customer service representative, you can retain customers and attract new ones by answering their questions efficiently and communicating solutions to their problems. As a team member who collaborates well with other team members to solve problems, you may be able to bring a product to market earlier, increasing the opportunity to sell the product.
- **Developing communication strategy.** If you work at a managerial or executive level, you may have the opportunity to influence how your organization communicates with employees, investors, and the general public. That communication can directly impact the organization's success. Research by a global consulting firm found that companies that are highly effective at communicating also experience greater employee satisfaction, greater productivity, and greater investor confidence. As a result, these companies are three-and-a-half times more likely to financially outperform their peers than companies that communicate less effectively.²²
- **Implementing social media.** Your expertise with **social media** also can benefit your company. Effective communication through social media—such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram—improves employee satisfaction and builds brand awareness to reach more customers.²³ In addition, if you run your own small business as an entrepreneur, your communication abilities will be especially critical because you will be responsible for most, if not all, of your company's social media communication.²⁴

social media Web-based applications, such as blogs, Facebook, and Twitter, designed to promote social interaction.

Communication skills may improve your salary

A growing body of research shows that jobs requiring both social and cognitive skills are the only ones with consistent wage growth and that good communicators earn more money than comparable employees with less developed social skills.²⁵ Employers who recognize the value of communication skills are willing to pay a premium to get employees with those skills. For example, Kip Tindell, the CEO of The Container Store, explains that communication is at the heart of his company's success, and he is willing to pay double the industry average for a great employee who has the right skills. Tindell said, "One great person could easily be as productive as three good people," so paying twice as much is a bargain.²⁶

Good communication skills can improve your personal life

Good business communication skills—such as speaking and writing clearly, being aware of who will receive your message, listening to others, and persuading others—are beneficial in your personal life, too. For example, you may be able to use your communication skills to persuade your cell phone provider to lower your monthly bill or convince a dealer to give you a better price for a car. Or you might use your listening skills to negotiate, or even prevent, an argument with a friend or family member. Studying business communication and practicing your skills will generate a positive return on your investment of time and energy, both for your professional career and your personal life.

New Hires @ Work

Shruti Shah

University of Florida

Operations Analyst

Development Program Intern @ JPMorgan Chase

I was surprised how broad but significant being a good communicator is. It does not just involve giving powerful presentations; it also involves asking the right questions, carrying conversations with coworkers and managers, and contributing during meetings.

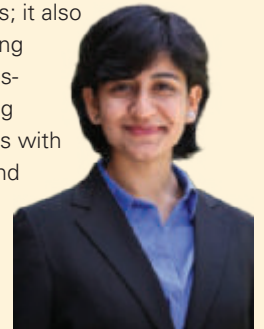


Photo courtesy of Shruti Shah

SQ3 What characteristics will help you communicate effectively?

As you begin to polish your professional presence, consider your current skills and abilities. Think about your core abilities: writing, speaking, listening, and interpersonal communication. The best business communicators—those who have real presence, are able to connect with other people, and successfully deal with communication challenges—share the specific characteristics illustrated in **Figure 1.4** on page 10. These are the characteristics that make writing, speaking, and other interactions effective. The remainder of this chapter previews these characteristics, which you will continue to develop throughout the course and throughout your career. As you read about each one, determine your current strengths and identify the gaps you need to fill to become a more effective communicator.

FIGURE 1.4 Characteristics of Effective Business Communicators



You will learn more about being strategic in Chapter 3: Managing the Communication Process.

communication strategy A plan for what and how you are going to communicate to ensure that your message achieves your purpose.

purpose The reason you are communicating.

outcome The result of your communication; what you want the recipients of your message to know, do, or feel about the subject of your message.

audience The intended recipients of your communication.

New Hires @ Work

Bailey Anderson

University of Northern Iowa

UX Designer @ Principal Financial Group

The most surprising aspect of being a good communicator in my work has been asking lots of questions. Questions show you care about the work you are doing. You might even ask a question that your boss hasn't thought of, which brings a new perspective to the table.



Photo courtesy of Bailey Anderson

Being strategic

The best communicators always have a **communication strategy**—a plan for what and how to communicate to ensure that their message achieves its **purpose**. Strategic communicators are always making decisions, asking themselves these questions:

- What do I want to accomplish with this communication? What is my goal?
- Who is my audience? With whom should I communicate to accomplish my goal?
- What content will my audience need?
- What medium will work best: a face-to-face meeting, a teleconference, an email, a presentation, a report, or a combination of medium options?
- How can I frame and organize the message to state the main point and effectively support it?

As these questions suggest, to be a strategic communicator, you must be purposeful, audience-oriented, and—in many cases—persuasive.

Purposeful

Business communication involves more than self-expression. It needs to be purposeful and constructed to achieve an intended **outcome**. You can judge the effectiveness of your communication by whether it accomplishes its purpose. For example, when you write a cover letter for a job, the letter is effective if you get an interview. Other features of effective communication—such as grammatical correctness, clarity, and conciseness—will also help you achieve your purpose.

Consider the two versions of the email message in **Figure 1.5** by Zack Kramer, a business major and a member of his university's chapter of Students for a Cleaner Environment. The two emails appear to have similar purposes: to get information from a civil engineering professor for one of the club's projects. However, only one of them is likely to get Zack what he wants.

Audience-oriented

Good business communicators understand that their messages must reach and influence their **audience**—the intended recipients of your communication. Being able to influence an audience requires two complementary sets of skills. First, you must be a good reader and listener so that you can understand audience concerns. Second, you must be able to compose messages that address those concerns and are also easy to understand.

Reading and listening provide you with insights into what is important to the audience. For example, when a good communicator receives an email asking a question, she replies only after reading it carefully to identify why the writer is asking the question and what kind of answer he needs.

Being a good listener is arguably even more important than being a good reader. Research suggests that people in school and in the workplace spend much more of their communication time listening than they do speaking, reading, or writing.²⁷ Too often people assume that they are good listeners simply because they *hear* things every day. However, hearing is not the

FIGURE 1.5 How to Write a Purposeful Email

INEFFECTIVE

Hello, My name is Zack Kramer. I'm on a student team working on a screening system that keeps sand out of a river intake (the Concord River, to be exact). Our current problem now is that the water looks like chocolate because it is so sandy, and because of that, the sand build-up at the bottom of the river seeps through the holes of the deep intake, creating a mess inside the intake because of the cementing, problems with filtrations, and obviously unclean water. On behalf of our team, we are looking for somebody in the civil engineering department with some experience in that area who can enlighten us with some past ideas used in other rivers, or perhaps recommend some of his/her own ideas and/or literature. Could you please forward this email to the professors in your department so that we can get some help?

Thanks
Zack

Avoid broad, untargeted email addresses and vague subject lines.

Avoid long paragraphs that force the reader to hunt for your point.

Avoid unclear questions that require extra steps—here, asking the recipient to forward your email on to someone else.

EFFECTIVE

Dear Professor Smith:

Professor Jones, the faculty advisor for Students for a Cleaner Environment, suggested that our design team contact you because you are an expert in fluid dynamics. Our club is currently designing a screening system for an intake valve on the Concord River, and your work on particles in rivers relates to our project. I know that our group would benefit tremendously from your expertise.

Would you be willing to meet with a few members of our team for about 15 minutes later this week to speak with us about the flow patterns of suspended particles in river water? If you are willing to meet with us, please let us know when would be a good time for you.

If you are not available, could you recommend someone else in your department who may be able to help us?

We would be very grateful for any thoughts you might have on our project. Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you,
Zack Kramer
zack.kramer@portola.edu

Address the email to a specific person rather than an entire department to ensure a response. Use a formal salutation ("Dear Professor Smith") when writing to someone for the first time.

Use a clear, specific subject line to alert the reader to the email's purpose.

Get to the point quickly to show respect for your reader's time, and keep sentences relatively short.

Ask a very specific question that is easy for the receiver to answer. Position the question in a visible location, at the beginning of a paragraph.

same as listening, which is a learned skill. **Active listening** involves focusing on the speaker, working to understand both what the speaker is saying and why he or she is saying it, and providing feedback to ensure that you understand it correctly.

