



Communicating at Work

Strategies for Success in
Business and the Professions

Thirteenth Edition

Ronald B. Adler

Santa Barbara City College, Emeritus

Michelle M. Maresh-Fuehrer

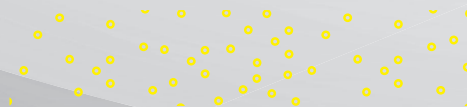
Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi

Jeanne Elmhorst

Central New Mexico Community College

Kristen Lucas

University of Louisville





COMMUNICATING AT WORK: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN BUSINESS AND THE PROFESSIONS,
THIRTEENTH EDITION

Published by McGraw Hill LLC, 1325 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10121. Copyright ©2023 by McGraw Hill LLC. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. Previous editions ©2019, 2013, and 2010. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written consent of McGraw Hill LLC, including, but not limited to, in any network or other electronic storage or transmission, or broadcast for distance learning.

Some ancillaries, including electronic and print components, may not be available to customers outside the United States.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 LWI 27 26 25 24 23 22

ISBN 978-1-264-30508-7 (bound edition)

MHID 1-264-30508-7 (bound edition)

ISBN 978-1-265-05342-0 (loose-leaf edition)

MHID 1-265-05342-1 (loose-leaf edition)

Executive Portfolio Manager: *Sarah Remington*

Product Development Manager: *Dawn Groundwater*

Product Developer: *Karen Moore*

Executive Marketing Manager: *Kate Stewart*

Content Project Managers: *Maria McGreal, Katie Reuter*

Buyer: *Laura Fuller*

Content Licensing Specialists: *Sarah Flynn*

Cover Image: *TierneyMJ/Shutterstock*

Compositor: *MPS Limited*

All credits appearing on page or at the end of the book are considered to be an extension of the copyright page.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Adler, Ronald B. (Ronald Brian), 1946- author. | Elmhurst, Jeanne Marquardt, author. | Maresh-Fuehrer Michelle Marie, author | Lucas, Kristen, author

Title: Communicating at work : strategies for success in business and the professions / Ronald B. Adler, Michelle M. Maresh-Fuehrer, Jeanne Elmhurst, Kristen Lucas.

Description: 13e. | New York, N.Y. : McGraw Hill LLC, [2023] | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2021011548 (print) | LCCN 2021011549 (ebook) | ISBN 9781264305087 (hardcover) | ISBN 9781265053420 (spiral bound) | ISBN 9781265055738 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Business communication—Study and teaching.

Classification: LCC HF5718 .A33 2023 (print) | LCC HF5718 (ebook) | DDC 658.4/5—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021011548>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021011549>

The Internet addresses listed in the text were accurate at the time of publication. The inclusion of a website does not indicate an endorsement by the authors or McGraw Hill LLC, and McGraw Hill LLC does not guarantee the accuracy of the information presented at these sites.

mheducation.com/highered

about the authors

Ronald B. Adler is professor emeritus at Santa Barbara City College. Throughout his career, he has specialized in the study of organizational and interpersonal communication. He is the author of *Confidence in Communication: A Guide to Assertive and Social Skills* and coauthor of *Understanding Human Communication*, *Interplay: The Process of Interpersonal Communication*, as well as the widely used text *Looking Out/Looking In*. Professor Adler is a consultant for a number of corporate, professional, and government clients and leads workshops in such areas as conflict resolution, presentational speaking, team building, and interviewing.



Courtesy of Ronald B. Adler

Michelle M. Maresh-Fuehrer is professor of public relations at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, where she specializes in the areas of crisis communication, public relations, and social media. She is the author of *Creating Organizational Crisis Plans* and coauthor of *Public Relations Principles: Strategies for Professional Success*. Her work has also appeared in *Persuasion in Your Life*, *The Handbook of Crisis Communication*, *Computers in Human Behavior*, *Communication Teacher*, *Communication Education*, and the *American Communication Journal*. Professor Maresh-Fuehrer also works as a consultant for a variety of business and nonprofit organizations.



Courtesy of Michelle M. Maresh-Fuehrer

Jeanne Elmhurst is an instructor in communication formerly of Central New Mexico Community College in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Her courses reflect the variety in the communication discipline: business and professional, public speaking, listening, intercultural, and interpersonal. Ms. Elmhurst lived and taught in Asia for three years, and she continues to find opportunities to travel, study, and volunteer in other countries. She enjoys designing and presenting communication training for business and not-for-profit clients.



Courtesy of Jeanne Elmhurst

Kristen Lucas is associate dean for faculty affairs and associate professor of management & entrepreneurship at University of Louisville. She teaches courses, conducts research, and facilitates management training sessions on organizational communication, workplace dignity, and careers. Her research has appeared in *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Management Communication Quarterly*, and *Journal of Applied Communication Research*.



Courtesy of Kristen Lucas

preface

In a time of great upheaval for traditional workspaces around the globe, *Communicating at Work: Strategies for Success in Business and the Professions* reminds students that practical communication skills and competencies endure and remain essential to finding success in the business world. The thirteenth edition of this well-respected title provides current research and real-world best practices to help students make ethical choices, develop cultural intelligence, navigate virtual environments, and enhance their business speaking and writing skills. With Connect for Business Communication, students will have access to a suite of assessments and presentation tools to help them become successful and confident communicators in the workplace.

McGraw Hill Connect® offers full-semester access to comprehensive, reliable content and assessments for the Business Communication course. Connect's deep integration with most learning management systems (LMS), including Blackboard and Desire2Learn (D2L), offers single sign-on and deep gradebook synchronization. Data from Assignment Results reports synchronize directly with many LMS, allowing scores to flow automatically from Connect into school-specific gradebooks, if required.

• Instructor's Guide to Connect for Business Communication



When you assign Connect, you can be confident—and have data to demonstrate—that your students, however diverse, are acquiring the skills, principles, and critical processes that are necessary for effective communication. This process allows you to focus on your highest course expectations.


Tailored to You

Connect offers on-demand, single sign-on access to students—wherever they are and whenever they have time. With a single, one-time registration, students receive access to McGraw Hill's trusted content.

Easy to Use

Connect seamlessly supports all major learning management systems with content, assignments, performance data, and SmartBook, the leading adaptive learning system. With these tools you can quickly make assignments, produce reports, focus discussions, intervene on problem topics, and help at-risk students—as you need to and when you need to.

A Personalized and Adaptive Learning Experience

 **SMARTBOOK®** SmartBook is the first and only adaptive reading and study experience designed to change the way students read and master key course concepts. As a student engages with SmartBook, the program creates a personalized learning path by highlighting the most impactful concepts the student needs to learn at that moment in time.

SmartBook is optimized for mobile and tablet and is accessible for with different abilities. For instructors, SmartBook tracks student progress and provides insights and reports that can help guide teaching strategies.



eBook

Alongside SmartBook, the Connect eBook offers simple and easy access to reading materials on smartphones and tablets. Students can study on the go even when they do not have an Internet connection, highlight important sections, take notes, search for materials quickly, and read in class. Offline reading is available by downloading the eBook app on smartphones and tablets. Any notes and highlights created by students will subsequently be synced between devices when they reconnect. Unlike with SmartBook, there is no pre-highlighting, practice of key concepts, or reports on usage and performance available with the eBook.

• *About Communicating at Work, Thirteenth Edition*

Focus on Practical Applications

A new feature, **A Professional Perspective**, helps students connect theoretical concepts with practical application. Twelve former business communication students share their perspectives on the value and relevance of course material in their professional lives, from experiences with conducting online networking to leading intercultural teams to conducting virtual meetings. Students will walk away with a variety of practical tips from professionals in fields as diverse as marketing, meteorology, sales, and government.

Part Four, Making Effective Presentations, has been reorganized to help students focus on the specific aspects of public speaking they will encounter in workplace situations. The unit begins with Chapter 9 which introduces the most common types of professional presentations as well as the types of audiences students will most likely encounter when speaking in the workplace. Subsequent chapters continue to develop relevant and business-oriented advice on how to develop, organize, support, and deliver presentations.

Appendix V continues to focus on the types of crises businesses today often face—including the COVID-19 pandemic—and how communication plays a role in recovering from such events. Special emphasis is placed on crisis prevention, including strategies for responding to specific types of conflicts, and on templates for developing crisis response messages.


Available in Connect, **Writing Assignments** offer faculty the ability to assign a full range of writing assignments to students with just-in-time feedback. You may set up manually scored assignments in a way that students can

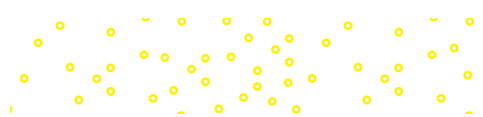
- automatically receive grammar and high-level feedback to improve their writing before they submit a project to you;
- run originality checks and receive feedback on “exact matches” and “possibly altered text” that includes guidance about how to properly paraphrase, quote, and cite sources to improve the academic integrity of their writing before they submit their work to you.

The new writing assignments will also have features that allow instructors to assign milestone drafts (optional), easily re-use your text and audio comments, build/score with your rubric, and view your own originality report of student’s final submission.

Strong Emphasis on Ethical Communication and Cultural Diversity

This edition features updated coverage of cultural diversity, with a new emphasis on developing cultural intelligence and respecting gender identity in the workplace. New topics include microaggressions, personal pronouns in a professional environment,





inclusive language, current legal protections concerning diversity, personal dress choice and dress codes, and masculine and feminine language use. Students will also consider new ethical content related to supporting material for business presentations and persuasion in business contexts. Culture at Work and Ethical Challenge boxes appear throughout, engaging students in thinking critically about topics of diversity and ethics in the workplace.

Updated and Expanded Coverage of Evolving Communication Technologies

Integrated throughout the program, *Communicating at Work* offers instruction on using the latest mobile technologies to effectively conduct and participate in meetings and updated coverage of social media tools and the accepted etiquette for their use. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, students will also consider the shift to remote work, virtual workplace relationships and teams, virtual dress codes, virtual meeting fatigue, and text messaging/group texting etiquette. This edition also includes enhanced and updated coverage of Internet job searches and applications, virtual networking and interviewing, as well as online résumés and interviews.


Boxed Features

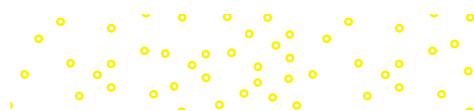
The thirteenth edition of *Communicating at Work* includes a variety of boxed features to support students' learning and enhance their business communication skills.

- **Culture at Work** boxes highlight the ways in which culture applies to every aspect of business and professional communication. Topics covered include the danger of uniformity in teams and the use of inclusive language in workplace presentations.
- **Case Study** boxes present cases from the world of business and the professions and offer compelling examples of how the principles in the book operate in everyday life.
- **Career Tip** boxes give practical advice on how to be more successful in work-related situations. Topics include building positive workplace relationships, coping with unfair treatment, shifting to remote work, and combating virtual meeting fatigue.
- **Technology Tip** boxes demonstrate how students can use a variety of communication tools to achieve their goals. Topics include how to “un-Google” oneself, apps for teamwork, and online internship searches.
- **Self-Assessment** boxes help students see how well they are applying communication concepts and identify their own strengths and weaknesses as communicators.
- **Ethical Challenge** boxes invite students to consider ways of incorporating ethical considerations into day-to-day work contexts.
- **A Professional Perspective** boxes—a new feature for this edition—highlight the experiences of former business communication students who regularly use and apply the concepts and ideas they learned in the classroom in their professional lives.

• Video Capture Powered by GoReact

With just a smartphone, tablet, or webcam, students and instructors can capture video of presentations with ease. Video Capture powered by GoReact, fully integrated in McGraw Hill's Connect platform, does not require any extra equipment or complicated training.





Create your own custom Video Capture assignment, including in-class and online speeches and presentations, self-review, and peer review.

With our customizable rubrics, time-coded comments, and visual markers, students will see feedback at exactly the right moment, and in context, to help improve their speaking and presentation skills and confidence.

- The Video Capture tool allows instructors to easily and efficiently set up speech assignments for their course that can easily be shared and repurposed, as needed.
- Customizable rubrics and settings can be saved and shared, saving time and streamlining the speech assignment process.
- Allows both students and instructors to view videos during the assessment process. Feedback can be left within a customized rubric or as time-stamped comments within the video-playback itself.

• Instructor Reports

Instructor Reports allow instructors to quickly monitor learner activity, making it easy to identify which learners are struggling and to provide immediate help to ensure those learners stay enrolled in the course and improve their performance. The Instructor Reports also highlight the concepts and learning objectives that the class as a whole is having difficulty grasping. This essential information lets you know exactly which areas to target for review during your limited class time.

Some key reports include:

Progress Overview report—View learner progress for all modules, including how long learners have spent working in the module, which modules they have used outside of any that were assigned, and individual learner progress.

Missed Questions report—Identify specific assessments, organized by chapter, that are problematic for learners.

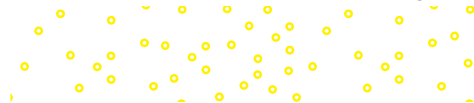
Most Challenging Learning Objectives report—Identify the specific topic areas that are challenging for your learners; these reports are organized by chapter and include specific page references. Use this information to tailor your lecture time and assignments to cover areas that require additional remediation and practice.

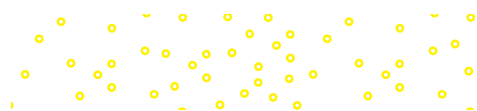
Metacognitive Skills report—View statistics showing how knowledgeable your learners are about their own comprehension and learning.

• Classroom Preparation Tools

Whether they are used before, during, or after class, a suite of products is available to help instructors plan their lessons and to keep students building upon the foundations of the course.

- **PowerPoint Slides** The PowerPoint presentations for *Communicating at Work* provide chapter highlights that help instructors create focused yet individualized lesson plans.
- **Test Bank and Test Builder** The *Communicating at Work* Test Bank is a collection of more than 1,000 examination questions based on the most important mass-communication concepts explored in the text. New to this edition and available within Connect, Test Builder is a cloud-based tool that enables instructors to format tests that can be printed or administered within a Learning Management





System. Test Builder offers a modern, streamlined interface for easy content configuration that matches course needs, without requiring a download. Test Builder enables instructors to:

- Access all test bank content from a particular title
- Easily pinpoint the most relevant content through robust filtering options
- Manipulate the order of questions or scramble questions and/or answers
- Pin questions to a specific location within a test
- Determine your preferred treatment of algorithmic questions
- Choose the layout and spacing
- Add instructions and configure default settings
- **PowerPoint Presentations** The PowerPoint presentations, lecture-ready and WCAG-compliant, highlight the key points of the chapter and include supporting visuals. All of the slides can be modified to meet individual needs.
- **Instructor's Manual** This comprehensive guide to teaching from *Communicating at Work* contains lecture suggestions and resources for each chapter.