An active listener will go beyond listening to words and will also perceive emotional cues and body language—and even think about what is not being said. For example, if a person's voice sounds strained, he may be nervous or concerned about the information he is communicating. Or if a person is using defensive body language, such as crossing her arms, she may feel skeptical or upset, although her words do not convey that same meaning. Most importantly, good listeners do not remain silent. They engage in a dialogue with the speaker and ask questions that prompt the speaker to think harder and gain new insights and perspectives.²⁸ If you develop good listening skills, your coworkers and customers will communicate with you more frequently and more fully. As a result, you will learn more and be able to do your job more effectively. You will also better understand your audience and be able to plan communications that meet their needs.

When you understand your audience, think about meeting their needs in two ways:

1. **Making the message easy for your audience to understand.** If you organize a message for easy comprehension, you will increase the chances that people will accurately read or listen to the message.
2. **Providing the content that the audience needs or wants.** If you address the questions on the audience's minds and anticipate their possible objections, you increase the chances that you will get the response you want.

Figure 1.6 on page 12 illustrates two versions of a business recommendation. To evaluate whether these documents are audience-oriented, try reading them in two steps. First, skim each version for about 10 seconds to see what stands out and to determine which one is easier to read. Then, read each version more carefully to identify which one more clearly provides reasons and explanations that will be compelling to the audience.

active listening A learned skill that requires you to attentively focus on the speaker's communication, interpret the meaning of the content, and respond with feedback to ensure understanding.

You will learn more about active listening in Chapter 2: Working with Others.

FIGURE 1.6 How to Compose an Audience-Oriented Business Recommendation

INEFFECTIVE

File
Message
Insert
Options
Format Text
Review

Send

To:

Cc:

Subject:

Matt Leonard

Santé Système Blood Pressure Monitor

Hello, Matt:

Santé Système has expressed interest in participating in the manufacture of our new home blood pressure monitor in France. On my recent trip to Europe, I had the opportunity of discussing this with George Bonet of our French subsidiary. The situation in France is that registration will take upwards of 12–18 months unless some local assembly/manufacturing can occur within France. If some assembly process could occur at Santé, George projects that registration could be accomplished within six months. Currently, two competitors, Acme and Globics, are pressing for large-scale automated programs of similar technology. Our French subsidiary has a number of Santé units out on trial now, which have been well received but further activity will be extremely difficult pending registration. Could I ask you and your people to investigate the possibility of providing Santé with parts, which they can assemble and incorporate into locally produced final packaging? George will be forwarding to Santé about 25 sets of parts that Santé can use to develop an assembly procedure. Once they have assembled a complete monitor, we can test it and make a decision. George projects first-year sales of such a blood pressure monitor in France to be between 8,000–10,000 units.

I am enclosing for your examination a mock-up monitor produced by Santé. Please keep me informed of progress as the evaluation continues.

Best regards,
Chris

Avoid generic subject lines that do not convey the purpose of the communication.

Avoid long, unbroken paragraphs, which force your audience to look for information that is important to them. Instead, compose your message with the audience's needs in mind.

Avoid mixing together recommendations, requests, and justifications for your proposals. Structure a coherent, well-organized proposal that leads your reader through your recommendations, rationales, and next steps.

EFFECTIVE

File
Message
Insert
Options
Format Text
Review

Send

To:

Cc:

Subject:

Matt Leonard

Recommendation to Evaluate Partnership with Santé Système

Hello, Matt:

On my recent trip to Europe, I met with George Bonet of our French subsidiary to discuss a partnership with Santé Système for manufacturing our new home blood pressure monitors in France. I am writing to get your approval on a recommended plan and to propose next steps.

Recommendation

Based on this conversation, I recommend that we evaluate the possibility of Santé's participation by allowing them to assemble several test units for us.

Rationale for Working with Santé

- **Working with Santé will substantially speed the process of getting the product on the market in France.** Registration in France will take 12 to 18 months if assembly occurs in the United States. If assembly takes place in France, registration will take only six months. Our French subsidiary has a number of monitors out on trial now. The units have been well received, but we will have difficulty growing sales until the product is registered.
- **Working with Santé, we may be able to beat our competitors to market.** Our competitors, Acme and Globics, are pressing for large-scale production programs of similar technology.
- **Getting to market quickly will allow us to capture a share of a substantial market.** George projects first-year sales of such a monitor in France to be between 8,000 and 10,000 units.

Next Steps

Will you please:

- **Investigate the possibility of providing Santé with components that they can assemble and incorporate into locally produced final packages.** George will be forwarding to Santé about 25 sets of parts to use to develop an assembly procedure. We can then (1) test a prototype on an in-house machine to understand its performance and (2) make a decision.
- **Examine the enclosed mock-up kit produced by Santé,** which demonstrates their proposed look of the product and confirm that it is acceptable.

Please let me know by February 25 if you anticipate any problems with the procedure.

Best regards,
Chris
chris.dillard@rumson.com

Identify the purpose of the message in the subject line.

Make your recommendation easy to find.

Use headings to outline the organization.

Provide reasoning that your audience will find compelling.

End with next steps listed in bullet points.

Persuasive

When you want to influence people's thoughts or actions, your message needs to be persuasive. **Persuasion** is the process of influencing your audience to agree with your point of view, recommendation, or request. In your daily life, you often need to communicate persuasively. You may be persuading people to accept a proposal or recommendation, give you a refund, agree with your argument, donate money to a charity, become a customer, or remain a customer—the list goes on and on. The more persuasive you are, the more effective your communication will be.

Being persuasive requires thinking about the topic from your audience's point of view. What benefits do you offer? What audience objections do you need to address? What reasons and factual evidence support your claim? In **Figure 1.7** on page 14, Fran Patera of MaxiWeb Web Hosting wants to persuade a potential customer to switch to MaxiWeb as its Internet provider. As you read Fran's message, notice how she stresses benefits, addresses actual and potential objections, and provides support for her claims.

Being professional

A survey by York College of Pennsylvania's Center for Professional Excellence found that professionalism is a key issue for students entering the workforce: "Almost 40% of faculty responded that less than half of students demonstrate professionalism."²⁹ **Professionalism** refers to the qualities that make you appear businesslike in the workplace. Professionalism is expressed by your actions, your attire, your wording in an email, your body language during a meeting, your tone of voice on the telephone, and your attention to correct grammar and proofreading. However, professionalism goes beyond projecting a professional image. It also involves living up to the standards of your profession, including ethical standards. An effective professional communicator is appropriate to the situation, clear and concise, and ethical.

Appropriate to the situation

Different situations require different behaviors. For example, if you have lunch with friends, you may not think to stand up when a new person joins you at the table or to introduce that person formally to the others. In addition, you may assume it is okay to tell your friends funny stories about another student. However, during a business lunch, professionalism requires that you observe etiquette and actively participate in conversations without disrespecting others. Etiquette errors become barriers that negatively impact other people's perceptions of you.

Professionalism is as important in writing as it is in speaking. For example, assume that you just found out you have to cancel your evening plans because your marketing team needs to finish a new client proposal before an 8 am meeting. You may want to email this message to your team: *"hey guys, i hope you didn't get too wasted last night, cuz we gotta pull an all-nighter tonight to get that project done by 8 AM or we'll be in deep trouble! i'll order pizza—what should I get?"*

The informal style and wording may be appropriate for your friends. However, informality in the workplace can be a problem because your email could be forwarded to others at the company. The challenge is to be professional in your work email without being overly formal. A more professional message would use standard English and eliminate references to personal life as well as negative references to the project and supervisor: *"Hi John, Deepa, and Elaine: It looks as if we will have to work late tonight to meet the 8 AM deadline. I'll order a pizza for us—any requests?"* Consider the two emails in **Figure 1.8** on page 15 and assess the level of professionalism in each one.

Clear and concise

In school, you might have developed a wordy writing style to fulfill word-count requirements in assignments such as a 500-word essay. You may also have developed the habit of writing complicated sentences in an attempt to sound sophisticated and well educated. If you have developed these bad habits, you will need to change them to sound professional

You will learn more about persuasion in Chapter 5: Communicating Persuasive Messages.

persuasion The process of influencing an audience to agree with your point of view, accept your recommendation, grant your request, or change their beliefs or actions in a way that facilitates a desired outcome.

professionalism The qualities that make you appear businesslike in the workplace.

New Hires @ Work

Sam Sharp

Michigan State University

Planning Supervisor @ GBT

My advice for new hires:

Don't ever be seen without a notebook or a pen. Write *everything* down. Take advantage of being the new kid; ask questions—but don't be the person who asks the same one twice.



Photo courtesy of Sam Sharp

FIGURE 1.7 How to Compose a Persuasive Letter

letter



2929 Avenue of the West, Houston, TX 77002

June 25, 20XX

Mr. Will Johnson
SaveOnCrafts
1349 Lothrop Street
Topeka, KS 66605

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for meeting with me last week to discuss changing your web hosting company from your current provider to MaxiWeb. We believe that MaxiWeb will offer you two important benefits.

The first benefit is reliability. With our integrated backup systems, we average only five minutes of outage time per month. According to an independent survey published in *E-Commerce Today*, your current provider loses connectivity at least once per day. I have enclosed an article from *E-Commerce Today* that provides a method for estimating what this amount of down time may be costing your company in lost sales.

The second benefit is responsiveness and customer service. MaxiWeb has the highest customer service rating in the industry. Unlike many other providers, we offer 24-hour telephone support from our home office in Houston. Our average time for resolving problems is less than 30 minutes.

At the meeting, you expressed concern that MaxiWeb may cost more per month than your current service. As an attachment to this letter, I've included a detailed comparison between MaxiWeb's flat fee, which includes all services, and Interflex's fee structure, which requires you to pay for each service separately. By the time you add up all the extra services you need, I think you will find that Interflex's yearly cost is 10 percent more than our flat fee.

Only a few days are necessary to set up and test your site. We will be glad to coordinate that work with your IT department. In more than 95 percent of cases, the actual transfer is so quick and seamless that you will not lose even one sale from your site.

I will call you next week to see if you have any additional questions. We are ready to begin the transfer process as soon as you authorize it.

Sincerely,

Fran Patera

Fran Patera
Director of Sales

Enclosures

Begin with a clear purpose.

Focus on benefits. Present them in separate, clear paragraphs to make them easier to see and provide support for claims.

Respond to objections your audience has previously raised.

Anticipate and respond to potential objections your audience may raise.

Use the closing to emphasize next steps and to make it easy for your reader to implement the change you are proposing.

in the workplace. In business, people value clarity and conciseness. **Clarity** is the quality of being unambiguous and easy to understand. Clear communication has only one possible meaning. In addition, it uses simple words in well-constructed sentences and well-organized paragraphs. **Conciseness** means that a message uses no more words than are necessary to accomplish its purpose. Clarity and conciseness are valued in business because time is a scarce resource. Your audience will understand a clear and concise message more quickly than a wordy and complicated one.

clarity The quality of being unambiguous and easy to understand.

conciseness Using no more words than necessary for a message to accomplish its purpose.

FIGURE 1.8 How to Convey Professionalism in an Email

INEFFECTIVE

greeting: Hello All!!!!!! 😊

formatting: single long paragraph, no headings, no bullets, no signature block

typo: pelase

Avoid informal elements such as vague greetings, exclamation points, and emoticons in business messages.

Avoid a single, long paragraph, which shows a lack of forethought and organization.

Avoid typos. A carelessly composed business message is unprofessional.

EFFECTIVE

greeting: To All Members of the Ice Glide Hockey Skates Marketing Team:

formatting: headings, paragraphs, bullets, signature block

typo: pelase

Address emails to specific recipients.

Use headings and paragraphs to provide clear organization and content.

Proofread to ensure proper spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Use bullets to make items easy to scan.

End your email with a complimentary closing to project a professional image.

Sign all emails with a signature block that identifies you, your position, and your contact information.

MyLab Business Communication

Apply Figure 1.8's key concepts by going to www.pearson.com/mylab/business-communication

Consider the two versions of a voice mail message in **Figure 1.9**. The ineffective message is long and unorganized. The effective message is short and to the point.

FIGURE 1.9 How to Compose a Voice Message That Is Clear and Concise

INEFFECTIVE	EFFECTIVE
Hi, Ahmad. This is Don. The meeting yesterday went on for two hours after you left and there was a lot of discussion about the new pricing system and how it will affect our sales and marketing campaign. No one could really agree about what the impact will be, which isn't surprising since we didn't have your charts to review, and we never agree about anything right away, so we decided to hold another meeting on Friday, which you are welcome to come to but you don't really have to. But what we do need from you are the sales projections for the four regions, which you never got a chance to present yesterday. Can you get those to Mary by Friday morning? Also, if you don't plan to come and there's anything else you want us to discuss, let me know.	Hi, Ahmad. This is Don. I'm sorry we didn't have a chance to discuss your sales projections at the meeting yesterday. We've scheduled a new meeting to discuss them at 2 pm on Friday. Could you let me know if you are available to attend? If not, please get the sales projections to Mary by noon on Friday so she can distribute them at the meeting. Thanks.



You will learn more about ethics and communication throughout the book. Each chapter includes an ethics feature that focuses on an aspect of ethics relevant to the chapter topic. Look for the ethics icon.

ethics The principles used to guide decision making and lead a person to do the right thing.

Ethical

As a professional, you are likely to face a number of ethical dilemmas that are difficult to resolve—and as the AACU survey indicates, employers believe that recent graduates are not well prepared to resolve them.³⁰ **Ethics** are the principles you use to guide decision making, leading you to do the right thing. However, the right thing is not always immediately obvious, and making a decision that violates ethical standards may put your career, your colleagues, your customers, or your company at risk. Being ethical means telling the truth, taking responsibility for your actions, and imagining the impact of your actions on others:

- **Telling the truth.** Assume that your supervisor asks your team to prepare a persuasive presentation to support her recommendation that your company move some of its manufacturing facilities to Mexico. Most of your research supports the move because it will save the company money without decreasing product quality. However, you are not certain you have done enough research into the labor situation in Mexico. You have heard rumors that the move may expose the company to risks resulting from excessive employee absenteeism and turnover. You don't have time to do more research because your supervisor is presenting the information tomorrow. Here is your ethical dilemma: Should you mention the potential risk, which will weaken your argument? Or should you ignore this potential risk and present the strongest case you can to support the move to Mexico? After all, your supervisor has asked you to put together a strong argument because management really wants to move several facilities to Mexico. In addition, you have no actual evidence that there will be a labor problem.

This scenario places you in an ethical dilemma in which you must choose between two competing responsibilities. The first is your responsibility to tell the truth. If your presentation gives the impression that no problems exist in moving facilities to Mexico, you would not be living up to that responsibility. The second is your responsibility to your supervisor and your organization. If your supervisor wants a change that you believe may be risky to the organization, you face a difficult decision. You might think, “I’ll just give my supervisor the strong argument she asked for, and she can do with it what she likes.” However, if you feel tempted to respond in this way, you might want to impose the *headline test* on your actions. How would you feel if the company had problems in Mexico, and the media coverage started with this headline: “Business analyst failed to inform company of potential labor risks”? If the headline makes you feel uncomfortable or guilty, then you have probably acted against your own ethical principles. In general, it is better to tell your supervisor the entire truth: There are unconfirmed rumors of labor unrest in Mexico that should be

investigated before reaching a final decision. This allows everyone to make the best and most informed decision.