● Support to Ensure Success

- **Support at Every Step**—McGraw Hill's Support at Every Step site offers a wealth of training and course creation guidance for instructors and learners alike. Instructor support is presented in easy-to-navigate and easy-to-complete sections. It includes the popular Connect how-to videos, step-by-step guides, and other materials that explain how to use both the Connect platform and its course-specific tools and features. Visit us at <https://www.mheducation.com/highered/support.html>
- **Implementation Consultant**—These specialists are dedicated to working online with instructors—one-on-one—to demonstrate how the Connect platform works and to help incorporate Connect into a customer's specific course design and syllabus. Contact your local McGraw Hill representative to learn more.
- **Digital Faculty Consultants**—Digital Faculty Consultants are experienced instructors who use Connect in their classrooms. These instructors are available to offer suggestions, advice, and training about how best to use Connect in your class. To request a Digital Faculty Consultant to speak with, please e-mail your McGraw Hill learning technology consultant.

Contact Our Customer Support Team

McGraw Hill is dedicated to supporting instructors and students. To contact our customer support team, please call us at 800-331-5094 or visit us online at <http://mpss.mhhe.com/contact.php>



• Changes to the Thirteenth Edition: Highlights

Chapter 1

- Coverage of formal communication networks has been updated with new content on Voice of Employee in regards to upward communication.
- An expanded discussion of personal networking equips students with tips they can begin using immediately.
- Sixteen new references highlight the most current research.
- Two revised Career Tip boxes help students get recognized by managers and practice the all-important “elevator speech.”
- A revised Technology Tip reminds students of the importance of disconnecting from devices from time to time to enhance productivity.
- Meteorologist Albert Ramon shares tips on professional networking in the new “A Professional Perspective” feature.

Chapter 2

- A new section on legal protections appears in the discussion of “Diversity and Ethical Issues.”
- Chapter 2 now offers guidance on cultural intelligence and microaggressions.
- New Career Tips boxes help students consider shifts to remote work (particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic), develop cultural intelligence, and cope with unfair treatment in the workplace.
- The chapter is thoroughly updated with 26 new references to ensure students are thinking through current, timely issues.
- Global media personality Melissa Mushaka shares the importance of finding a good fit in terms of workplace culture in “A Professional Perspective.”

Chapter 3

- Updates to this chapter reflect the adaptations of listening in today's remote and virtual business environments.
- Barriers to listening when working remotely and being attuned to one's nonverbal cues when attending virtual meetings are now discussed to enhance students' understanding.
- Software developer Ahmad Mather shares why listening well is particularly important when communicating in highly technical fields in “A Professional Perspective.”

Chapter 4

- The section on Masculine and Feminine Language Use has been thoroughly updated to reflect current understandings of sex, gender, and language.
- A new Career Tips box discusses dress codes and remote work while the new Ethical Challenge box tackles a related topic—dress codes and religious belief.
- Director of program management Lilly Vu describes the value of sense of humor as a tool for building workplace rapport in “A Professional Perspective.”



Chapter 5

- Timely updates in light of the COVID-19 pandemic include new content on challenges for workplace relationships related to remote work as well as work-life balance issues related to working from home.
- A new Career Tip box invites discussion on how to build positive workplace relationships given their importance to success and satisfaction on the job.
- In “A Professional Perspective,” digital marketer Josephine Christiani discusses the value of using interpersonal skills to build relationships and reduce high turnover within a corporate job in a high-context culture.

Chapter 6

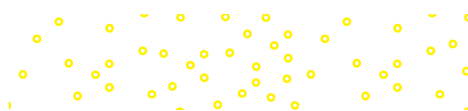
- Updated content on the importance of cleaning up online identities when preparing for an interview (given the frequency with which organizations engage in cyber-vetting candidates) offers students immediate, actionable tasks.
- A new Technology Tip on un-Googleing oneself provides tips to address common online identity red flags.
- The section on The Employment Interview now offers a discussion of the tricky topic of when (and how) to use humor when interviewing for a professional position.
- A new Career Tip provides advice for negotiating salary and benefits when accepting employment.
- In “A Professional Perspective,” management consulting specialist KeAnna Whisenhunt argues that a thoughtful self-analysis of previous employment situations is essential for all types of interviews on the job.

Chapter 7

- A new Culture at Work box discusses a culturally insensitive video ad from designer Tori Burch and how diverse perspectives on teams can prevent such offensive and embarrassing events from occurring.
- The section on Virtual Teams has been updated in light of the coronavirus pandemic that forced many teams to make the move to virtual with little to no preparation.
- In “A Professional Perspective,” Chelsea Childress (special assistant to the Secretary at the U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs) discusses the role of asking hard questions, building networks, and taking risks to achieve success in the workplace.

Chapter 8

- This chapter offers the latest research with 22 new references on contemporary topics.
- The section on Virtual Meetings has been revised to reflect the reality of workplace life during the time of COVID-19 restrictions and what it might mean for the future of workplace meetings.
- A new Career Tip box on combatting virtual meeting fatigue explores why this phenomenon happens and how to prevent it or at least lessen its effects.
- In “A Professional Perspective,” digital sales manager Nicole Plascencia discusses the challenges (and benefits) of prioritizing virtual meetings with teammates and clients, despite all parties' growing fatigue and frustration with on-screen interaction.



Chapter 9

- This chapter has been revised to offer readers a thorough overview of the types of business presentations that they will most frequently encounter on the job, and includes a new section on podcasting as a type of workplace presentation.
- An entirely new section on Common Audiences for Business Presentations prepares students to think about internal and external audiences, setting the stage for a later discussion of audience analysis.
- In “A Professional Perspective,” communication consultant Jeffrey Riddle talks about the importance of knowing your audience and tailoring workplace presentations to their various needs.

Chapter 10

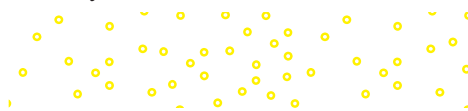
- New content on considering your own level of confidence when analyzing yourself as a speaker aims to help students think through their own communication apprehension when beginning to prepare a presentation.
- A new section on Analyzing Your Group offers tips specific to preparing for a group presentation, including learning the dangers of social loafing.
- A Culture at Work box gives tips on using inclusive language in presentations.
- New content encourages speakers to know their way around a digital platform when speaking virtually as well as they would know their way around the physical location of an in-person speech.
- In “A Professional Perspective,” marketing and public relations professional Kristen Bily discusses the two questions that should guide most business presentations: “Why am I presenting?” and “To whom am I speaking?”

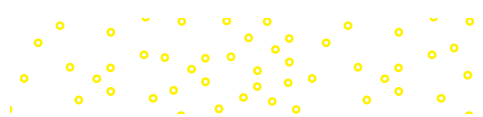
Chapter 11

- New content (as well as a new Case Study) on ethical quoting and paraphrasing helps students avoid this common pitfall when preparing content for an effective business presentation.
- Updated content on using visual aids in virtual presentations is covered throughout, including tips on optimizing and compressing photos, using virtual meeting platforms, screen sharing, and engaging with virtual whiteboards.
- A new section on interactive polls as a visual aid encourages students to find ways to make some business presentations more interactive.
- A comprehensive new section on using support ethically includes content on oral and textual citations for visual aids and inclusive language and physical depictions when sharing aids.
- In “A Professional Perspective,” digital content, marketing strategy, and analytics specialist Stephanie Russell describes how to build trust with an audience using inclusive, clear language, and straightforward visual aids.

Chapter 12

- This thoroughly revised chapter offers updated and new content on building confidence to address communication apprehension related to business presentations. New sections encourage students to “Focus on the Positive” and “Draw from Negative Experiences” to manage nervousness, while recognizing that audience members cannot generally detect speaker anxiety.



- 
- The section “Rehearse Your Presentation” now includes suggestions specific to rehearsing for virtual presentations.
 - A new section, “Assess Your Delivery with Technology” offers specific steps to help students observe their own rehearsals using technology in order to discover opportunities to improve both visually and vocally.
 - The chapter features two new Technology Tip boxes. The first explains how students might use a virtual teleprompter when giving a manuscript speech; the second explains security measures to help prevent the unfortunately common experience of videoconference hacking.
 - In “A Professional Perspective,” account specialist Curtis Falkner describes how he gained confidence in his delivery style after the COVID-19 pandemic forced him to move from in-person client presentations to the virtual realm.

Appendix I

Social media and video conference interviews are now discussed in this appendix.

Appendix II

This appendix has been updated to cover a variety of topics relevant to today's students as they transition to professional writing, including how to address someone if you don't know their preferred pronoun, how to treat slang in writing, when to use reply-all in an e-mail, how to use text messaging (and group texts) in professional contexts, and when to use exclamation marks in business communication. In addition, the discussion of resumes and cover letters is enhanced with advice on avoiding clichés and scanning signatures.

Appendix III

The content on problem-solving communication has been updated to address remote work. In addition, the discussion of “storming” now includes differences in this process between high and low context cultures.

Appendix IV

The sample presentations in this appendix are now organized by general speech purpose (to inform/instruct, to persuade, and to celebrate), corresponding to Chapter 9. The samples are updated with bracketed narrations of guidelines being used in the examples to boost clarity and aid in students' comprehension.

Appendix V

This appendix has been updated with information on the importance of having a crisis plan, including a discussion of the liability issues organizations face for not having a COVID-19 crisis plan.

acknowledgments

We are grateful for the suggestions from colleagues whose thoughts helped guide us in preparing this new edition:

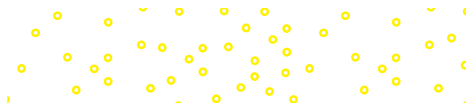
| | |
|------------------|--|
| Brandon Wood | College of DuPage |
| Carl Stoffers | Kean University |
| Heidi Bolduc | University of Central Florida |
| Kathy Castle | University of Nebraska-Lincoln |
| Karley Goen | Tarleton State University |
| Karen Otto | Florida State College at Jacksonville, North Campus |
| Minnie Roh | Saint Peter's University |
| Mandolen Mull | Rockford University |
| Patrick Daly | Faulkner University, Montgomery Campus |
| Ryan DePesa | Wentworth Institute of Technology |
| Renee Rallo | Florida Gulf Coast University |
| Stellina Chapman | The University of Arkansas |
| Tim Detwiler | Calvin University |

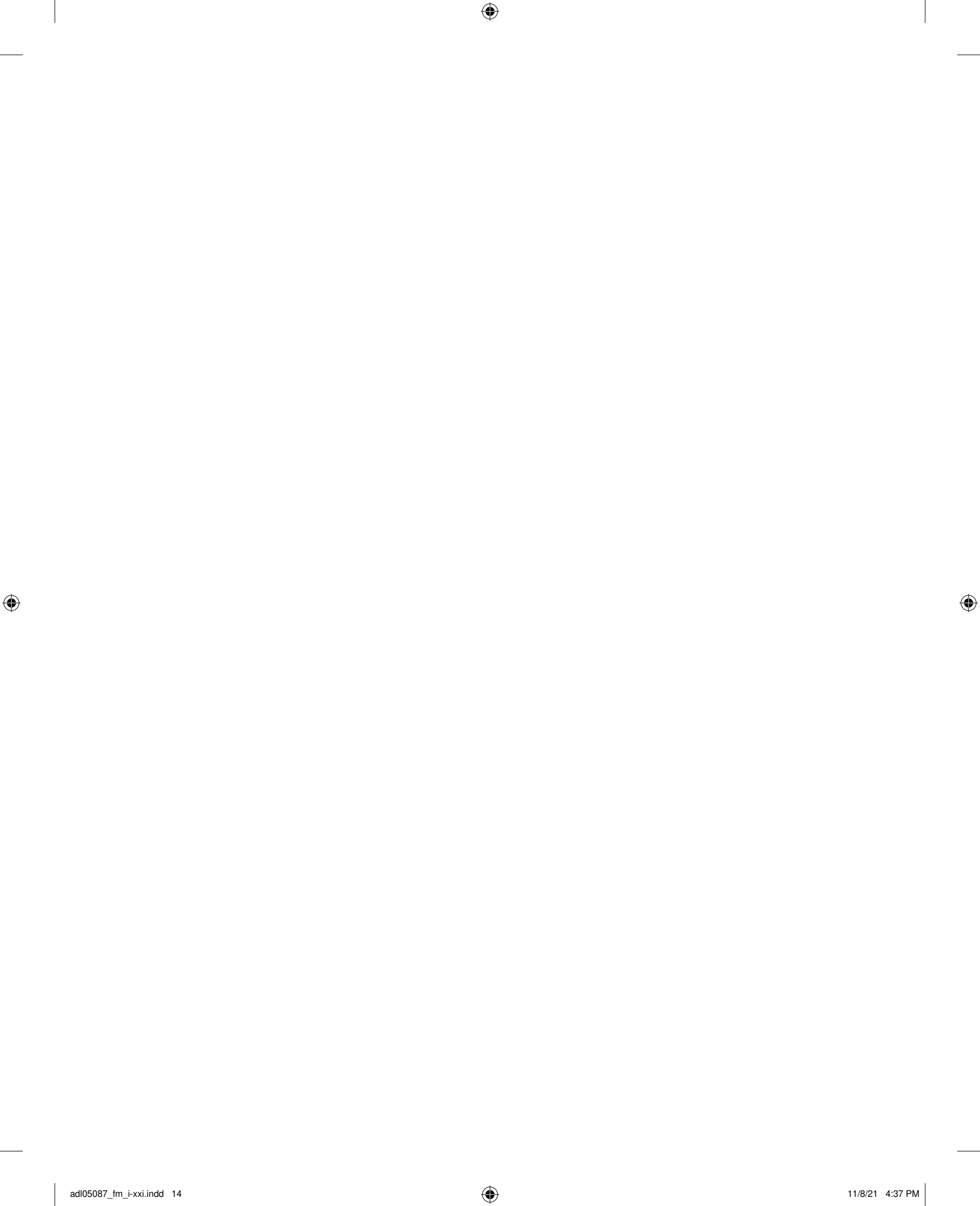
We would like to express our gratitude to members of the McGraw Hill team whose ideas, feedback, and encouragement helped shape this edition of *Communicating at Work*:

- Sarah Remington and Dawn Groundwater: It is a pleasure working with both of you! Thank you for your guidance in the development of our revision plan.
- Karen Moore: We can't thank you enough for going above and beyond for this project! Your keen eye for detail and thoughtful insights made every chapter stronger.

A special thanks also to our production team, Surbhi Sharma and Maria McGreal, as well as Yashoda Rawat, the talented copyeditor whom we were fortunate to have contribute to this edition.