- **Taking responsibility for your actions.** If you read or watch the news, you will routinely see reports of companies that endanger the safety of customers, bribe officials, cheat customers, provide incorrect information to the government or shareholders, or in other ways do not live up to their promises. In some cases the actions appear to have been deliberate—such as Volkswagen’s manipulation of software to make it appear that its diesel engines were meeting emission standards.³¹ In other cases, the crisis surprised the company as much as the public—such as the contaminated ingredients at Chipotle that endangered the lives of nearly 200 customers in nine states.³² Finally, in some cases, it is unclear whether the problem was deliberate or accidental—such as when Whole Foods systematically overcharged customers for fruits and vegetables in at least two states.³³

Whoever is at fault, the public and stockholders clearly expect the company to be honest, take responsibility, apologize, and make a plan to provide restitution and prevent reoccurrence. However, not all companies do so effectively. In the case of Volkswagen, the CEO made a statement but never actually admitted fault. Whole Foods responded to accusations of overcharging first by denying the claim and refusing to take responsibility. When Whole Foods finally acknowledged the problem and apologized, the company shifted the blame to the workers. Even though Whole Foods outlined a clear and compelling plan to solve the overcharging problem, the press and social media reactions were not good.³⁴ By contrast, Chipotle took immediate responsibility for endangering the safety of customers, apologized, and took action by developing a plan to prevent future occurrences and win back customers’ trust.³⁵

Just as businesses need to take responsibility for their actions, so do individual employees. Those who deny responsibility or shift blame to others quickly lose their colleagues’ respect and trust. As a business communicator, you may not always easily identify the best and most ethical course of action to take. However, a good communicator recognizes the responsibility to try.

- **Imagining the impact of your actions on others.** As you prepare for your professional career, think carefully about the distinction between the behaviors you currently consider personally acceptable and those considered acceptable in business. For example, people who actively participate in social networking are so comfortable with openness and sharing that they may not always maintain the boundary between content that a business owns and content that an individual employee may keep and share. In fact, a national business ethics survey conducted by the Ethics Resource Center found that active social networkers were more likely than others in the workplace to believe it is acceptable to keep copies of confidential company documents in case they need them in the next job with a different employer or to take copies of work software home to use on personal computers.³⁶

In most businesses, this behavior would be considered ethically questionable. Imagine the potential impact of these actions on others. For example, if you take electronic copies of confidential documents when you leave a job and if your computer gets lost or stolen, you are not likely to report the incident to your previous employer. If the documents contain trade secrets or other proprietary information, you put the company at risk.

Being adaptable

The business world evolves continually, requiring you to adapt both as an employee and as a communicator. Think of all the changes that occur during a typical person’s 40-year business career. For example, a new college graduate who began working for IBM in the mid-1980s joined a company whose key business was building and selling stand-alone mainframe computers for large corporate clients. IBM basically had one product to make and one product to sell to one kind of customer. Communication with those clients—and with colleagues—took place by phone calls, letters, memos, and face-to-face meetings.

However, in a few short years, the world changed dramatically. IBM employees saw the company’s one product being overshadowed by the personal computer and networks. The Internet was rapidly growing as both a means of communication and a business platform. Clients began looking for software solutions, not hardware products. So IBM changed its focus from being a product provider to being a service provider.

During this change, an employee who wanted to remain at IBM had to learn to adapt—no longer focusing on communicating the benefits of one product but listening to client needs and providing solutions to those needs. Employees also had to adapt to other cultures because IBM's customer base outside the United States was growing. In addition, employees needed to become more collaborative as IBM created more global teams to serve its customers around the world. New communication media—email, video conferencing, online meetings—replaced the old ones.³⁷

These kinds of significant transformations continue today. Before 2003, Facebook and social networking between businesses and customers did not exist, and before YouTube launched in 2005, there was no easy way to post videos on the web. Now Facebook and YouTube are both standard tools of business communication.

It is impossible to predict how business will change in the future and how communication will change as a result. Only one thing is certain: More change will come, and as a business communicator, you must learn to adapt—to new technologies, diverse colleagues and customers, and new ways of working with others.



You will learn more about business uses of social media in Chapter 7: Using Social Media in Business. In addition, each chapter includes a technology feature that focuses on an aspect of communication technology relevant to the chapter topic. Look for the technology icon.

Current with technology and social media

Being an effective business communicator requires that you take advantage of new communication technologies such as smartphones and tablets as well as new communication media such as Web 2.0 applications and social media. Technology changes so quickly that the hardware and software applications you use now will likely be outdated by the time you reach the workplace. New options—and new challenges—will arise to make your business communication both more efficient and more prone to error. You will need to adapt to these changes as well as to the ways businesses use familiar platforms. To take the best advantage of technology, communicators continually need to address three questions: What is the best technology for the task? How can I avoid the technology traps that hinder effective communication? And how can I adapt familiar technology to business use?

Choosing the best technology for the task. Imagine that you are working for a company in Palo Alto, California. You are collaborating on a project with a team in your company's Tokyo office, where the time zone is 16 hours ahead. At the end of your workday at 5 PM, it is 9 AM the next day in Tokyo. You need to update your Tokyo colleagues about your progress on the project for the day so they can continue the work. What technologies can you use to do this? As the following analysis shows, no technology is perfect, and you will need to make thoughtful decisions:

- **Should you call your colleagues to let them know the status of the project?** The advantage of a phone call is that your colleagues can ask questions. The disadvantage is that there is no written documentation of your update. If someone in Tokyo misses your phone call, he won't have access to the information.
- **Should you email your colleagues?** Email is very efficient, and it allows you to communicate with many people at once. But sending an email does not guarantee that your colleagues will read it, especially if they receive many emails in a day. In addition, email is not always reliable because there may be network delays, or someone's spam filter may block your message.
- **Should you upload your documents to the company intranet or a collaborative worksite?** Uploading to an intranet or a collaborative worksite offers the advantage of having all the documents in a central location that employees with the password can access. In addition, collaborative web applications such as Google Drive and Box allow multiple people to work on material at the same time. The disadvantage, though, is that your colleagues in Tokyo will need to remember to go to the site to download documents. The documents aren't delivered to their mailboxes.

Avoiding technology traps. Technological competence goes beyond selecting a communication technology. It also requires knowing how to avoid traps. Have you experienced any situations similar to these?

- You receive a text message from your boss asking "Do you have the project update ready?" You intend to text back "No I don't. I'll have it tomorrow." However, your smartphone

“autocorrects” your message to read “No idiot. I’ll have it tomorrow.” It is hard to recover from that kind of mistake. (To prevent this problem, always proofread your texts carefully before sending them.)

- You send an email with a large attachment to someone outside your organization. You assume that the recipient got the file because you do not receive a message saying your email failed. However, two days later, you get an email asking when you intend to send the file. (To prevent this problem, avoid emailing large files. Instead upload them to a collaboration site such as Dropbox or Google Drive and email your recipient a link.)
- You’ve created a PowerPoint presentation that includes specialized fonts, which you have downloaded to your computer. However, when you give the presentation using someone else’s computer, your fonts don’t work. Instead, the presentation computer has substituted alternative fonts that not only look unprofessional but also change your line spacing. (To prevent this problem, learn how to “embed” fonts within a PowerPoint or Word document.)
- You have written a long and complex email that carefully and thoroughly analyzes a problem, but when your recipients read it on a mobile device, as is increasingly common in business,³⁸ they see big blocks of text and have to scroll a long way to find your main point. Many of them choose not to read your entire email and, as a result, never get to your main point. (You can prevent this problem by writing all emails with the mobile reader in mind: Keep the email short, summarize the main ideas at the beginning, and provide headings and other visual cues that keep mobile readers on track.)
- You are starting a Facebook page for your new business, and a fan of your company tags you in an offensive post, which then appears on your own wall. (This problem is solved by paying attention to privacy and access settings on your page, which will allow you to control who can tag you in their posts as well as enable you to review any posts before they reach the public.)

As a good communicator, you don’t need to know all technologies, but you do need to think about the implications of technology choices and use your options wisely.