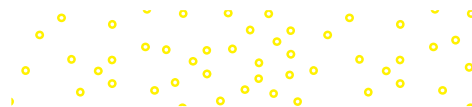
Finally, we thank our colleagues, students, families, and friends for their support. We would like to express a special note of gratitude to Warren “Josh” Maxwell for their contributions to the research-gathering process.





brief contents

| | | |
|-------------------|--|------------|
| part one | Basics of Business and Professional Communication | |
| | Strategic Case: Sundown Bakery | 2 |
| 1 | Communicating at Work | 4 |
| 2 | Communication, Culture, and Work | 32 |
| part two | Personal Skills | |
| | Strategic Case: Omnicom Marketing | 66 |
| 3 | Listening | 68 |
| 4 | Verbal and Nonverbal Messages | 88 |
| 5 | Interpersonal Skills and Success | 124 |
| 6 | Principles of Interviewing | 162 |
| part three | Working in Groups | |
| | Strategic Case: Museum of Springfield | 210 |
| 7 | Leading and Working in Teams | 212 |
| 8 | Effective Meetings | 242 |
| part four | Making Effective Presentations | |
| | Strategic Case: Fresh Air Sports | 274 |
| 9 | Types of Business Presentations and Their Audiences | 276 |
| 10 | Developing and Organizing the Presentation | 300 |
| 11 | Supporting the Presentation | 340 |
| 12 | Delivering the Presentation | 380 |
| | Appendix I: Interviewing Materials | 407 |
| | Appendix II: Business Writing | 418 |
| | Appendix III: Problem-Solving Communication | 444 |
| | Appendix IV: Sample Presentations | 450 |
| | Appendix V: Crisis Communication | 463 |
| | Glossary | 467 |
| | Index | 474 |



contents

part one

Basics of Business and Professional Communication Strategic Case: Sundown Bakery 2

James Hardy/PhotoAlto/
Alamy Stock Photo



1 Communicating at Work 4

Communication and Career Success 5

The Nature of Communication 7

- Communication Principles 7
- Basics of the Communication Model 9
- Communication Channels 10

Communicating in and beyond Organizations 13

- Formal Communication Networks 13
- Informal Communication Networks 18
- Personal Networking 19

Ethical Dimensions of Communication 24

- Master the Chapter 27
- Review Points 27
- Key Terms 27
- Activities 27
- References 29

cybrain/Shutterstock.com RF



2 Communication, Culture, and Work 32

The Nature of Culture 34 Communication in a Diverse Society 37

- Race and Ethnicity 38

xvi

- Social Class 39
- Generational Differences 40
- Regional Differences 42
- Disabilities 43
- Sex and Gender 44
- Military Veterans 45

Cultural Differences in International Business 46

- Customs and Behavior 46
- Fundamental Dimensions of Cultural Diversity 50

Diversity and Ethical Issues 53

- Legal Protections 54
- Responding to Ethical Challenges 54

Communicating across Diversity 56

- Become Culturally Literate 56
- Develop Constructive Attitudes 57
- Adapt Your Behavior 58

- Master the Chapter 59
- Review Points 59
- Key Terms 59
- Activities 59
- References 61

part two

Personal Skills Strategic Case: Omnicom Marketing 66

Klaus Vedfelt/
Getty Images



3 Listening 68

Listening at Work 69

- The Importance of Listening 69
- Assumptions about Listening 70

Barriers to Effective Listening 72

- Environmental Barriers 72
- Physiological Barriers 73
- Psychological Barriers 73

Listening Styles 75

- Relational Listening 75
- Analytical Listening 75
- Task-Oriented Listening 76
- Critical Listening 76

Listening More Effectively 76

- Listening to Understand 77
- Listening to Evaluate 81
- Master the Chapter 83
- Review Points* 83
- Key Terms* 83
- Activities* 84
- References* 85

Wavebreakmedia/
Shutterstock.com RF



4 Verbal and Nonverbal Messages 88

Verbal Messages 90

- Clarity and Ambiguity 90
- Inflammatory Language 95
- Language and Identity Management 97
- Feminine and Masculine Language Use 99

Nonverbal Communication 102

- Characteristics of Nonverbal Communication 102
- Types of Nonverbal Communication 104
- Improving Nonverbal Effectiveness 113

- Master the Chapter 116
- Review Points* 116
- Key Terms* 116
- Activities* 116
- References* 120

Dean Drobot/
Shutterstock.com RF



5 Interpersonal Skills and Success 124

Interpersonal Skills and Success 125

- Building Positive Relationships 125
- Affirming Dignity 126
- Enhancing Organizational Climate 127

Sharing Feedback 128

- Giving Praise 128
- Raising Difficult Issues 130
- Offering and Responding to Criticism 133

Dealing with Difficult People and Situations 137

- Incivility 138
- Workplace Bullying 139
- Sexual Harassment 142
- Problematic Communication 144

Managing Conflict 144

- Causes of Conflict 145
- Approaches to Conflict 146
- Handling Conflicts Constructively 149

- Master the Chapter 154
- Review Points* 154
- Key Terms* 155
- Activities* 155
- References* 157

LWA/Larry Williams/
Blend Images



6 Principles of Interviewing 162

Types of Interviews 164

- The Information-Gathering Interview 164
- The Career Research Interview 165

The Employment Interview 169
The Performance Appraisal Interview 190

Interviewing Strategies 193

Planning the Interview 193
Conducting the Interview 198

The Ethics of Interviewing 202

Obligations of the Interviewer 202
Obligations of the Respondent 203

Master the Chapter 204

Review Points 204

Key Terms 204

Activities 205

References 207

part three

Working in Groups Strategic Case: Museum of Springfield 210

Rawpixel.com/
Shutterstock



7 Leading and Working in Teams 212

The Nature of Teams 214

Characteristics of Workgroups 214
What Makes a Group a Team? 216
Virtual Teams 217

Leadership and Influence in Teams 219

Perspectives on Leadership 219
Leader–Member Exchange 221
Becoming a Leader 222
Power and Influence of Members 223

Effective Communication in Teams 225

Fill Functional Roles 226
Recognize Both Team and
Personal Goals 227

xviii

Promote Desirable Norms 231
Promote an Optimal Level of
Cohesiveness 233
Avoid Excessive Conformity 235

Master the Chapter 236

Review Points 236

Key Terms 237

Activities 237

References 238

Rawpixel.com/
Shutterstock



8 Effective Meetings 242

Types of Meetings 243

Information-Sharing Meetings 244
Problem-Solving and Decision-Making
Meetings 245
Ritual Activities 246

Virtual Meetings 247

Conference Calls 247
Web Conferences 249
Video Conferences 249
Collaborative Technologies 250

Planning a Meeting 252

When to Hold a Meeting 252
Setting an Agenda 254
Pre-Meeting Work 257

Conducting the Meeting 257

Setting the Tone 257
Conducting Business 258
Concluding the Meeting 264
Following Up the Meeting 265

Master the Chapter 267

Review Points 267

Key Terms 268

Activities 268

References 269

part four

Making Effective Presentations **Strategic Case: Fresh Air** **Sports 274**

Fizkes/Shutterstock



9 Types of Business Presentations and Their Audiences 276

Common Business Presentations 277

Presentations to Inform and Instruct 278

Presentations to Persuade 284

Presentations for Special Occasions 287

Common Audiences for Business Presentations 291

Internal Audiences 292

External Audiences 292

Master the Chapter 295

Review Points 295

Key Terms 296

Activities 296

References 297

Stockbyte/Getty Images



10 Developing and Organizing the Presentation 300

Analyzing the Situation 302

Analyzing the Occasion 302

Analyzing the Audience 304

Analyzing Yourself as the Speaker 307

Analyzing Your Group 309

Setting Specific Goals and Developing a Thesis 311

Setting Specific Goals 311

Developing a Thesis 313

Organizing the Body 314

Brainstorming and Research 314

Identifying Main Points and Subpoints 316

Rules for Main Points 316

Choosing the Best Organizational Pattern 319

Developing Introductions, Conclusions, and Transitions 326

Functions of Introductions 326

Types of Opening Statements 328

Functions of Conclusions 330

Types of Closing Statements 331

Functions of Transitions 332

Characteristics of Effective Transitions 333

Master the Chapter 335

Review Points 335

Key Terms 335

Activities 336

References 338

Charts and BG/Shutterstock



11 Supporting the Presentation 340

Functions of Supporting Material 341

Clarity 342

Interest 343

Proof 343

Verbal Support 343

Definitions 344

Examples 345

Stories 346

Statistics 348

Comparisons 349

Quotations 351

Persuasive Support 351

- Maximize Your Credibility 352
- Use Logical Reasoning 353
- Use Psychological Appeals 354

Visual Support 357

- Types of Visual Support 358
- Display Media 365
- Guidelines for Using Visual Aids 369

Using Support Ethically 371

- Cite Your Sources 371
- Strive to Be Inclusive 372
- Use Sources Responsibly 373
- Master the Chapter 374
- Review Points* 374
- Key Terms* 374
- Activities* 375
- References* 376

Matej Kastelic/
Shutterstock



12 Delivering the Presentation 380

Delivery Styles 381

- Manuscript Presentations 381
- Memorized Presentations 382
- Extemporaneous Presentations 383
- Impromptu Presentations 384

Building Your Confidence 385

- Accept a Moderate Amount of Nervousness 385

- Focus on the Positive 386
- Draw from Negative Experiences 387
- Seek Opportunities to Speak 387
- Rehearse Your Presentation 387
- Assess Your Delivery with Technology 388

Guidelines for Delivery 390

- Visual Elements 390
- Verbal Elements 392
- Vocal Elements 395

Managing Questions and Feedback 397

- When to Answer Questions 397
- How to Manage Questions 399
- Seeking Feedback 401
- Master the Chapter 402
- Review Points* 402
- Key Terms* 402
- Activities* 403
- References* 405

Appendix I: Interviewing Materials 407

Appendix II: Business Writing 418

Appendix III: Problem-Solving Communication 444

Appendix IV: Sample Presentations 450

Appendix V: Crisis Communication 463

Glossary 467

Index 474

Communicating at Work

**Strategies for Success in
Business and the Professions**

PART ONE



laflor/Getty Images

STRATEGIC CASE

Sundown Bakery

When Carol Teinchek and Bruce Marshall first started Sundown Bakery, the business was fairly simple: Carol ran the shop up front, while Bruce ran the bakery and ordered supplies. When the business began to grow, Carol hired two part-time clerks to help out in the shop. Marina had moved to the country two years earlier from El Salvador, and Kim was a newly arrived Korean working his way through college. Bruce hired Maurice, a French Canadian, as an assistant.

The ovens were soon running 24 hours a day, supervised by Maurice, who was now master baker, and two assistants on each of three shifts. Marina and Kim supervised the shop because Carol was usually too busy managing general sales distribution to spend much time with customers. Bruce still spent 3 or 4 hours a day in the bakery whenever he could get out of his office, but he devoted most of that time to coordinating production and solving problems with Maurice.

Over the next year, Sundown expanded from its original location, adding two new shops as well as two kiosks in local malls. Carol and Bruce hired an operations manager, Hans Mikelson, formerly a regional manager of a national chain of coffee shops. Hans had plenty of new ideas about how to operate an expanding business: He launched a website, added an extensive range of drinks and meal items to the menu, and instituted two dress codes—one for all counter help and another for kitchen employees. He also put together an employee manual to streamline the process of orienting new employees. Hans announced all of these changes by memos, which store managers distributed to the employees.

Sundown's expanding size led to a change in the company. The "family feeling" that had been so strong when Sundown was a small operation became less noticeable. The new employees barely knew Bruce and Carol; as a result, there was less give-and-take of ideas between the owners and workers.

Hans's memos on the dress code and the employee manual created a crisis. Old-time employees were furious about receiving orders from "the bureaucrats," as management came to be called. Bruce and Carol recognized the problem and wanted to keep the lines of communication open, but they weren't sure how to do so. "I'm just a baker," Bruce confessed in exasperation. "I don't know how to run a big company."

Another set of challenges grew out of the changing character of the employees. In the original location alone, Sundown now employed workers from seven different countries. Nadheer, who was born in Yemen, confessed to Bruce that he felt uncomfortable being managed by Carol. "It's nothing personal," he said, "but where I come from, a man doesn't usually take orders from a woman." The Sundown employee profile was diverse in other ways as well: Two of the assistant bakers were gay; one of the sales clerks uses a wheelchair.

Carol, Bruce, and Hans know that good products alone aren't enough to guarantee Sundown Bakery's continuing success. They need to improve the quality of communication among the growing team who make and sell their products.

Basics of Business and Professional Communication

As you read the chapters in this unit, consider the following questions:

chapter 1

1. Apply the Communication Model (see Figure 1.1) to analyze Hans's communication with employees regarding the employee manual and uniforms. Consider the impact of the sender, message, decoding, feedback, context, and probable sources of noise. Which elements seem to contribute most to the apparent lack of shared understanding?
2. Identify the changes that have occurred in the communication channels between employees and management as Sundown Bakery has grown. Suggest alternative communication strategies that might have reduced employee resentment. Explain why these channels could help improve management's communication about workplace changes. How might an organization's culture affect its choice of communication channels?
3. Identify the instrumental, relational, and identity messages that employees seem to have received from management as Sundown's business grew. Which functions of downward communication do you notice? Can you find examples of upward and horizontal communication in this case study? How could Sundown improve its upward communication flow?

4. How have Sundown's formal and informal communication networks changed as the company expanded? In which ways have both the formal and informal networks contributed to Sundown's growing pains? In which ways can these networks be used to improve the relationships between management and employees?

chapter 2

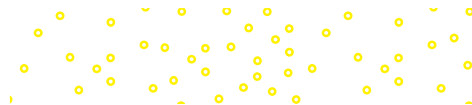
1. How do the changes in the demographic makeup of Sundown Bakery reflect transformation of the larger workforce as described in Communication in a Diverse Society section?
2. Reflect on the six parts of the Customs and Behavior section. Cite a specific instance or predict the impact of three of these customs and behaviors in this workplace.
3. Consider the following hidden dimensions of culture as you describe the impact of culture on communication within the company: high- and low-context styles, individualism and collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, and long-term orientation.
4. Using the guidelines in the Communicating across Diversity section, which specific advice would you give to Sundown's management team about how to communicate most effectively in the face of the company's growth?



James Hardy/PhotoAlto/
Alamy Stock Photo

Chapter One

Communicating at Work



chapter outline

Communication and Career Success

The Nature of Communication

Communication Principles

Basics of the Communication Model

Communication Channels

Communicating in and beyond Organizations

Formal Communication Networks

Informal Communication Networks

Personal Networking

Ethical Dimensions of Communication

chapter objectives

After reading this chapter you should be able to:

1. Explain the role of communication in career success, providing examples to support your claims.
2. Apply the key principles of communication, knowledge of the basic elements of the communication model, and considerations of effective communication channel use to a specific situation, showing how each one affects the outcome of the interaction.
3. Describe how formal and informal communication networks operate in a given situation in your career field; then create a strategic plan of personal networking to accomplish your goals within an organization.
4. Apply the concepts of ethical communication discussed here to one or more ethically challenging situations.