Adapting familiar technology to business use. You will also need to adapt to the business uses of familiar social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram as well as social media platforms that are used primarily for business, such as LinkedIn and SlideShare. You may already be using social media to connect with friends, to broadcast your current activities, to share pictures, and even to play games. However, businesses use social media strategically to accomplish a number of different goals:

- **Reach customers.** Think of all the ways that companies use social media to reach customers, promote their products and services, enhance brand awareness, and build a community of followers.³⁹ Examples include YouTube videos of new products, community discussion boards on corporate websites, coupons and discounts distributed through Facebook pages, and social media promotions designed to generate customer interest. As new social media technologies gain popularity, businesses find creative ways to use and benefit from them.
Ikea Norway offers a good example of creativity. The company wanted people to engage with and talk about its products on social media. To accomplish that goal, Ikea offered customers an opportunity to win their favorite item from the catalog (which is mailed to every residence in Norway) by taking a photo of the page containing the item and posting the picture on Instagram with the hashtag #ikeakatalogen. Within four weeks, every page of the catalog had been uploaded to Instagram. Ikea had its first “social catalog” at very little cost, and Ikea’s Instagram account had 12,000 new followers.⁴⁰
- **Provide customer support and education.** For example, Salesforce, the enterprise cloud-computing company, uses YouTube to host training videos and best-practice webinars about its software. Potential customers also have access to the videos and comments from current customers. This education and validation builds consumer confidence.
- **Find new employees through social recruiting.** Social media outlets such as LinkedIn and Facebook are excellent places to publicize jobs and search for new employees, and organizations are continually finding new ways to use both social media and messaging apps to attract job candidates. For example, the company HireVue not only sells a digital recruiting platform but also uses Snapchat and Periscope to communicate with candidates and help them visualize what it’s like to work at the company.⁴¹



LinkedIn, the world’s largest professional social networking site, grew from half a million members in 2004 to more than 400 million members in 2016.

goodwill A positive relationship between you (or your company) and the audience.

- **Engage existing employees and improve productivity.** Companies use social media in various ways to engage employees. Many companies create internal social media sites, such as the computer manufacturer Lenovo's internal network Lenovo Social Champions. The site encourages employees to learn from each other, share stories, and create buzz about events.⁴²

Even more companies encourage their employees to be brand ambassadors, writing and talking about the company on external social media. That kind of employee presence on social media builds both brand awareness and **goodwill**—that is, a positive relationship between the company and the audience. The software company Adobe is a leader in empowering employees to communicate broadly about the brand through social media. Adobe provides employees training in how to responsibly talk about Adobe in their personal social media accounts, and for those who want to go further, Adobe provides additional training and branded social media accounts. Adobe has found that social media is responsible for 20 percent of subscriptions to Adobe Creative Cloud and that in some months brand ambassadors are responsible for more revenue than Adobe's official social media accounts.⁴³ The benefit of employee social media goes beyond increased sales and customer goodwill. Research shows that employees who engage in work-related social media are more productive than those who do not.⁴⁴

As the previous examples suggest, by being adaptable to changes in technology, businesses create communication opportunities and strengthen their connections with employees, customers, and the general public. Businesses rely on their employees—especially younger employees—to find new ways to use technology effectively.



You will learn more about working with other cultures in Chapter 2: Working with Others. In addition, each chapter includes a culture feature that focuses on an aspect of culture relevant to the chapter topic. Look for the culture icon.

idiom An expression that means something other than the literal meaning of its words.

culture The learned and shared attitudes, values, and behaviors that characterize a group of people.

Able to work with diverse cultures and ages

Workplaces are becoming increasingly diverse, bringing together people from different countries, cultures, backgrounds, and generations. Although these differences create a collective wealth of knowledge and breadth of perspectives, the differences also can make communication challenging. Bridging these differences requires self-awareness, respect, and patience. Consider some of the challenges of communicating with people who come from an older generation. To Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964) telephone and email are comfortable forms of communication. To Millennials (born 1981–2000), texting seems much more convenient. By contrast, the digital natives of Generation Z (born 2000–2015) prefer talking face-to-face, in person.⁴⁵ When working in a multigenerational workplace, your chances of being heard may depend on choosing the medium that works best for your audience.

Also consider the challenges of communicating with people from other cultures. If they are not native English speakers, language choices can be challenging. To keep your writing and speaking easy to understand by a diverse audience, use short sentences and avoid **idioms**—expressions that mean something different from the literal meaning of their words, such as “we are on the same page.” Idioms may confuse people who are unfamiliar with them.

Even people who are adept at English may come from *cultures* that approach business and communication differently than you do. **Culture** refers to the learned and shared patterns in a society. People demonstrate their culture through values, ideas, and attitudes—and their approach to communication. Some cultures, such as the Chinese, are more formal than others. Chinese businesspeople follow a prescribed set of rules about how to show respect to managers and other senior colleagues. As another example, some cultures, such as the Germans, are more concerned with punctuality than others. German businesspeople may be offended if someone arrives at a meeting 10 minutes late.

Cultural differences can lead to communication challenges. Consider the following scenario involving two companies doing business together—one from China and the other from Britain.⁴⁶ Communication challenges arise from a key difference between Chinese and British business cultures: Chinese businesses are hierarchical, and British businesses are more democratic or egalitarian. This means that in China, senior members of the company are accorded special respect and treated differently than their employees, while in Britain everyone is accorded equal respect.

The British company hired a Chinese firm to act as the sales representative for its products in China. The British regional manager in charge of Asia Pacific sales created an email distribution list to communicate efficiently with the entire group in China. The head of sales in China was insulted at being included in the list with junior colleagues. This method of communication does

not show him enough respect. If the British manager had learned more about Chinese corporate culture, he probably would have sent the communication only to the Chinese director, who could have then decided how to communicate the information to his employees.

As you can see from this scenario, basic communication decisions that seem normal in your own cultural context may offend colleagues from another culture. By increasing your awareness of cultural differences and keeping an open dialogue with your colleagues, you can adapt your behavior as needed.

Cultural sensitivity does not apply only to international communication. Even within the same country, younger people are likely to be less hierarchical and formal than their older counterparts. While the older head of sales from the Chinese firm may have been insulted at receiving information at the same time as his junior colleagues, the junior members may have responded differently. Like their younger British counterparts, they may have felt that respect is earned rather than owed based on hierarchy.⁴⁷

Even if you conduct comprehensive research on a culture, you will not be able to predict every intercultural problem. However, your attempts to accommodate cultural differences will communicate professionalism and respect.

Collaborative

In school, you complete much of your work on your own. Even when you work on a group project with other students, the grade you earn at the end of the class is usually an individual one. In business, although you will routinely have to communicate as an individual, many of your projects will be team-based because they are too big to be completed by just one person. As a result, **collaboration**—working with others to achieve a common goal—is crucial in the workplace.

Being collaborative requires that you adapt to the working styles of many different people. In addition, it requires that you coordinate, compromise, negotiate, and manage conflict. For example, assume that you work for an airline and have been assigned to a cross-disciplinary team that is researching various ways to decrease costs. Your team has 30 days to complete its research and present findings and recommendations to management. Think about all the decisions you need to make to coordinate your work:

- How to identify talents of team members and divide the research
- How and when to share information with each other
- What criteria to use to evaluate the options
- Which options to present to management
- How to organize your presentation
- How to divide the task of writing the presentation
- How to organize and deliver your recommendations to management

In the process of working together and making these decisions, you and your teammates are likely to experience disagreements and conflicts. Perhaps one teammate, based on his research, firmly believes that the best option for decreasing costs is to eliminate the lowest-volume routes that the airline flies, while another teammate argues that her research shows this option has hidden public relations costs. As this scenario suggests, effective communicators need to know more than just how to research, write, and present. They also need to know how to coordinate work, manage conflicts, and negotiate agreements.

collaboration The process of working with others to achieve a common goal.



You will learn more about communicating effectively in groups in Chapter 2: Working with Others. In addition, each chapter includes a collaboration feature that focuses on an aspect of collaboration that is relevant to the chapter topic. Look for the collaboration icon.

SQ4

What other important career skills will this textbook help you develop?

As you have learned in this chapter, communication is central to your success no matter what career you plan to pursue. Communication skills top the list of what employers want, and working through this course gives you opportunity to practice your communication abilities, receive feedback, and polish your professional presence.

However, the skills you will gain do not stop there. By paying attention to the boxed features in the text and working through the case scenarios and exercises, you will enhance

data literacy The ability to access, assess, interpret, manipulate, summarize, and communicate data.

a wide range of other skills that are vital for success in the 21st-century workplace: critical thinking, collaboration, ethical reasoning, the ability to apply knowledge in new situations, the ability to use technology effectively, and **data literacy**. **Figure 1.10** explains why employers value these skills and how you can practice them.

FIGURE 1.10 How This Textbook Will Help You Develop Additional Employability Skills

SKILL	WHY EMPLOYERS VALUE IT	HOW YOU CAN PRACTICE IT
Critical thinking: A disciplined approach to analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information to guide actions and decisions	Critical thinking is foundational to problem solving. Employers value employees whose education has gone beyond memorization and who can use what they have learned to solve problems.	Each chapter in this text includes a set of questions that focus specifically on critical thinking. In addition, most of the end-of-chapter exercises are designed to engage your critical thinking abilities. You will also see many scenarios in the book in which people are exercising critical thinking to solve problems. Use these examples as models to practice your own critical thinking skills.
Collaboration: The ability to work with others to achieve a common goal	In the workplace, many tasks require multiple perspectives; other tasks require more work than one person can accomplish on his or her own. Today's workplace is team oriented, and collaboration is a core ability for team success.	Each chapter includes a collaboration feature that focuses on an aspect of collaboration relevant to the chapter topic. In addition, each chapter includes a set of collaborative exercises that challenge you to work effectively with others.
Ethical reasoning: Using a set of principles to guide thinking and lead a person to do the right thing	Employers rely on employees to distinguish between right and wrong and to make well-thought-out decisions that consider the interests of all stakeholders. Poor ethical decisions put the entire company at risk.	Each chapter includes an ethics feature that focuses on an aspect of ethics that is relevant to the chapter topic. In addition, each chapter includes critical thinking questions or exercises that explicitly address ethical reasoning.
Ability to apply knowledge in new situations: The ability to learn a concept and then appropriately apply that knowledge in another setting	Employers hire new employees expecting that those employees can translate the knowledge they have gained in school to the practical requirements of the job. If you cannot apply your education in flexible ways, you will be a less valuable employee.	At the end of every chapter, a case scenario challenges you to apply the chapter concepts and skills to a new situation. Many of the end-of-chapter exercises provide similar opportunities.
Ability to use technology effectively: The ability to select and use appropriate technology to accomplish a given task	Every job requires the ability to select and use the appropriate technology. Communication technology is evolving quickly, and employers require that you adapt quickly to use new technology effectively.	Every chapter of the text includes a technology feature that focuses on effectively using a technology that is relevant to the chapter. Each feature references at least one end-of-chapter exercise for more practice.
Data literacy: The ability to access, assess, interpret, manipulate, summarize, and communicate data	Technology has made it possible for businesses to generate and access increasing amounts of data. For this data to be useful in making business decisions, employees must know how to analyze the data and communicate it effectively to a variety of audiences.	While you may learn techniques for analyzing and evaluating data in other courses, this course gives you the opportunity to practice the complementary skills of data literacy: communicating insights from data, using data to support arguments, and communicating data effectively in tables, graphs, and text.

As you work through this course, reflect on how you are using and developing these skills and how they will apply to the work you will do in your career. If you do, then when you are ready to write your résumé and prepare for job interviews, you will be better able to showcase what you have learned.

■ **In summary,** employers want to hire people who are effective communicators and project a strong professional presence. However, becoming a successful communicator is not as simple as you may first believe. In addition to developing effective writing, speaking, listening, and interpersonal skills, a good communicator needs to be strategic, professional, and adaptable. Because communication is so critical to your success, working on communication skills will also give you the opportunity to enhance other skills that are vital for employment, including critical thinking, collaboration, ethical reasoning, and data literacy. This course will give you ample opportunity to practice all these skills and develop a competitive edge at work and in other facets of your life.

SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION @ WORK Patrick Engineering, Inc.



Patrick Engineering is a national engineering and construction company that plans, designs, and builds infrastructure projects, such as bridges, dams, mass transit systems, railways, water systems, power delivery systems, and communications systems. With 12 offices across the United States, the company works with the state and federal agencies and industrial clients that own these systems, and it often partners with peer companies on specialized aspects of these projects.

According to Dan Dietzler, CEO of Patrick Engineering, being successful in this business requires a culture of communication. Clear technical communication utilizing drawings, maps, tables, graphs, reports, and technical specifications is vital to the company's work. Equally important is clear, concise, and persuasive business communication. Employees routinely communicate with team members, project owners, inspectors, vendors, craftspeople, and even project neighbors—both orally and in writing. Letters, proposals, interviews, and presentations at meetings are all vital elements of their work. In all this communication, professionalism is as important as content.

To build this culture of communication, the company looks for employees with three fundamental characteristics that are foundational to communication success and that reflect professional presence:

- 1. Intellectual and emotional intelligence:** "In this business, employees need to be smart," says Dietzler, "but not just book smart. They need to get along with other people." In other words, they also need *emotional intelligence*: the ability to listen to others, understand their points of view, and use that understanding to guide behavior.
- 2. Teamwork:** Projects—whether large or small—depend on teamwork. People need to work together toward a common goal and to communicate with each other in professional and respectful ways that encourage collaboration. According to Dietzler, there is no room for people who need to get their own way all the time. That's why the company looks for employees who have team experience, whether it's on a soccer team, or as part of a band, or in the military. People with good team experience know how to pass the ball to others, to keep in tune with others, and to trust others to do good work. A key question to ask yourself, Dietzler says, is "Do you want to be right, or do you want to be successful?"
- 3. Passion:** Finally, success requires passion. Employees must care about the job, the company's values and culture, and their contribution to the larger goals. Without passion for the job, people are likely to refuse to be team players or to communicate as frequently and effectively as is required. "You can't build a company around people who treat the job as a placeholder in their careers."

Source: Based on an interview with Dan Dietzler, 2016.

End of Chapter

Study Questions in Review

SQ1 Why is it challenging to communicate well? (pages 4–6)

Professional presence—your ability to project competence, credibility, and confidence—depends on communicating well, and that is not an easy task. Communicating well requires understanding some foundational principles.

- **Communication is a complex process.** Communicating even a single message involves many steps: having an intention, encoding that intention into a message, selecting an appropriate medium, decoding the message, and providing effective feedback. Barriers often block successful communication. Successful communication requires overcoming physiological, psychological, semantic, and linguistic barriers. These complexities are magnified when you consider that communication rarely involves a single exchange but instead an interaction in which messages and meanings evolve.
- **Communication is affected by context.** Within a communication interaction, a range of contexts may affect someone's ability to understand your communication: that person's *physical* or *psychological* state, the specific *social* situation that dictates expectations, your *relational* history with that person, and the broader *cultural* context of learned behaviors and norms.
- **Communication is more than just transmission of messages.** Adding to the complexity is the fact that people communicate not just to transmit messages but for an array of other reasons: to form and maintain relationships, to persuade others, to learn, to increase self-esteem, to work collaboratively and develop new ideas, and to get work done. Communication is the means by which we create meaning and influence the world.

SQ2 What are the benefits of being a good communicator? (pages 6–9)

Being a good communicator will benefit you and any organization you work for.

- **Effective business communicators have a competitive edge in the job market.** Research continually shows that employers want to hire good communicators. Yet employers find too few people who communicate well.
- **Communication skills will contribute to your company's and your own success.** Your ability to write well, listen and speak effectively, develop communication strategies, and even implement social media will increase your value as an employee. In addition, the skills you use on the job will help you in your personal life to improve relationships, negotiate better deals, and persuade others.

SQ3 What characteristics will help you communicate effectively? (pages 9–21)

Your writing, speaking, and interpersonal communication skills are clearly important. But the best business communicators—those who have real presence—share a number of specific characteristics that make their writing, speaking, and other communication effective.