• Communication and Career Success

The next time you look for job postings online, talk to recruiters at a job fair or check out internship opportunities at your college's career services office, look a little closer. No matter which type of position you are seeking—from an entry-level job to a highly technical professional position—chances are you will see “excellent communication skills” listed as a job requirement.

Regardless of which occupations they pursue, people spend a staggering amount of time communicating on the job. At many companies, employees spend around 80% of the workweek on the phone, in meetings, and communicating by e-mail.¹ However, it is not just the amount of time spent communicating that is important. When it comes to communication, quality matters in almost every career.² Scientists must convey important findings—such as the transmission rate of viruses—to general audiences. Engineers spend most of their professional lives speaking and listening, mostly in one-to-one and small group settings.³ Accountants may crunch numbers, but they also need to communicate

effectively to serve their clients. That is why certified public accountants (CPAs) and the firms that hire them constantly cite effective communication as essential for career success.⁴

Effective communication is an essential tool for achieving a healthy workplace culture and business success.⁵ As a matter of fact, a global study found that companies with high communication effectiveness are three and a half times more likely to outperform their competitors.⁶ On-the-job communication skills can also mean the difference between life and death. The Los Angeles Police Department cited “bad communication” as one of the most common reasons for errors in shooting by its officers.⁷ Communication skills are also essential for doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals.⁸ A survey by a major hospital accreditation group identified “communication failures” among the root causes of medical errors—including errors related to death, serious physical injury, and psychological trauma.⁹ Research published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and elsewhere suggests there is a significant difference between the communication skills of physicians who have no malpractice claims against them and doctors with previous claims.¹⁰

CAREER tip

Recovering from a Communication Blunder

Communication plays an important role in business. Miscommunication in the workplace is stressful and costly. The results of a study conducted by Joseph Grenny and David Maxfield, authors of *Crucial Conversations* and cofounders of VitalSmarts, a TwentyEighty, Inc. company, indicate that 83% of employees

have witnessed their colleagues say something that has had a catastrophic impact on their careers, reputations, and businesses.
To recover from most common blunders: *acknowledge* how others feel, *admit* when you have made a mistake, and express *sincere* regret.

Source: Adapted from VitalSmarts. (2016). The top five one-sentence career killers Retrieved from <https://www.vitalsmarts.com>

Communication skills are also essential for personal career success. Employees in technical careers who have effective communication skills earn more money than their counterparts who are weak communicators.¹¹ Table 1-1 summarizes the results of one survey in which employers list the skills and qualities for their ideal candidate. Included in the top ten skills are problem-solving skills, the ability to work in a team, written and verbal communication, and leadership.¹² Although this survey is distributed annually, communication skills are always near the top of the list. Executive coach and pharmaceutical recruiter Jim Richman made this point most emphatically: “If I give any advice, it is that you can never do enough training around your overall communication skills.”¹³

Many people fail to realize the full extent of the role of communication in career success. One survey revealed that nearly 80% of students believe that they are competent in oral and written communication; however, only 42% of employers agreed that the students were proficient in these areas.¹⁴ In other words, many students underestimate the importance of good communication while overstating their own abilities. This is not a recipe for success.

Because communication skills are an essential ingredient in professional and organizational accomplishment, this book is dedicated to helping you hone your talents in this important area.

| Table 1-1 | Top Qualities/Skills Employers Seek on a Candidate’s Résumé |
|--|---|
| <div><div>1. Problem-solving skills</div><div>2. Ability to work in a team</div><div>3. Strong work ethic</div><div>4. Analytical/quantitative skills</div><div>5. Communication skills (written)</div><div>6. Leadership</div><div>7. Communication skills (verbal)</div><div>8. Initiative</div><div>9. Detail-oriented</div><div>10. Technical skills</div></div> | |

Source: *Job Outlook 2020*, National Association of Colleges and Employers.

• The Nature of Communication

Communication looks simple and almost effortless, especially when it goes smoothly. But every communicative exchange is affected by principles that are not always apparent. Understanding this process better can help you make strategic choices that help achieve both personal and organizational goals.

Communication Principles

A more sophisticated understanding of how communication operates begins with some fundamental principles.

Communication Is Unavoidable A fundamental axiom of communication is “One cannot not communicate.”¹⁵ As you will learn in Chapter 4, facial expression, posture, gesture, clothing, and a host of other behaviors offer cues about our attitudes. The notion that we are always communicating means we send messages even by our absence. Failing to show up at an event or leaving the room suggests meaning to others. Because communication is unavoidable, it is essential to consider the unintentional messages you send.

Communication Is Strategic Almost all communication is aimed at achieving goals. On the job, the most obvious type is **instrumental communication**, or messages aimed at accomplishing the task at hand. Your manager is communicating instrumentally when she says, “I need that report by noon,” and you are pursuing instrumental goals when you ask, “How long does the report need to be?” People are not always direct in their communication about instrumental goals. Saying, “Wow—look at the time!” could be an implicit message designed to accomplish the task of ending a conversation. Furthermore, in a negotiation, your “final offer” may actually be a bargaining ploy to get a better deal.



Jose Luis Pelaez Inc/Blend Images LLC

The second set of goals involves **relational communication**, or messages that shape and reflect the way people regard one another. As we will explore in Chapter 5, building positive relationships is not just about being sociable. A positive climate in the workplace also helps us accomplish instrumental goals. Conversely, a negative relationship can make it difficult, or even impossible, to accomplish the task at hand.

Virtually all messages contain both instrumental and relational dimensions. When a customer service representative asks, “How can I help you?” the instrumental nature of this question is obvious. But the *way* the question is asked shapes the tenor of the relationship between the representative and the customer—rushed or deliberate, sincere or phony, friendly or unfriendly.¹⁶

A third, less obvious reason we communicate involves **identity management**, which is the practice of presenting yourself in ways that produce a preferred image and distinctive sense of self. To understand this concept, list 10 words or phrases that describe the way you would like others to see you on the job. Your list probably includes terms such as *competent*, *trustworthy*, and *efficient*. (Be sure to complete your own list before reading on.) Taken together, the attributes on this list (and many others) make up the professional identity you want to create. Next, think about the ways you communicate, both verbally and nonverbally, to get others to accept your identity. If being calm under pressure is part

of your preferred identity, what do you say or do to project that quality? If you want others to see you as knowledgeable, how do you communicate to create that impression?

As these examples show, communication is often *strategic*; in other words, we intentionally craft messages for the purpose of achieving instrumental, relational, and identity goals. However, we do not always realize that we are being strategic in our communication. Think about the last time you met a new person. You probably did not have the following thoughts running through your mind: “Must look confident and friendly! Firm handshake! Direct eye contact! Remember to smile!” While many of these behaviors are performed subconsciously, crafting a thoughtful strategy to achieve your goals can boost the odds you will succeed.

The authors of this book suggest a variety of communication strategies you can use to achieve your goals and the objectives of the organizations with which you are involved. Many of these strategies focus on specific work-related contexts, such as interviews, meetings, and presentations. Others will be useful in almost every professional context where you want to enhance your professional identity, manage relationships, and get the job done most effectively.

At first, the notion of strategic communication might seem unethical. In reality, communicating purposefully is not necessarily dishonest. For example, organizational spokespersons must be strategic in how they phrase their messages when communicating with the public during a crisis event. If family members are grieving over the loss of a loved one due to a workplace accident, a spokesperson may strategically choose to acknowledge that they are hurting, rather than saying, “I know how you feel.” The guidelines in the Ethical Dimensions of Communication section show that it is possible to be strategic while still respecting others’ rights and needs.

Communication Is Irreversible At one time or another, everyone has wished they could take back words they regretted uttering. Unfortunately, this is not possible. Our words and deeds are recorded in others’ memories, and we cannot erase them. As the old saying goes, people may forgive, but they do not forget. In fact, the more vigorously you try to erase an act, the more vividly it may stand out.

Communication Is a Process It is not accurate to talk about an “act” of communication as if sending or receiving a message is an isolated event. Rather, every communication event needs to be examined as part of its communication context. As an example, suppose your boss responds to your request for a raise by saying, “I was going to ask you to take a *cut* in pay!” How would you react? The answer probably depends on several factors: Is your boss a joker or a serious person? How does the comment fit into the history of your relationship—have your boss’s remarks been critical or supportive in the past? How does the message fit with the ones you have received from other people? What kind of mood are you in today? All these questions show that the meaning of a message depends in part on what has happened before the message. Each message is part of a process: It does not occur in isolation.

Communication Is Not a Panacea *Panacea* comes from the Greek word *panakeia*, meaning “all-healing.” Just as alchemists during the Renaissance believed there was an elixir that would give eternal life, some individuals today believe that communication is a cure-all for problems. Although communication can certainly smooth out the bumps and straighten the road to success, misunderstandings and ill feelings may still occur.¹⁷ Even effective communication cannot solve all problems. In some situations, the parties may understand one another perfectly yet still disagree. These limitations are important to understand as you begin to study communication on the job. Boosting your communication skills may increase your effectiveness, but improvements in those skills will not be a remedy for every situation that you encounter.

Derogatory E-mails Lead to Firings

Three employees of the Iowa Civil Rights Commission learned the hard way that digital gossip can be costly. They were fired after supervisors found they had used the state's e-mail system to disparage and ridicule coworkers. The culprits referred to colleagues by offensive nicknames, such as Monster, Psycho, Stoned Intern, Roid Rage, Extreme Makeover, Where's My Car?, and Albino. A representative message read,

"Where's My Car and Psycho are talking about food—a match made in stoner/fatty heaven!"

The workers called their e-mails harmless office chatter. "It was just talk, water cooler chat," one protested. An administrative law judge disagreed, characterizing their messages as "misconduct" that disqualified them from receiving unemployment insurance benefits.

Source: Foley, R. J. (2011, August 22)., Email exchanges gets three Iowa civil rights investigators fired. *Cedar Rapids Gazette*.

Basics of the Communication Model

No matter what the setting is or how many people are involved, all communication consists of the same elements. Understanding those elements can help explain what happens when one person tries to express an idea to others. It can also offer clues about why some of these attempts succeed and others fail.

The communication process begins with a **sender**, the person who transmits a **message**.¹⁸ Some messages are deliberate, whereas others (such as sighs and yawns) may be unintentional. The sender must choose specific words or nonverbal methods to send an intentional message. This activity is called **encoding**. The **channel** (sometimes called the *medium*) is the method used to deliver a message. You will read much more about channels in the next section.

Even when a message reaches its intended receiver intact, there is no guarantee it will be understood as the sender intended it to be.¹⁹ The **receiver** must still attach meaning to the words or behavior. Receivers actively interpret and respond to the messages they have received, both unintentionally and intentionally. The process of a receiver attaching meaning to a message—such as when a teacher interprets a student's yawn as signifying that the student is bored by the lecture—is called **decoding**.

Misunderstandings often arise because messages can be decoded, or interpreted, in more than one way. Consider a situation in which a customer responds to a slip-up by saying, "Don't worry about it." Perhaps the literal statement is accurate: "There's absolutely no need to worry." Or perhaps the customer means, "It isn't perfect, but I can tolerate the mistake." The customer could also be annoyed yet not want to say bluntly, "I'm really unhappy." In the coming chapters, you will learn a variety of strategies for reaching a shared understanding during these situations.

The receiver's observable response to a sender's message is called **feedback**. Some feedback is nonverbal—smiles, sighs, frowns, and so on. Sometimes it is verbal, as when you react to a colleague's ideas with questions or comments. Feedback can also be written, as when you respond by writing an e-mail to your coworker. In many cases, the lack of a message is a type of feedback. Failure to answer a letter or to return a phone call, for example, can suggest how a receiver feels about the sender.

Even though we have described sending and receiving as discrete roles, communication is actually a two-way process. Especially when communication is instantaneous—in face-to-face settings, phone conversations, and web conferencing—people are simultaneously senders and receivers. Imagine pitching an idea (sending a message) to your manager (receiver). While listening to your idea, your manager frowns (sending feedback), and you immediately attempt to adjust your communication (receiver). Both of you are sending

and receiving messages at the same time. Because sending and receiving are simultaneous and connected, these two roles are combined into the “communicator” positions represented on both sides of the model pictured in Figure 1.1.

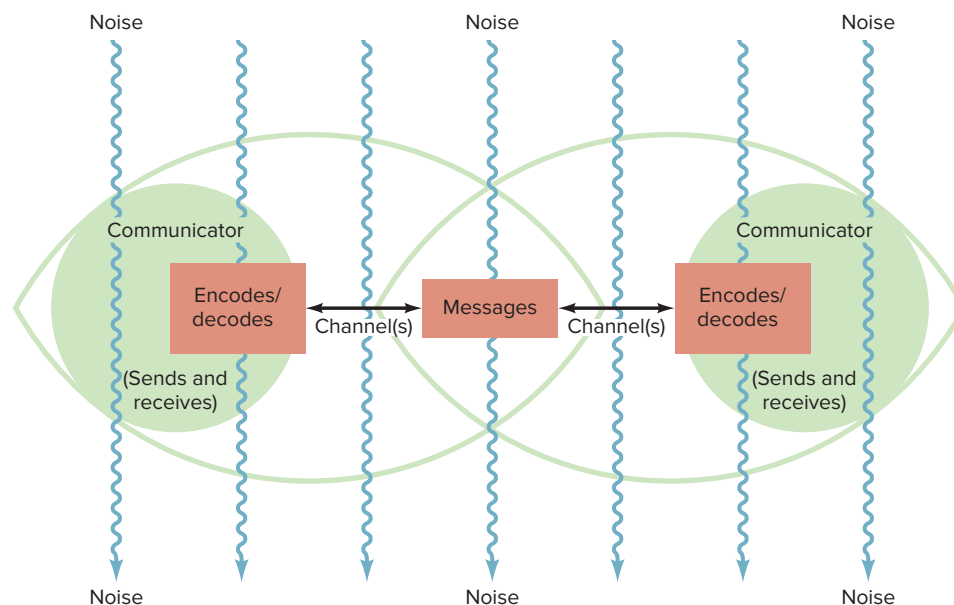
Once you understand that receiving and sending are simultaneous and connected, you start to recognize that successful communication is not something active senders do to passive receivers. Rather, it is a collaborative process in which the participants create a shared understanding through the exchange of messages. In other words, communication is not something we do *to* others, but rather a process we do *with* them. An effective way to build shared meaning is to practice other-orientation—that is, to try to understand the other person’s viewpoint, whether or not we agree with it. Feedback helps us in this process of building shared meaning.

One of the greatest barriers to effective communication is **noise**—factors that interfere with the exchange of messages. The most obvious type of noise is *environmental*, or based on the communicators’ surroundings. The babble of voices in the next room, the annoying ring of someone’s mobile notifications during a meeting, and a smelly cigar are all examples of environmental noise. The second type of noise is *physiological*—physical issues such as hearing disorders, illnesses, disabilities, and other factors that make it difficult to send or receive messages. To appreciate the impact of physiological noise, recall how tough it is to process messages when you are recovering from a late-night study session or have a headache. The third type of noise is *psychological*—forces within the sender or the receiver that interfere with understanding, such as egotism, defensiveness, assumptions, stereotypes, biases, prejudices, hostility, preoccupation, and fear. If you were thinking strategically about communicating with someone at work, what steps could you take to reduce the amount of noise in your environment before delivering your message?

Communication Channels

As a business communicator, the channel you choose to deliver your message can have a big influence on your effectiveness. Should you express your ideas in a phone call? Put them into a text message or e-mail? Send them in hard copy? Or should you express yourself in person? Deciding which communication channel to use is not a trivial matter; communication researchers have extensively studied which factors lead to good channel

FIGURE 1.1
Communication
Model



choice.²⁰ To select the best channel, you should consider several aspects related to the communication.

Consider Channel Characteristics New technologies have given business people a wider range of choices for communication than ever before. It was not that long ago when the choices were in-person communication, telephone call, fax, pager message, or written memo. Today, other options include e-mail messages, voice mail, live streaming, web conferencing, social media, mobile phone calls, texting, and more. One way to start evaluating these choices is to consider how each channel's different characteristics match up with your communication goals.

- *Richness.* Richness refers to the amount of information that can be transmitted using a given channel. Three aspects determine the richness of a channel: (1) whether it can handle many types of cues at once, (2) whether it allows for quick feedback from both senders and receivers, and (3) whether it allows for a personal focus.²¹ Ideally, when announcing an important decision that may affect employees (e.g., the acquisition of another company), you would select a rich channel to convey this information. Face-to-face communication would likely be preferred in such a situation because it allows for the communication and decoding of verbal and nonverbal cues, simultaneous feedback, and a personal focus. In contrast, lean channels carry much less information. While a lean e-mail channel is a good choice for exchanging information efficiently, it is not as effective when factors such as tone and emotion are important. Even the inclusion of emojis such as “smiley faces” may not prevent e-mail misunderstandings.²²
- *Speed.* The speed of the channel refers to how quickly the exchange of messages occurs. High-speed or instantaneous channels support **synchronous communication**; they include face-to-face conversations, video chat, and telephone conversations. A key benefit of synchronous channels is that no time lag separates the transmission and reception of messages, so immediate feedback is possible. That is, you can respond to questions as soon as they arise and rephrase or elaborate as necessary. If you need a price quote *now*, or if you need to discuss a complex idea that will need elaboration, a high-speed channel is probably the best choice. Nevertheless, high-speed, synchronous communication is not always desirable. Another option is **asynchronous communication**, which occurs through channels such as e-mail, inter-office memos, and voice mail. In these “low-speed” channels, there is a lag between the transmission and reception of messages. These channels can be effective for less urgent requests. In addition, if you want to avoid a knee-jerk reaction and encourage careful thought, you might be better off choosing an asynchronous method to deliver your message.
- *Control.* Control refers to the degree to which you can manage the communication process. Of course, because communication is a two-way process, you can never have complete control over it. Even so, different channels offer different types of control. In written channels (such as e-mail and social media posts), you can exert more control over how you encode a message because you will be able to write, proofread, and edit it as many times as you need until you get it exactly the way you want. If you have something highly sensitive to say, this might be a good channel to choose. But there are also some trade-offs to this kind of channel. Even though you might spend hours drafting a memo, letter, or report, the recipient may scan it superficially or not read it at all. In contrast, in a face-to-face channel, you have much more control over the receiver's attention. You can reduce noise, interpret nonverbal signals of understanding, or even explicitly ask the sender to pay more attention to your message.

Consider the Desired Tone of Your Message In general, channels that utilize oral communication—face-to-face, telephone, video conference—are best for communicating messages that have a personal dimension. One corporate manager, whose company spends more than \$4 million annually on employee travel, makes the case for face-to-face contact: “Nothing takes the place of a handshake, going to lunch, seeing their eyes.”²³ These types of channels are also best for ideas that have a strong need for visual support, in the form of a demonstration, photos or slides, and so on. Spoken communication is also especially useful when immediate feedback is needed, such as in question-and-answer sessions or as a quick reply to your ideas.

Written communication works well when you want your message to have a relatively formal tone. Writing is almost always the best medium when you must choose your words carefully. Writing is also better than speaking when you want to convey complicated ideas that are likely to require much study and thought on the part of the receiver. Likewise, it is smart to put your message in writing when you want it to be the final word, with no feedback or discussion. Finally, writing is the best option for *any* message if you want a record of that communication. In business and the professions, sending confirming letters and e-mails is a common practice, as is keeping meeting minutes. These steps guarantee that what is said will be a matter of record, with the documentation being useful in case of later misunderstandings or disputes and in case anyone wants to review the history of an issue. Handwritten notes of thanks or sympathy also express thoughtfulness and add a personal touch that is lost in many electronic messages.

Consider the Organization’s Culture Besides message-related considerations, the culture of the organization in which you work may favor some communication channels over others.²⁴ Along with an organization’s overall preference for certain channels, it is important to consider the preferences of particular departments or even individuals. For example, the computer support staff members in some organizations respond to e-mails, while in other companies a phone call to the help desk is the best way to get a quick response. If you know a coworker or your boss responds only to face-to-face reminders, your best bet is to use that approach. In fact, one study indicated that employees who followed corporate norms for e-mail and instant messaging received higher performance evaluations.²⁵

Consider Using Multiple Channels In some cases, it is wise to send a message using more than one channel. For example, you could:

- Distribute a written text or outline that parallels your presentation.
- Follow a letter, fax, or e-mail message with a phone call, or call first and then write.
- Send a report or proposal, and then make appointments with your readers to discuss it.

This redundancy capitalizes on the diverse strengths of the various channels and boosts the odds of getting your desired message across. One study revealed that following up a face-to-face exchange with an e-mail that included supplemental information was more persuasive than the single-channel approach. The dual-channel approach also enhanced the sender’s credibility.²⁶

Sometimes channel selection involves trade-offs. For example, face-to-face communication is rich and fast, and it allows you to have much control over the receiver’s attention. It also has the potential to create personal bonds that are more difficult to forge through other types of communication. Unfortunately, personal contacts can be difficult to schedule, even when people work in the same building. A cross-town trip for a half-hour meeting

The Virtues of Going Offline

Today's array of communication technologies makes it possible to be connected to others on a nearly around-the-clock basis. Along with their benefits, however, the technologies that keep workers connected have a downside. When your boss, colleagues, and customers can reach you at any time, you can become too distracted to tackle the necessary parts of your job.

Communication researchers have discovered that remote workers have developed two strategies for reducing contact and thereby increasing their efficiency.²⁷ The first simply involves disconnecting from

time to time—logging off the computer, forwarding the phone call to voice mail, or simply ignoring incoming messages. The researchers labeled the second strategy *dissimulation*. With this approach, teleworkers discourage contact by disguising their activities—for example, changing their instant message status to “in a meeting” or posting a fake “out of the office” message online.

It's important to note that these strategies are typically used not to avoid work but rather to get more done. Too much connectivity is similar to many aspects of life: More is not always better.

can consume most of the morning or afternoon. Sometimes it is impossible to access contacts face-to-face when a colleague works in a different state or country, or during a situation like the COVID-19 crisis.

Ultimately, the question is not which communication channel to use, but when to use each one most effectively.²⁸ Knowing how to choose the optimal channel can have a strong impact on your career. In one survey, managers who were identified as “media sensitive”—those who carefully matched the channel to the message—were almost twice as likely to receive top ratings in their performance reviews when compared with less-media-sensitive peers.²⁹ Table 1-2 presents some guidelines that will help you decide how to deliver your message most effectively.

• Communicating in and beyond Organizations

For most of us, work is collaborative. Whether the people we work with are in adjacent cubicles or on the other side of the world, we are members of **communication networks**—patterns of contact created by the flow of messages among communicators through time and space.³⁰ Two kinds of networks exist: formal and informal.

Formal Communication Networks

Formal communication networks are systems designed by management that dictate who should communicate with whom to get a job done. In small organizations, these “chain of command” networks are so simple they may hardly be noticeable. In larger organizations, they become more intricate. The most common way of describing formal communication networks is with **organizational charts** like the one in Figure 1.2. Organizational charts provide clear guidelines indicating who is responsible for a given task and which employees are responsible for others' performance. They also depict optimal flows of communication, including downward, upward, and horizontal communication.

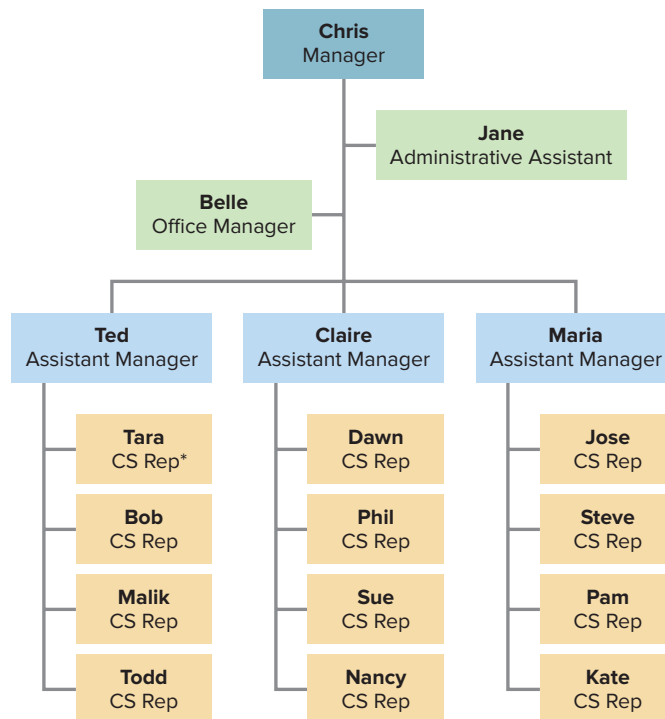
Downward Communication **Downward communication**, sometimes referred to as top-down communication, occurs whenever leaders or managers send messages to their

Table 1-2**Considerations in Choosing a Communication Channel**

| | Richness | Speed | Control over Message | Control over Attention | Tone | Level of Detail |
|---|----------|------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Face-to-Face | High | Synchronous | Low | High | Personal | Moderate |
| Telephone Calls, Teleconferencing, and Videoconferencing | Moderate | Synchronous | Low | Moderate | Personal | Moderate |
| Voice Mail | Moderate | Asynchronous | Moderate | Low | Moderate | Low |
| E-mail | Low | Asynchronous | High | Low | Impersonal-Moderate | High |
| Instant Messaging | Low | Asynchronous but potentially quick | Moderate | Moderate | Moderate | Low |
| Text Messaging | Low | Asynchronous but potentially quick | High | Low | Impersonal-Moderate | Low |
| Hard Copy (e.g., handwritten or typed message) | Low | Asynchronous | High | Low | Depends on writer's style | High |

FIGURE 1.2

A Formal Communication Network

Organizational Chart

*CS Rep = Customer Service Representative

lower-level employees. Downward communication is usually one-directional; in other words, the higher-level communicator does not invite a response from the lower-level recipient.³¹

Examples of downward communication include explaining an organization's mission or vision, assigning directives or giving job instructions, and providing feedback. Business communication experts John Anderson and Dale Level have identified five benefits of effective downward communication:

- Better coordination
- Improved individual performance
- Improved morale
- Improved consumer relations
- Improved industrial relations³²

Most managers would agree—at least in principle—that downward communication is important. It is hard to argue with the need for giving instructions, describing procedures, explaining rationales, and so on. Like their bosses, employees recognize the importance of downward communication. A study at General Electric (GE) revealed that “clear communication between boss and worker” was the most important factor in job satisfaction for most people. GE was so impressed with the findings of this study that it launched a program to encourage managers to communicate more, and more directly, with their employees, including holding informal meetings to encourage interaction.³³

The desire for feedback is probably so strong among most employees because supervisors rarely provide enough of it. As two leading researchers put it: “The frequent complaint . . . by the individual is that he [sic] does not know where he stands with his superiors.”³⁴ Many companies do take a more enlightened approach to feedback. Ed Carlson, former president of United Airlines, is generally credited with turning the company from a loser into a winner during his tenure. Part of his success was due to his emphasis on keeping United's employees—all of them—aware of how the company was doing. “Nothing is worse for morale than a lack of information down in the ranks,” he said. “I call it NETMA—Nobody Ever Tells Me Anything—and I have tried hard to minimize that problem.”³⁵ True to his word, Carlson passed along to the field staff information on United's operations that was previously considered too important to circulate.

Upward Communication Messages flowing from the lower levels of hierarchy to upper levels are labeled **upward communication**. One form of upward communication is **Voice of Employee (VoE)**, or employees expressing ideas, grievances, and suggestions.³⁶ A variety of tools exist for providing such feedback, including annual employee surveys, posts on job sites like Glassdoor, and online employee sentiment tools. One study found that employees who hold central positions in the formal network are more likely to speak up with ideas and suggestions; however, their perceptions of peer support may influence their willingness to do so.³⁷

Businesses that truly are open to upward communication can profit from the opinions of employees.³⁸ Mark Whitten, U.S. director of operations for Martinrea International, credited one-on-one meetings with each of his employees—a total of 550 meetings—for a host of positive changes in organizational culture. Among the benefits were increased employee satisfaction, \$200 million in new business, and a supplier award from customers.³⁹ Bestselling author John Izzo emphasized the importance of listening to employees in an interview with *Business News Daily*, saying “the bottom line is that people want to

CAREER tip

Getting Recognized by Your Bosses

According to career advisors Caroline Zaayer Kaufman and Tyler Omoth, no matter how great you are at your job, it's hard to advance if your boss isn't noticing you. Both offer tips for how you can showcase your talent, create interest in your work, and display your potential:

- **Be early to work.** Showing up just 10 minutes early can increase your chances of being noticed.
- **Speak up during meetings.** Employees who offer ideas and suggestions to problems are more likely to be noticed for their contribution.
- **Share your achievements.** Your boss may not realize the positive contributions you are making to

the company; use your boss's preferred method of communication to share relevant updates.

- **Be involved.** Volunteer to participate on committees, service projects, or other events. Create opportunities to meet and build relationships with people at many levels of your organization.
- **Recognize your co-workers' success.** Take the time to praise others for their work to foster positive relationships and build a reputation as a supportive colleague.

Source: Kaufman, C. Z. (n.d.). 10 ways to get your work noticed by senior staff. *Monster*. Retrieved from <https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/employee-recognition-1117>; Omoth, T. (n.d.). 6 ways to impress your boss. *TopResume*. Retrieved from <https://www.topresume.com/career-advice/6-ways-to-get-your-boss-to-notice-you>

be heard and feel valued.”⁴⁰ As the Career Tip suggests, getting recognized by your supervisor can pave the way to career advancement.