- **Being strategic.** Effective communicators are purposeful and design their communication to achieve a specific outcome. They are also audience-oriented, considering what content the audience requires and also what organization, format, and language will make the content easy to understand. Finally, when their communication purpose requires persuading others to agree and/or to act, effective communicators know how to be persuasive and influence the audience's thoughts and actions. Three useful techniques for persuasion are (1) identifying benefits, (2) anticipating audience objections, and (3) providing reasons and evidence to support claims.
- **Being professional.** Professionalism refers to the qualities that make you appear businesslike. Business communicators appear professional when they act in a manner appropriate to the situation, are clear and concise, and live up to the ethical standards of their profession.
- **Being adaptable.** Effective communicators are adaptable. Being adaptable means being willing and able to change to meet new business needs. In business, communicators must adapt to remain current with technology, including social media, which changes very quickly. In addition, because business is increasingly global and values diversity, communicators must adapt to work well with other cultures and generations. Finally, because many business projects require teamwork and coordination with others, communicators must adapt their work styles to collaborate well with others.

SQ4 What other important career skills will this textbook help you develop? (pages 21–23)

Although communication is the single most important asset you can polish as you launch and manage your career, a range of other skills are vital to job success in the 21st century. These include critical thinking, collaboration, ethical reasoning, the ability to apply knowledge in new situations, the ability to use technology effectively, and data literacy. Each of these skills is integrally connected to communication, and by completing this course, you will have the opportunity to work on all of them.

Visual Summary

STRATEGIC

Purposeful

Anna Osborn

University of Tennessee
Business Analyst - Audit Liaison
@ Georgia-Pacific, LLC

In communicating via email, I try to use an informative subject that will be useful in future searches for the email. I begin with a personal introduction and then think about what I want to convey and communicate it clearly. After completing the e-mail, I proofread and then send.



Photo courtesy of Anna Osborn

Audience-Oriented

Christian Tucker

Georgia Southern University
Intern @ Bank of America

When we develop internal apps for BOA employees, our proposals focus on what the users can and can't do with the new app, demonstrate how it's going to make their work better, and show them what's in it for them. It's all about focusing on the end-user.



Photo courtesy of Christian Tucker

Persuasive

Bianca Wallace

Eastern Kentucky University
Human Resources Representative
@ Hendrickson Trailer
Commercial Vehicle
Systems

In manufacturing, the most important thing is production and numbers. But in HR, it's our job to persuade decision makers to take people into account, also. Without the people to produce the product, we have no product.

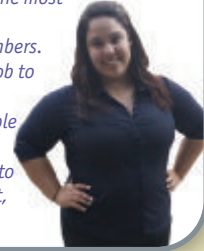


Photo courtesy of Bianca Wallace

PROFESSIONAL

Appropriate to the Situation

Suzie Loveday

Eastern Kentucky University
Grants Management Officer
@ Frontier Nursing
University

Writing professionally is extremely important, especially in my position as a grant writer. If I do not show professionalism in my writing and communication, people will not take me seriously. This, in turn, could negatively impact funding opportunities for my employer.



Photo courtesy of Suzie Loveday

Clear and Concise

Chris Harlow

Northwestern University
Consultant @ Capgemini
Consulting

My first interaction with new colleagues and clients is often through email and meeting requests. Clean and clear writing creates an impression from the beginning of being professional and composed.



Photo courtesy of Chris Harlow

Ethical

Megan Sugrue

Northwestern University
Senior Manager, Social Media
Strategy @ Viacom International
Media Networks

When developing our social media strategy, it's important for us to be transparent and authentic. If we need to say "sorry, we messed up," we will.



Photo courtesy of Megan Sugrue

ADAPTABLE

Current with Technology and Social Media

Ray Holloman

Belmont University
Business Continuity Administrator
@ HCA Healthcare

I use WebEx because I communicate with employees in twenty states. With WebEx, I can share my screen with them and record the meetings if necessary. WebEx also allows me know who is on the call without having to stop and ask each time someone joins.



Photo courtesy of Ray Holloman

Able to Work with Many Cultures

Amber Osborn

University of Northern Iowa
Quality Control Analyst
@ Principal Financial
Group

My job requires me to communicate with different cultures in different countries. There are always cultural communication barriers, and these increase when communicating from a distance. After 3 years of daily calls, it has become much easier for me to communicate across cultures.



Photo courtesy of Amber Osborn

Collaborative

Byron Smith

North Carolina A&T
State University
Business Sales Manager
@ AT&T Mobility

I don't know of any job that doesn't require collaboration of some kind. Whether you are a new hire, an experienced manager, or the CEO, you have to be able to work well with others to get things done. I've learned that you don't have to be best friends with someone to collaborate. You can ignore the things other people do that bug you, work through conflict when needed, sometimes agree to disagree, and still be a team.




Photo courtesy of Byron Smith

Key Terms

Active listening p. 11	Conciseness p. 15	Decode p. 5	Medium p. 5
Audience p. 10	Context p. 6	Encode p. 5	Outcome p. 10
Barrier p. 5	Credibility p. 4	Ethics p. 16	Persuasion p. 13
Clarity p. 15	Culture p. 20	Feedback p. 5	Professional presence p. 4
Collaboration p. 21	Critical thinking p. 4	Goodwill p. 20	Professionalism p. 13
Communication p. 4	Data literacy p. 22	Idiom p. 20	Purpose p. 10
Communication strategy p. 10			Social media p. 9

MyLab Business Communication

If your instructor is using MyLab Business Communication, go to www.pearson.com/mylab/business-communication to complete the problems marked with this icon .

Review Questions

- 1 What is professional presence?
- 2 What does it mean to encode and decode a message?
- 3 Identify three barriers to communication.
- 4 Identify three types of contexts that can influence communication.
- 5 In what ways can communication skills save money or make money for a business?
- 6 Define active listening.
- 7 Define culture. How does it influence communication?
- 8 How does being concise differ from simply reducing the length of your communication?
- 9 How does business use of social media differ from personal use?
- 10 Why are collaborative skills necessary in the workplace?

Critical Thinking Questions

- 1 The chapter recommends that communicators address potential audience objections. Describe a communication scenario—either from your personal experience or a hypothetical business example—where you expect that the audience might have objections. What would the objections be, and how would you address them?
- 2 Imagine that you are trying to persuade a teammate to agree with an idea for a presentation, and the teammate accuses you of being manipulative—trying to influence someone for your own advantage. What is the difference between being persuasive and being manipulative?
- 3 Assume that your supervisor asked you to lie to a customer in an email about why a shipment is delayed. Would it be unethical for you to write the email if you believe it is wrong to lie? Conversely, would it be unethical for you to refuse to write the email if you believe you have a responsibility to your employer? How would you resolve this issue?
- 4 Imagine that you have been asked to collaborate on a project with a colleague whose work style is very different from yours. For example, you like to plan carefully and follow a schedule, whereas your colleague is spontaneous. You like to write thorough drafts that require only minimal revision, whereas your colleague likes to write incomplete drafts and revise heavily later. Based on these differences, you think it would be more efficient and cost-effective for the company to have you work on this project by yourself. Should you make that argument to your supervisor? What might be the benefits of collaborating? What are the drawbacks?
- 5 Although it is important to consider your audience's potential questions and objections when you communicate, you may not always know a lot about the people in your audience in advance. Imagine, for example, that you are sending a business proposal to a new client you have never met before. How can you learn more about your audience before writing the proposal?
- ★ 6 Cross-cultural communication requires you to use clear language. What are some of the other challenges of communicating across cultures?
- ★ 7 Students who are not used to writing professional emails sometimes make the mistake of composing them as if they were text messages. What are some key elements of text messages that you should avoid in professional emails?
- 8 Businesses use different social media tools and mobile apps for different purposes. Based on your knowledge of Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Instagram, how do you expect businesses would use each of these tools?
- ★ 9 Readers often judge a person's professionalism based on whether a document is spell-checked and free of grammatical errors. Do you believe this is a fair basis for making a judgment?
- 10 Some people argue that using emoticons in business emails is unprofessional. Others say that emoticons are useful because they help the audience interpret the writer's intention more effectively. Would you choose to use emoticons in your business email? Explain why or why not. Provide evidence or reasoning to support your decision.