Upward communication can convey what employees are doing, which unsolved dilemmas they are facing, how problem areas might be improved, and how employees feel about one another and the workplace.⁴¹ These messages can benefit both lower-level employees (subordinates) and upper-level management (superiors)—which explains why the most satisfied employees feel free to express dissent to their bosses.⁴² Bennis emphasizes the critical role that upward communication plays in the success of an organization:

The longer I study effective leaders, the more I am convinced of the underappreciated importance of effective followers. What makes a good follower? The single most important characteristic may well be a willingness to tell the truth. In a world of growing complexity, leaders are increasingly dependent on their subordinates for good information, whether the leaders want to [be] or not. Followers who tell the truth, and leaders who listen, are an unbeatable combination.⁴³

Despite its importance, upward communication is not always easy. Almost every organization *claims* to seek upward messages, but many supervisors are not as open to employee opinions as they purport themselves to be. Being frank with superiors can be both important and risky, especially when the news is not what the boss wants to hear.⁴⁴ One executive gives an example:

In my first C.E.O. job, a young woman who worked for me walked in one day and said, “Do you know that the gossip in the office is that the way for a woman to get ahead is to wear frilly spring dresses?” And I just looked at her and asked, “Where did this come from?” She said, “Well, you said, ‘pretty dress’ to four women who happened to be dressed that way. And so now it’s considered policy.”⁴⁵

Some organizations have developed systems to promote upward communication in the face of potential challenges. British Airways launched an online suggestion box for its employees. One idea was to make the planes lighter by descaling the toilet pipes. As unusual as it might sound, the implementation of this idea cut the cost of fuel by over \$900,000 a year.⁴⁶

Most of the responsibility for improving upward communication rests with managers. One study showed the likelihood of reporting bad news was highest when employees trusted supervisors and when there was a history in the organization of leaders resolving problems.⁴⁷ They can begin the process by announcing their willingness to hear from subordinates. A number of vehicles can be used to facilitate upward messages—an open-door policy, grievance procedures, periodic interviews, group meetings, and the suggestion box, to name a few. Nevertheless, formal channels are not the only way to promote upward messages. In fact, informal contacts are often the most effective approach. Chats during breaks, in the elevator, or at social gatherings can sometimes tell more than planned sessions. Even so, no method will be effective unless a manager is sincerely interested in hearing from employees and genuinely values their ideas. Just talking about the desirability of upward communication is not enough; employees have to see evidence of a willingness to hear upward messages—both good and bad—before they will really open up.

Horizontal Communication A third type of organizational interaction is **horizontal communication** (sometimes called *lateral communication*). This type of communication occurs between people, divisions, or departments that would be considered on an equal level in the organizational hierarchy. Communications occurring among office workers in the same department, coworkers on a construction project, and teachers at a middle school are all examples of horizontal communication.

Horizontal communication serves five purposes⁴⁸:

- *Task coordination*: “Let’s get together this afternoon and set up a production schedule.”
- *Problem-solving*: “It takes three days for my department to get reports from yours. How can we speed things up?”
- *Sharing information*: “I just found out a big convention is coming to town next week, so we ought to get ready for lots of business.”
- *Conflict resolution*: “I’ve heard you were complaining about my work to the boss. If you’re not happy, I wish you would tell me first.”
- *Building rapport*: “I appreciate the way you got that rush job done on time. I’d like to say thanks by buying you lunch.”

Top-performing organizations encourage people from different areas to get together and share ideas. At Hewlett-Packard, worldwide personnel manager Barbara Waugh and her colleagues spent five years improving horizontal communication. “My role is to create mirrors that show the whole what the parts are doing—through coffee talks and small meetings, through building a network, through bringing people together who have similar or complementary ideas.”⁴⁹

Despite the importance of horizontal communication, several forces may discourage communication among peers.⁵⁰ *Rivalry* is one such factor. People who feel threatened by one another are not likely to be cooperative. This sense of threat can stem from competition for a promotion, a raise, or another scarce resource. Another challenge is the *specialization* required for people with different technical specialties to understand one another. A communication professor and a geographic information science professor may find it difficult to collaborate because of their individual specialties, despite being peers in the hierarchy of a university setting. *Information overload* may also discourage employees from reaching out to others in different areas. A simple *lack of motivation* is another problem. Finally, *physical barriers*, such as having offices scattered throughout different buildings, can interfere with horizontal connections.



Sydney Shaffer/Photodisc/Getty Images RF

Informal Communication Networks

So far, we have focused on networks within organizations that are created by management. Alongside the formal networks, every organization also has **informal communication networks**—patterns of interaction based on friendships, shared personal or career interests, and proximity. One business writer described the value of informal networks:

A firm's organizational chart will tell you about authority. It doesn't always show how things get done or created. You know the rules, but you don't know the ropes. For that, you need a map to the network, the corresponding informal structure that is usually invisible.⁵¹

Informal relationships within organizations operate in ways that have little to do with the formal relationships laid out in organizational charts.⁵² Figure 1.3 shows how the actual flow of information in one firm is quite different from its formal structure. Moreover, beyond any sort of organizational connection, people are connected with one another through informal personal networks—with friends, neighbors, family members, and all sorts of other relationships.

Some informal networks arise because of personal interests. Two colleagues who are avid basketball fans or share a fascination with rare books are more likely to swap information about work than coworkers who have no such bonds. Personal friendships create connections that can lead to increased communication. Finally, physical proximity increases the chances of interaction. Shared office space or frequent meetings around the copying machine make it more likely that people will exchange information.

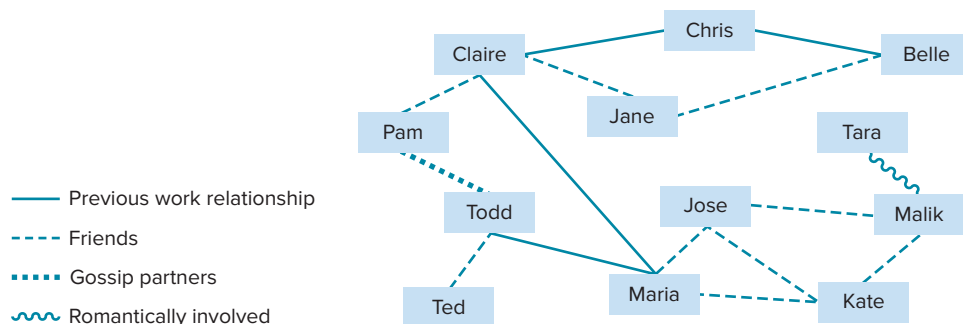
Informal networks are often a source of important job-related information, organizational resources, career advice, and social connections that help workers successfully navigate their careers. When someone is excluded from that network—even unintentionally—they are placed at a major disadvantage. For example, research has shown that isolation from informal communication networks has a real impact on career success.⁵³ The difference is even more pronounced for minority women, who face “concrete walls” that isolate them from informal relationships with superiors and peers.⁵⁴ It is important to identify the informal networks in your organization and try to get as involved as possible—especially if you are a minority.

Not all informal messages are idle rumors. Informal communication can serve several useful functions:

- *Confirming formal messages:* “The boss is really serious this time about cutting down on overnight travel. I heard him yelling about it when I walked past his office.”

FIGURE 1.3
An Informal
Communication
Network

Source: Adapted from Orbe, M. P., & Bruess, C. J. (2007). *Contemporary issues in interpersonal communication*. New York: Oxford University Press.



- *Expanding on formal messages:* “The invitation to the office party says ‘casual dress,’ but don’t make it too informal.”
- *Expediting official messages:* You might learn about openings within an organization from people in your network long before the vacancies are published.
- *Contradicting official messages:* You might learn from a friend in accounting that the deadline for purchases on this year’s budget is not as firm as it sounded in the comptroller’s recent memo.
- *Circumventing formal channels:* Your tennis partner who works in duplicating might sneak in an occasional rush job for you instead of putting it at the end of the line.

Many companies elevate informal communication to an official policy by encouraging open, unstructured contacts between people from various parts of the organization. Some observers consider informal contacts to be the primary means of communication within an organization. In one survey, 57% of the respondents said that communicating with informal contacts is “the only way to find out what’s really happening” in their organizations.⁵⁵ A decade of research shows engineers and scientists are five times more likely to turn to a person for information than to impersonal sources such as databases or files.⁵⁶

Writing in *Harvard Business Review*, David Krackhardt and Jeffrey Hanson capture the difference between formal and informal networks: “If the formal organization is the skeleton of a company, the informal [organization] is the central nervous system.”⁵⁷ Like the human nervous system, informal networks are faster and often more dependable than formal channels.⁵⁸ They also provide a shortcut for (and sometimes a way around) the slower and more cumbersome formal channels, making innovation easier.⁵⁹ This fact helps explain why organizational decision-makers tend to base their decisions on verbal information from trusted associates.⁶⁰ Smart communicators do not just rely on informal contacts with peers for information, but rather take advantage of sources throughout the organization. One study revealed that general managers spent a great deal of time with people who were not direct subordinates, superiors, or peers—people with whom, according to the official chain of command, they had no need to deal. Although many of these people—administrative assistants, lower-level subordinates, and supervisors with little power—seemed relatively unimportant to outsiders, successful managers all seemed to cultivate such contacts.⁶¹

Enlightened organizations do everything possible to encourage constructive, informal interactions. Upon purchasing an old bank building to use as an office, England marketing agency Team Eleven hired an office design agency to design a floor plan that inspires creative ideas. Dubbed “The Bank of Brilliant Ideas,” Team Eleven’s office space uses centrally-located soft furniture, as well as a “freak show” themed meeting room to encourage workers to mingle and swap ideas.⁶²

Informal networks do not just operate within organizations. Friends, neighbors, and community members increase their effectiveness by sharing information with one another. In some cities, chambers of commerce host networking events to encourage ties among community businesses. Even without these organized contacts, most people are surprised to realize just how many people they know who can offer useful information.

Personal Networking

While all of us have personal contacts, **networking**, as the term is typically used, has a strategic dimension that goes beyond being sociable. It is the process of deliberately meeting people and maintaining contacts to give and receive career information, advice, and leads.

CAREER tip

Your Elevator Speech

Often the chance to present yourself and your ideas last less than a minute. You meet a prospective customer at a party. You run into your boss on the street. You are introduced to a potential employer in a hallway. Whether networking opportunities like these turn out well may depend on your foresight and preparation.

When the opportunity arises, you can make a good impression by delivering what is called an “elevator speech” or “elevator pitch.” (This type of communication gets its name because it should be brief enough to deliver in the length of an elevator ride.) Elevator speeches can accomplish a variety of goals. Besides serving as introductions, they can be a tool for seeking help, establishing a relationship, gaining visibility, marketing yourself or your organization, getting feedback, expanding your personal network, and doing an end-run around someone who is blocking your progress. A written version of your elevator pitch may also be included in your professional online profiles, such as LinkedIn.

Your speech should contain four parts and take 20 to 30 seconds to deliver.

1. State your name and your current job title or position.
“Hi. I’m Mayra Alaniz. It’s nice to meet you! I’m a senior, graduating in December.”

2. Give a brief summary of your background, highlighting strengths or experiences.
“I’m completing my computer science major this semester with a 3.8 GPA, and I recently developed additional skills by attending a coding boot camp in Austin, Texas.”
3. Depending on your audience, make your “pitch” by sharing what you can do for others *or* asking for their help.
“If you or someone you know needs help with coding or web development, I can help,” *or* “If you know of any openings in computer science, I’d like to hear about them.”
4. Include a call to action, by sharing how the person can get in touch with you or how you plan to contact this person.
“Here’s my card with my e-mail address and a link to my career portfolio. I’d like to hear from you.”

While modesty is a virtue, the best elevator pitch is one that is delivered with confidence. Chapter 4 contains tips for using verbal and nonverbal communication to demonstrate self-assurance. Improve your skill at presenting yourself briefly and effectively by planning and delivering an elevator speech to your classmates.

Source: Indeed Career Guide. (2020, July 7). How to give an elevator pitch (with examples). Retrieved from <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/how-to-give-an-elevator-pitch-examples>

For many, the concept of networking is intangible. In fact, one of the authors of your textbook commonly receives questions about how students can build a network while they are still in college. The answer is not as daunting as one might think. Think about networking as building an impression and name recognition, rather than finding ways to share your resume. Volunteering with on- and off-campus organizations, interning at an organization, helping your peers with a homework problem, attending career fairs, and actively engaging during class discussions are all ways to build an impression that may benefit you in the future. Attending face-to-face mixer events, being actively engaged on business sites like LinkedIn, and joining professional associations or service organizations like Rotary International are ways to expand your professional network while engaging in meaningful activities that benefit the community.

People with highly developed personal networks tend to be more successful in their careers.⁶³ Over their lifetimes, they earn more raises, are promoted more often, and are generally more satisfied with their jobs. With better networks, people have greater access to career sponsorship, resources, and information. Membership of just one network, however, probably will not accomplish these goals. Instead, the key is to have a wide and diverse network that incorporates all kinds of people. As you explore and expand your network, keep the following tips in mind.⁶⁴

Using LinkedIn Effectively

The social networking site LinkedIn (<http://www.linkedin.com>) has been called “Facebook for professionals.” More than 467 million members around the world use this service to advance their careers. Your profile is often your first impression with employers and recruiters. When used appropriately, LinkedIn can help you manage your professional identity, expand your network of contacts, and enhance career opportunities. The following guidelines can help you use LinkedIn effectively.

Improve Your Profile

- Upload a professional photo to your profile to increase your chances of being found and receiving messages. If you don’t have a professional headshot, dress nicely and ask a friend to take your photo in a well-lit location.
- Write a concise summary that showcases your personality and tells a story of your experience, interests, and goals.
- Include your education to establish credibility and help you connect with alumni and friends.
- Input your work experience, past jobs, and internships. Include your job title, company name, and time period. If you are in transition or unemployed, use a title that describes what you wish to pursue.
- Maintain a list of at least five relevant skills in order of your strengths.
- Add your location.

Manage Your Professional Identity

- Start connecting with past and current colleagues, fellow students, and your professors. Use the search function to locate and connect with professionals who are working in jobs similar to those you hope to seek.

- Use LinkedIn for professional messages only. Do not link your page to your Facebook or Twitter identity if you use those tools to share nonprofessional information.
- Use LinkedIn’s multimedia capabilities to showcase your work (and yourself).
- Request recommendations from professors, colleagues, supervisors, and clients who can comment on your work, attitude, skills, achievements, professionalism, and integrity.
- Proofread everything you post.
- Use status updates to share industry-relevant content to show that you are in-the-know.

Learn from Others

- Join, contribute to and use groups. Begin by searching for groups in your career field. Focus on trends, glean advice, and garner news and tips particular to your field. Connect with national and international groups as well as local groups to explore employment, training, and networking opportunities virtually and in person. When you understand the culture of different groups, contribute your knowledge, links to pertinent articles, upcoming events, or book reviews.
- Use the Answers Forum to discover which types of questions others are asking and to learn from the answers. Browse by topic and subtopic (e.g., résumé writing, start-ups and small business, nonprofit, work-life balance, mentoring, finance) or by language.

Source: Fisher, C. (2016, August 3). 5 steps to improve your LinkedIn profile in minutes. Retrieved from <https://blog.linkedin.com>; LinkedIn (n.d.) About LinkedIn. Retrieved from <https://press.linkedin.com/about-linkedin>; Serdula, D. (n.d.). LinkedIn makeover: Professional secrets to a powerful LinkedIn profile. Retrieved from <http://www.linkedin-makeover.com/blog>; Stokes, C. (2019, June). Developing a first-rate LinkedIn profile. *Strategies & Tactics*. Retrieved from <https://apps.prsa.org/StrategiesTactics/Issues/view/2/6>

View Everyone as a Networking Prospect Consider the members of all the networks to which you already belong: family members, friends, neighbors, social acquaintances, fellow workers, members of your religious community, professionals (e.g., doctors, dentists, accountants, attorneys), and school contacts (e.g., faculty, fellow students, counselors). Beyond the people you already know, almost everyone you meet has the potential to be a source of useful information. The passenger seated next to you on a plane might be acquainted with people who can help you. The neighbor who chats

A Professional Perspective

Albert Ramon

Chief Meteorologist

WGN America's NewsNation

Chicago, IL



Credit: Sandy Pudar

We have all heard the saying, “it’s all about who you know” when it comes to searching for an internship or first job. There is definitely truth to this, but how does someone with zero work experience connect with hiring managers and network with professionals at companies they want to one day work for? The age of social media has changed the meaning of “who you know.” Some of my past hires have reached out to me via LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook.

I encourage interns with my organization to come up with a list of companies they would want to work for, then research the supervisor for the department they are most interested in. (This information can often be found on the company’s website and/or on LinkedIn.) The company does not have to have a current opening, nor does the prospective employee need to be ready to be hired. A professional message expressing an interest in the career field and the company can make a positive impression for the future. Interested individuals may also explain what they are doing right now to obtain their professional goals or even ask for feedback on their resumes or advice on the job search process. Some managers may not reply, but I guarantee some will respond enthusiastically because they remember what it was like to search for that first job post-degree. Sometimes reaching out even yields a mentor/mentee relationship from which both parties benefit over many years.

Lastly, I always share one key piece of advice with interns and job hunters: When you do get that internship or first job, work hard. People notice and appreciate a solid work ethic, an enthusiasm to learn, and a passion for the craft.

with you at a block party might have the knowledge or skill to help you solve a problem. Within an organization, the best informants are often people you might overlook. Administrative assistants are exposed to most of the information addressed to their managers, and they usually serve as **gatekeepers** who can give or deny access to them. Custodial and maintenance people travel around the building and, in their rounds, see and hear many interesting things.

Be Sensitive to Personal and Cultural Factors While everyone you meet is a potential networking prospect, it is important to think of each person as an individual. Some may welcome the chance to share information, whereas others may object to more

than occasional contacts. It is also important to recognize that culture plays a role in networking practices.

Treat Your Contacts with Gratitude and Respect Do not make the mistake of equating networking with being dishonest or exploitive. As long as you express a genuine desire for information openly, there is nothing to be ashamed of. Furthermore, seeking information does not mean you have to stop enjoying others' company for social reasons. When others do give you information, be sure to express your appreciation. At the very least, a sincere "thank you" is in order. Even better, let your networking contacts know exactly *how* the information they gave you was helpful.

Build Genuine Relationships After meeting someone, jot down a few notes about the interaction in your phone contacts or on the back of their business card. Consider listing when and where you met them along with any details that might be worth mentioning in a future interaction, such as where they went to school or if they were recently married. Send an e-mail to them within 1-2 days to reinforce the connection. Tell them how great it was to meet them, remind them of where you met, thank them for their time and let them know you would like to remain connected. Continue your relationship by sending an "I hope you're well" e-mail around the holidays.

Help Others Do not just be an information-seeker. Whenever possible, make an effort to put people who will benefit from a contact in touch with one another: "You're looking for a new bookkeeper? I know someone who might be right for you!" Volunteering for opportunities to serve on committees, or plan events or socials are also great ways to be a resource for others. The idea is to help people without seeking anything in return. Besides being the right thing to do, helping others will earn you a reputation for generosity that can serve you well.⁶⁵

Get Referrals to Secondary Sources The benefits of personal networks do not stop with your personal acquaintances. Each person you know has his or her own connections, some of whom could be useful to you. Researchers have demonstrated the "small world" phenomenon: A study on the "six degrees of separation" hypothesis involving more than 45,000 messages and more than 150 countries has demonstrated that the average number of links separating any two people in the world is indeed a half-dozen.⁶⁶ You can apply this principle to your own information by only seeking people removed from your personal network by one degree: If you ask 10 people for referrals and each of them knows 10 others who might be able to help, you have the potential to obtain support from 100 information-givers.

Secondary sources are so valuable that some online networking group sites exist to help users find the contacts they need. Having a network of people who can refer you to others can be especially helpful in today's workforce, where people often stay in their jobs for only a year or two.

If you are trying to connect to someone you have never met, let them know what you have in common and why you are reaching out. If you are requesting secondary connections on LinkedIn, for example, make an impression by liking or commenting on their posts, sending kudos messages recognizing their accomplishments, and actively posting content on your own page that shows your interests and expertise.

Seek a Mentor A mentor is a person who acts as a guide, trainer, coach, and counselor; who teaches you the informal rules of an organization or a field; and who

imparts the types of wisdom that come from firsthand experience. Many organizations have formal programs that match new employees with experienced ones. Other mentor-protégé relationships develop informally and unofficially. Sixty-four percent of recent graduates of U.S. colleges and universities say that a professor was their college mentor.⁶⁷ However you find one, a mentor can be invaluable. This is especially true for women, minorities, and people trying to break into nontraditional fields where “good old boy” networks can be hard to penetrate.⁶⁸

A successful mentoring relationship is not a one-time affair. Instead, it passes through several stages.⁶⁹ In the initial phase, the parties get to know each other and gain confidence in their mutual commitment to the relationship. After the initial stage, a period of cultivation occurs in which the mentor guides the protégé through a series of conversations and tasks with the goal of building knowledge, confidence, and skill. By the third phase of the relationship, the protégé can function mostly on their own, with occasional guidance from the mentor. Finally, the fourth stage involves either separation or a redefinition of the relationship as peers. Not all mentoring relationships are quite so involved or long-lasting as this description suggests. Nevertheless, whether they are relatively brief or ongoing, they can provide great value and satisfaction for both mentor and protégé.

Whatever the relationship, some rules guide mentoring relationships.⁷⁰ Look for someone with a position in a field that interests you. Do not be bashful about aiming high: You may be surprised by successful people’s willingness to give back by helping aspiring newcomers. Approach your mentor professionally, showing that you are serious about growing in your career. See The Career Research Interview section for guidelines on how to handle this process.

Once you have found a mentor, show respect for their time by keeping most of your contact to regularly scheduled times. Be sure to follow up on your mentor’s suggestions about reading, checking websites, and attending activities.

Realize that a mentoring relationship should be primarily professional. If you have serious personal problems, turn to a counselor. A mentor may be able to help you with some personal problems as they affect your professional life, but a mentor should not become an emotional crutch. Also, remember that any personal insights that mentors and protégés share should be kept confidential. Finally, do not expect a mentor to grant you special favors, intervene on your behalf with your boss, or boost your chances for promotion. The advice you receive should be reward enough.

Network throughout Your Career Networking is not just for job-seekers. Indeed, it can be just as important once you start climbing the career ladder. In an era when changing jobs and even changing careers is common, expanding your options is always a smart move.

• Ethical Dimensions of Communication

Some cynics have noted that the trouble with business ethics is that the phrase is an oxymoron. Despite this attitude, there is a growing recognition that behaving ethically is an essential part of being an effective, promotable employee. Scandalous business practices have led to the downfall of major corporations like Enron and WorldCom and have cost others millions of dollars. As a result of these ethical lapses, sensitivity to the need to communicate in a principled way has grown, and several hundred corporations and organizations now include an ethics officer in their organizational chart who reports

Guanxi: Networking Chinese-Style

Any savvy business person in China knows the value of *guanxi* (pronounced “gwan-shee”)—the web of social relationships that help get a job done through the granting of favors. It takes *guanxi* to get a good job, find a good apartment, overcome bureaucratic hurdles, and line up suppliers and distributors. In other words, it is required to accomplish almost any transaction. As one observer put it, “In the West, relationships grow out of deals. In China, deals grow out of relationships.”⁷¹

It may be tempting to think of *guanxi* as the Chinese equivalent of Western networking, but the concept has far more cultural and practical significance. The unwritten code of *guanxi* is rooted in the Chinese national character, reflecting the Confucian emphasis on loyalty, obligation, order, and social harmony.

Guanxi operates on three levels.⁷² The strongest bond is with immediate family. In relationships linked by blood and marriage, higher-status members are obligated to perform favors for their lower-status relatives. In return, lower-status family members are obliged to demonstrate fierce loyalty. To a lesser extent, *guanxi* connects extended family members, friends, neighbors, classmates, and people with other strong commonali-

ties. Unlike the closest form of *guanxi*, obligations in these relationships are usually reciprocal; receiving help creates an obligation to return the favor. The least powerful level of *guanxi* is between people who know one another but have no strong relational history. At this level, *guanxi* is similar to networking connections in the West. These relationships lack the history, trust, and power of stronger bonds.

Developing *guanxi* can be challenging for foreigners who want to do business in China, but it is not impossible. One strategy is to rely on intermediaries to make initial connections. This practice is widespread among native Chinese, so a foreigner will not stand out for using it. Once introduced, be prepared to socialize. Even more so than in the West, important business is often conducted outside of the workplace. When socializing, look for the chance to emphasize commonalities—business experiences, education, and mutual acquaintances are a few examples. After enough trust has developed to seek favors, be indirect. As you will read in the next chapter, Asian cultures consider oblique, “high-context” communication as a sign of sensitivity and skill. Finally, remember that *guanxi* is reciprocal. Accepting help from others obliges you to assist them in the future.

directly to the chairperson.⁷³ Employees share this concern for ethics. One survey revealed that 75% of Millennials would take a pay cut to work for an organization with a better reputation for corporate social responsibility (CSR) and ethics.⁷⁴

Behaving ethically is not always easy. On a personal level, you are likely to face conflicts between what you believe is right and what is practical. For instance, you might have to deal with a customer or colleague whose business or approval you want, but who is behaving badly—perhaps making sexist or racist remarks. After a trip together, coworkers may turn in inflated expenses and expect you to do the same. Your team might be under pressure to finish a project when you recognize shortcuts are creating potential safety issues. Besides personal challenges, sooner or later you are likely to experience situations like these where others in your organization behave in ethically questionable ways. Do you speak up when a colleague makes promises to clients that you know the company cannot keep? Should you challenge your boss when he or she treats other employees unfairly or illegally?

It has been said that ethics centers on a sense of responsibility for someone other than yourself.⁷⁵ A blanket obligation to communicate ethically can be too vague to be helpful in specific situations. Many industries have developed codes of ethics to serve as a guide for employees in day-to-day decision-making. However, in the absence of such a code, five philosophical principles offer guidelines that can help you decide how to behave in a principled manner.⁷⁶

There is no single right approach to ethics; these competing ethical perspectives often lead to conflicting actions. For example, what one group perceives as “virtuous” might not

ETHICAL challenge

Ethical Communication Choices

Descriptions for seven guidelines for judging ethical communication are provided in the text:

- Utilitarian approach
- Rights approach
- Fairness or justice approach
- Common-good approach
- Virtue approach
- Professional ethic
- Publicity test

Outline the range of ways you could handle each of the following situations. Use two or more of the ethical guidelines to compare courses of action, and then decide on a course of action you believe to be both principled and realistic. Justify your decision.

1. A coworker tells you he is about to buy an expensive car that will strain his budget to the maximum. You recently learned he is slated to be laid off at the end of the month but were told to keep this information in strictest confidence. What do you do?
2. Your friend is applying for a job and has given you as a reference. A questionnaire sent by the

employer asks if there is any reason you cannot recommend the applicant. You know that your friend is struggling with an alcohol problem, which led to dismissal from a previous job. Do you mention this problem on the reference form? If so, how?

3. Your manager calls you into her office and praises you for doing excellent work on a recent project. She suggests that this level of performance is likely to earn you a promotion and a raise. In truth, a colleague made a far greater contribution to the project. How do you respond to your manager's praise?
4. As part of your job, you learn that some damaged equipment can be repaired for \$15,000. Your supervisor tells you to claim the damage is much greater so the insurance company will pay closer to \$100,000. What do you do?
5. While you are entertaining a customer, he makes a blatantly offensive joke. How do you respond?

Source: Adapted from Richardson, J. E. (Ed.) (2003). *Business ethics* 03/04 (15th ed.). Guilford, CT: McGraw Hill/Dushkin; Soeken, D. (2008). On witnessing a fraud. In J. E. Richardson (Ed.), *Business ethics* 07/08 (19th ed.). Dubuque, IA: McGraw Hill/Dushkin.

bring good to the greatest number; likewise, what one group considers moral might be considered immoral by another group. When faced with a decision about how to communicate ethically, it is helpful to ponder the situation from several viewpoints before proceeding.

1. *Utilitarian approach (Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill)*: Does this action provide the greatest good for the greatest number?
2. *Rights approach (Immanuel Kant)*: Does this action respect the moral rights (truth, privacy, noninjury, promises) of everyone?
3. *Fairness or justice approach (Aristotle, John Rawls)*: Is this action fair and free of discrimination or favoritism?
4. *Common-good approach (Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, John Rawls)*: Does the action further the common or community good?
5. *Virtue approach*: Does this action promote the development of moral virtue (character) in me and my community?