Key Concept Exercises

SQ1 Why is it challenging to communicate well? (pages 4–6)

1 Communication is a complex process

Think of a personal or business experience when someone “decoded” your message incorrectly and misinterpreted your meaning. Write a brief paragraph explaining the situation and the result.

2 Communication is affected by context

Think of a personal or business situation when you tried to persuade someone with whom you have a personal or business relationship. In that situation, how did the relational context affect your credibility? In other words, was the person more or less likely to believe you based on his or her personal history with you? Write a brief paragraph explaining the situation and the result.

3 Communication is more than transmission of messages

Think of a personal or business situation when you had a conversation with someone that resulted in a new and shared understanding, different from what you originally intended to communicate. Write a brief paragraph explaining the situation and the result.

SQ2 What are the benefits of being a good communicator? (pages 6–9)

4 Effective business communicators have a competitive edge in the job market

Use an online job bank, such as Monster, to search for job advertisements related to your career goals. How many of them include communication skills in their descriptions or requirements? Summarize your findings in a paragraph that outlines your career goals, two or three jobs you found, and the communication skills they require.

5 Communication skills will contribute to your company’s and your own success

Typically when people think about business success, they think of financial success. In addition to making and saving money, what other business benefits can result from employees’ effective communication? Write a paragraph identifying and explaining at least two additional benefits.

SQ3 What characteristics will help you communicate effectively? (pages 9–21)

6 Being strategic—purposeful

Read the memo at the top of the next column and identify its main purpose. Rewrite the subject line and the first sentence of the memo to make them clearer.

7 Being strategic—audience-oriented

When the U.S. government’s General Services Administration (GSA) learned that a historic building site was contaminated with pigeon droppings, a staff member drafted the following announcement to warn construction workers in historic buildings about the dangers of working near this potential biological hazard.

Imagine that you are asked to offer advice about revising the message and choosing a medium to inform workers of the hazard. After

memo

TO: Gloria Paradi
FROM: Josh Benson
DATE: March 23, 20XX
SUBJECT: Staffing

This office has not had the benefit of full staffing at any time in the past year. There is no relief from continual pressure due to a limitation of staff. An analysis of overtime during the November/December time period provides a clear indication of the inability of the office to enjoy full coverage of all the required work within regular work hours. Additional help can be usefully provided in purchasing, design, fabrication, assembly, and shipping since we are understaffed in all areas. As we can set aside no time for training right now, it is required that all new employees be experienced.

Accompanies Exercise 6

Bulletin: Potential Biological Hazard

Background: During evaluations in a historic building that GSA proposes to restore, a large accumulation of pigeon droppings was discovered, which had collected through long habitation of the birds. Samples of the droppings were collected and analyzed by the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia.

Discussion: The CDC identified the droppings as containing a fungus capable of causing very serious infection in humans. This fungus is called “Cryptococcus Neoformans.” It attacks the lungs, central nervous system, skin, eyes, liver, and joints and has a marked target of the brain and meninges. It is contained in the accumulation of excretion of birds and pigeons in old nesting areas and in soil contaminated with bird and pigeon droppings.

Workers who work around or demolish bird and especially pigeon habitations should use extreme caution due to the potential risk of illness involved when disturbing accumulation prior to decontamination. Infection is primarily due to inhalation. Prevention is possible by wearing appropriate facemasks and personal protective clothing.

Recommendation: If such an area is identified, do not disturb it. Leave the area and report the finding immediately to your supervisor. Supervisors will coordinate with Regional Accident and Fire Prevention Branches for evaluation, preventive measures, and decontamination action.

Further information: Avoid a suspected area until it has been determined not hazardous.

Accompanies Exercise 7

reading the message, write a memo to your instructor recommending (1) three changes to make it easier for the audience to find the most important ideas, (2) any additional information that the message

(continued)

should include to address audience concerns, and (3) the medium (or combination of media options) that you think will work best to reach the audience: a face-to-face meeting, a teleconference, an email, a presentation, an announcement posted on the wall of buildings, or something else. Be sure to justify your recommendations.

8 Being strategic—persuasive

You are the manager of a large supermarket that borders a residential neighborhood. A customer who lives nearby comes into the store and says, “I am completely out of patience with the trucks that make deliveries to your store. Deliveries start at 7 AM and end at 9 PM. Early in the morning and into the evening, trucks are banging their trailers into the loading docks. And the engines! The drivers keep the trucks running while they’re making deliveries. I can’t talk with friends in my yard because of all the noise of the trucks. And it’s not just the noise. The trucks also block the alley so I sometimes can’t get out of my garage to get to work in the morning.”

To respond, you could just choose to explain the situation. Clear reasons exist for each of the behaviors that the neighbor is complaining about:

- Local laws have set truck delivery hours from 7 AM to 9 PM. To accommodate all the deliveries, management needs to spread them throughout the day.
- The engines are on in refrigerator trucks because they run the generators that keep food from spoiling.
- The trucks block the alley for only a short time while they are waiting for other trucks to leave. Drivers politely move if they are asked.

However, suppose your main goal is to retain this “neighbor” as a customer and increase goodwill. In that case, you may choose to respond in a way that is more persuasive. Brainstorm content to include in your response. As you brainstorm, consider these persuasive techniques:

- Show that you understand your audience’s concern.
- Address the objections.
- Show the benefits to the audience.

As part of your brainstorming, think of possible solutions to the problem. If you mention possible solutions, your response may be even more persuasive. Be prepared to discuss in class or submit your responses, according to your instructor’s directions.

9 Being professional—appropriate

You work for HungerFighters United, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to eradicating hunger in the United States. One of your colleagues, Sheryl Greene, drafts a letter to a potential donor who has also expressed an interest in volunteering for your organization. Sheryl gives you a copy of the letter to review before sending it. You think it sounds friendly, but you wonder if Sheryl is projecting a sufficiently professional image of herself and HungerFighters. Identify at least five changes you would suggest that Sheryl make.

letter

December 14, 20XX

Ms. Anita Lawrence
4949 Daily Drive
Cleveland, OH 44101

Dear Anita:

As mentioned in my voice mail to you today, I am enclosing my card and other information that you might be interested in.

I have been with HungerFighters United in the Detroit Office since 1997 and have just moved to Development Director of the Midwest region . . . long title but the work is pretty much the same except I’ve expanded from Detroit to 11 states and am encouraged by the wonderful reception I’ve received and especially by the powerful resources Midwesterners are sharing with the families we serve.

Steve Cannon mentioned that you might consider reaching out to others in your circle of friends. If you would like to host a gathering in or around your area, that would be an idea. We have wonderful stories to tell, literature to share, and handouts people can take home. Or, a small group in a restaurant or your home is also effective. At any rate, this serves as an introduction to our efforts and ideas on expanding the help we need to end hunger.

I wish you and yours a wonderful holiday season and look forward to talking to you in the New Year.

Gratefully,

Sheryl Greene
Director of Development

Accompanies Exercise 9

10 Being professional—clear and concise

Select a message you received, such as a letter from a company or an email from a colleague. Identify specific content that can be revised to be clearer and more concise. Offer specific revisions based on the content presented in the chapter. Prepare to present your suggestions in class or submit it according to your instructor’s directions.

11 Being professional—ethical

Your supervisor is preparing a speech for the company’s chief executive officer to distribute to shareholders. He asks you to read the speech and provide feedback on how effective you think it will be. As you read the speech, you think you recognize some of the points—and the wording—from a speech by a financial analyst you heard a few weeks ago on C-SPAN. You fear that parts of your supervisor’s speech are plagiarized. You wonder if you should tell him that you recognize some of that speech from another source, but you decide not to for two reasons. First, if you tell your supervisor the speech sounds familiar, he may get angry or insulted. Second, the speech was televised very late at night, so it’s unlikely that many people watched it. Evaluate the pros and cons of that choice. Is your choice ethical? Be prepared to discuss your decision in class or submit it according to your instructor’s directions.