Two additional guidelines can help you evaluate whether you are behaving ethically:

1. *Professional ethic*: How would an impartial jury of your professional peers judge this action?
2. *Publicity test*: Would you be comfortable having the public learn about your behavior in the broadcast or print media?⁷⁷

MASTER the chapter

review points

- Communication is important for career success.
- Communication is unavoidable, strategic, and irreversible. It is a process that involves instrumental and relational communication and identity management. It is not a panacea that will solve all problems.
- The communication model demonstrates how senders and receivers encode and decode messages in the process of developing a shared meaning. To improve communication, consider the characteristics of various channels, the desired tone of the message, the organization's culture, and the use of multiple channels.
- Noise can interfere with exchange of a message. This type of distraction can be environmental, physiological, or psychological in nature and can be present in the sender, receiver, message, or channel. Good communicators reduce noise as much as possible.
- Formal communication networks (organizational charts) represent management's view of organizational relationships: upward, downward, and horizontal/lateral.
- Informal networks, based on proximity, shared interests, or friendships, serve to confirm, expand, expedite, contradict, or circumvent formal communication.
- Effective communicators cultivate and use personal networking for career success.
- Professional success necessitates an understanding of and ability to apply various ethical frameworks (utilitarian, rights, fairness/justice, common good, virtue, professional ethic, publicity test) to consistently make principled decisions around ethical challenges.

key terms

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|----|----------------------------|----|
| asynchronous communication | 11 | instrumental communication | 7 |
| channel | 9 | message | 9 |
| communication networks | 13 | networking | 19 |
| decoding | 9 | noise | 10 |
| downward communication | 13 | organizational charts | 13 |
| encoding | 9 | receiver | 9 |
| feedback | 9 | relational communication | 7 |
| formal communication networks | 13 | sender | 9 |
| gatekeeper | 22 | synchronous communication | 11 |
| horizontal (lateral) communication | 17 | upward communication | 15 |
| identity management | 7 | voice of employee (VoE) | 15 |
| informal communication networks | 18 | | |

activities

1. Invitation to Insight

Keep a log of your work-related (or school-related) communication over a three-day period. Include who you have communicated with (superior, subordinate, peer, external) and your level of satisfaction

with the communication. Based on your findings, analyze the following:

- a. How much time you spend communicating.
- b. With whom you communicate. (Identify each example as downward, upward, or horizontal flow of communication.)

- c. Which channels of communication you tend to use most frequently.
- d. Your level of satisfaction.
- e. Areas where improving your communication skills would be desirable.

2. Invitation to Insight

Think about a situation you have experienced in which communication went wrong. Diagnose the problem by finding the parts of the communication process that contributed to the trouble. Suggest a remedy for each problem you identify.

- a. Sender: Did the wrong person send the message?
- b. Encoding: Did the sender use words or nonverbal cues that were confusing, inappropriate, or irrelevant?
- c. Message: Was the message too short or too long? Were there too many messages? Was the timing wrong?
- d. Channel: Was the most appropriate channel chosen?
- e. Receiver: Was there no receiver at all? Was the message poorly formulated for the person(s) at whom it was aimed? Was it received by the wrong person?
- f. Decoding: Did the receiver read in meanings that were not intended?
- g. Feedback: How did the feedback affect the sender? Did the feedback help or hinder shared understanding?
- h. Noise: In which ways did environmental, physiological, or psychological noise distort the message? Provide specific examples.

3. Invitation to Insight

Learn about upward communication in the workplace by asking several employees which types of information they share with their supervisors. Which types of information do they avoid sharing with their supervisors? How does the organization encourage or discourage accurate upward communication?

4. Skill Builder

Develop your skill at cultivating informal communication networks by following these instructions:

- a. Choose one of the following information goals, or identify a school-related or work-related goal of your own.

- 1. Decide which instructors and/or courses in an academic department of your institution are worth seeking out and which you might want to avoid.
- 2. Identify the qualities that would help you get the job of your dreams.
- 3. Locate an organization where you could gain job experience as a volunteer or intern.
- b. Identify the people who can help you acquire the information you are seeking. Locate people from a variety of positions within the organization so you will gain a complete perspective. For each person, decide which channel you could use to begin to develop your network.

5. Skill Builder

With your group members, formulate a hypothetical context for each of the following messages. Then use the information from the section on Communication Channels to decide which channel would be best for each message. Use the criteria from Table 1-2 to explain your choice.

- a. Informing your supervisor about difficulties with a coworker.
- b. Asking for a few days of leave from work to attend a friend's wedding.
- c. Training a new employee to operate a complicated computer program.
- d. Notifying the manager of a local business that you have not received the refund you were promised.
- e. Reminding your busy boss about a long-overdue reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses.
- f. Apologizing to a customer for a mistake your company made.
- g. Getting your boss's reaction to the idea of giving you more responsibility.

6. Invitation to Insight

Ask a few of your acquaintances to describe an ethical dilemma they have encountered in the workplace or in their personal lives. How did they handle the situation? Which factors influenced them?

With a group of classmates, determine which ethical perspectives your informants seemed to rely on as they decided how to act. Apply various ethical perspectives to the same situations. Would you have followed the same course of action your informants did? Why or why not?

references

1. Cross, R., Rebele, R., & Grant, A. (2016, January-February). Collaborative overload. *Harvard Business Review*, 74-79. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2016/01/collaborative-overload>
2. Morreale, S. P., & Pearson, J. C. (2008). Why communication education is important: The centrality of the discipline in the 21st century. *Communication Education*, 57, 224-240.
3. Darling, A. L., & Dannels, D. P. (2003). Practicing engineers talk about the importance of talk: A report on the role of oral communication in the workplace. *Communication Education*, 52, 1-16.
4. Gray, E. F. (2010). Specific oral communication skills desired in new accountancy graduates. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 73, 40-67.
5. Kashyap, V. (2019, May 20). Effective communication in the workplace: How and why? *HR Technologist*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/employee-engagement/effective-communication-in-the-workplace-how-and-why/>
6. Towers Watson Communication (2013, December 5). *2013-2014 change and communication ROI study*. Retrieved from <https://pdpsolutions.com/research/test-to-add-to-research>
7. Harper's index. (1994, December). *Harper's Magazine*, 13.
8. Mauksch, L. B., Dugdale, D. C., Dodson, S., & Epstein, R. (2008). Relationship, communication, and efficiency in the medical encounter. *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 168, 1387-1395; Holmes, F. (2007). If you listen, the patient will tell you the diagnosis. *International Journal of Listening*, 21, 156-161.
9. Joint Commission. (2019, February 5). *Most commonly reviewed sentinel event types*. Retrieved from <https://www.jointcommission.org/resources/patient-safety-topics/sentinel-event/sentinel-event-data—event-type-by-year/>
10. Levinson, W., Roter, D., & Mullooly, J. P. (1997). Physician-patient communication: The relationship with malpractice claims among primary care physicians and surgeons. *Journal of American Medical Association*, 277, 553-559. See also Rodriguez, H. P., Rodday, A. C., Marshall, R. E., Nelson, K. L., Rogers, W. H., & Safran, D. G. (2008). Relation of patients' experiences with individual physicians to malpractice risk. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*, 20, 5-12.
11. Calandra, B. (2002, September 16). Toward a silver-tongued scientist. *The Scientist*, 16, 42.
12. National Association of Colleges and Employers (2020). *Job outlook 2020*. Retrieved from <https://www.naceweb.org/about-us/press/2020/the-top-attributes-employers-want-to-see-on-resumes/>.
13. Calandra, B. (2002, September 16). Toward a silver-tongued scientist. *The Scientist*, 16, 42.
14. National Association of Colleges and Employers (2018). *Job outlook 2018*. Retrieved from <https://www.naceweb.org/job-market/trends-and-predictions/job-outlook-2018-college-hiring-to-increase-by-4-percent/>
15. Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J. H., & Jackson, D. D. (1967). *Pragmatics of human communication*. New York: Norton.
16. Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J. H., & Jackson, D. D. (1967). *Pragmatics of human communication*. New York: Norton.
17. Byron, K. (2008). Carrying too heavy a load? The communication and miscommunication of emotion by email. *Academy of Management Review*, 33, 309-327.
18. Shannon, C. E., & Weaver, W. (1949). *The mathematical theory of communication*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press; Adler, R. B., Rosenfeld, L. B., & Proctor, R. F. (2012). *Interplay: The process of interpersonal communication*. New York: Oxford University Press.
19. Powers, W. G., & Witt, P. L. (2008). Expanding the theoretical framework of communication fidelity. *Communication Quarterly*, 56, 247-267.
20. Flaherty, L. M., Pearce, K. J., & Rubin, R. B. (1998). Internet and face-to-face communication: Not functional alternatives. *Communication Quarterly*, 46, 250-268; Sheer, V. C., & Chen, L. (2004). Improving media richness theory: A study of interaction goals, message valence, and task complexity in manager-subordinate communication. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 18, 76-93; and Turner, J. W., & Reinsch, N. L. (2007). The business communicator as presence allocator: Multicommunicating, equivocality, and status at work. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44, 36-58.
21. Daft, R. L. (2008). *The leadership experience* (4th ed.). Mason, OH: Thomson South-Western.
22. Byron, K. (2008). Carrying too heavy a load? The communication and miscommunication of emotion by email. *Academy of Management Review*, 33, 309-327.

23. Bryant, A. (2000, October 23). Fare rage. *Newsweek*, 46.
24. Baxter, L. A. (1993). Talking things through and putting it in writing: Two codes of communication in an academic institution. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 21, 313–323.
25. Turner, J. W., Grube, J., Tinsley, C., Lee, C., & O’Pell, C. (2006). Exploring the dominant media: How does media use reflect organizational norms and affect performance? *Journal of Business Communication*, 43, 220–250.
26. Stephens, K. K., Sørnes, J. O., Rice, R. E., Browning, L. D., & Sætre, A. S. (2008). Discrete, sequential, and follow-up use of information and communication technology by experienced ICT users. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 22, 197–231.
27. Leonardi, P. M., Treem, J. W., & Jackson, M. H. (2010). The connectivity paradox: Using technology to both decrease and increase perceptions of distance in distributed work arrangements. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 38, 85–105.
28. Renischn, L., & Turner, J. W. (2006, July). Ari, r u there? Reorienting business communication for a technological era. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 20, 339–356.
29. Lengel, R. J., & Daft, R. L. (1998). The selection of communication media as an executive skill. *Academy of Management Executive*, 2, 225–232.
30. Monge, P. R., & Contractor, N. S. (2003). *Theories of communication networks*. New York: Oxford University Press.
31. Boundless (2016, May 26). Downward Communication. *Boundless Management*. Retrieved from <https://www.boundless.com/management/textbooks/boundless-management-textbook/communication-11/management-and-communication-83/downward-communication-397-847/>
32. Anderson, J. & Level, D. (1980). The impact of certain types of downward communication on job performance. *Journal of Business Communication*, 17(4), 51–59.
33. Managers’ shoptalk. (1985, February). *Working Woman*, p. 22.
34. Katz, D., & Kahn, R. (1978). *The social psychology of organization*, 2nd ed. New York: Wiley.
35. Peters, T. J., & Waterman, R. H., Jr. (1982). *In search of excellence: Lessons from America’s best-run companies*. New York: Harper & Row.
36. Bhat, A. (n.d.). *Voice of employee: Definition, survey questions, and importance*. Retrieved from <https://www.questionpro.com/blog/voice-of-employee/>
37. Venkataramani, V., Zhou, L., Wang, M., Liao, H., & Shi, J. (2016). Social networks and employee voice: The influence of team members’ and team leaders’ social network positions on employee voice. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 132, 37–48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2015.12.001>
38. See, for example, Kassing, J. W. (2000). Investigating the relationship between superior-subordinate relationship quality and employee dissent. *Communication Research Reports*, 17, 58–70.
39. Whitten, M. (2019, July 25). The importance of listening to employees. *Industry Week*. Retrieved from <https://www.industryweek.com/leadership/article/22027966/the-importance-of-listening-to-employees>
40. Business News Daily Editor (2020, February 28). If you listen up, your employees will step up. *Business News Daily*. Retrieved from <https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/1934-leadership-listening-employee-input-initiative.html>
41. Katz, D., & Kahn, R. (1978). *The social psychology of organizations* (2nd ed.). New York: Wiley.
42. Kassing, J. W. (2000). Investigating the relationship between superior-subordinate relationship quality and employee dissent. *Communication Research Reports*, 17, 58–70.
43. Bennis, W. G. (1993). *An invented life: Reflections on leadership and change*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
44. Dansereau, F., & Markham, S. E. (1987). Superior-subordinate communication: Multiple levels of analysis. In F. M. Jablin, L. L. Putnam, K. H. Roberts, & L. W. Porter (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational communication*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
45. Bryant, A. (2011, June 27). A sitting duck can’t catch a moving turkey. *New York Times*.
46. Ellis, M. (2012, February 23). Flush with cash: British Airways saves £600,000 on fuel by descaling its toilet pipes. *Mirror*. Retrieved from <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/flush-with-cash-british-airways-saves-740383>
47. Keil, M., Tiwana, M., Sainsbury, R., & Sneha, S. (2010). Toward a theory of whistleblowing intentions: A benefit-to-cost differential perspective. *Decision Sciences*, 41, 787–812.
48. Goldhaber, G. (1993). *Organizational communication* (6th ed.). Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown.
49. Mieszkowski, K. (1998, December). Change-Barbara Waugh. *Fast Company*, 20, 146–154.
50. Goldhaber, G. (1993). *Organizational communication* (6th ed.). Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown.
51. Ferguson, T. W. (1997, May 19). Who’s mentoring whom? *Forbes*, 252.
52. Doloff, P. G. (1999, February). Beyond the org chart. *Across the Board*, 36, 43–47.
53. Gregory, M. (2009). Inside the locker room: Male homosociability in the advertising industry. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 16, 323–347.

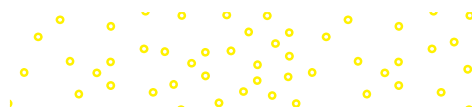
54. Bell, E. L. J. E., & Nkomo, S. M. (2001). *Our separate ways: Black and white women and the struggle for professional identity*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press; Baker, M., & French, E. (2018). Female underrepresentation in project-based organizations exposes organizational isomorphism. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, 37(8), 799–812. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-03-2017-0061>
55. Did you hear it through the grapevine? (1994, October). *Training & Development*, p. 20; Motlhamme, K. F. (2018). *Black female managers' perceptions' of integration into informal social networks at work*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/10539/27216>
56. Cross, R., & Parker, A. (2004). *The hidden power of social networks: Understanding how work really gets done in organizations*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
57. Krackhardt, D., & Hanson, J. R. (1993, July). Informal networks: The company behind the chart. *Harvard Business Review*, 71, 104–111.
58. Kanter, R. M. (1989, November/December). The new managerial work. *Harvard Business Review*, 67, 85–92.
59. Bush, J. B., Jr., & Frohman, A. L. (1991). Communication in a 'network' organization. *Organizational Dynamics*, 20, 23–36.
60. Eisenberg, E. M., & Goodall, H. E., Jr. (1993). *Organizational communication: Balancing creativity and constraint*. New York: St. Martin's.
61. Murray, T. J. (1987, August). How to stay lean and mean. *Business Month*, pp. 29–32.
62. Interaction (n.d.). *Team Eleven*. Retrieved from <https://www.interaction.uk.com/case-studies/team-eleven/>
63. Seibert, S. E., Kraimer, M. L., & Liden, R. C. (2001). A social capital theory of career success. *Academy of Management Journal*, 44, 219–237.
64. R. E. Kelley interviewed by Webber, A. M. (2000). Are you a star at work? In *Fast Company career guide*. New York: Fast Company Media Group.
65. Feely, T. H. (2000). Testing a communication network model of employee turnover based on centrality. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 28, 262–277; Network inside your organization. (2000). In *Fast Company career guide* (p. 13). New York: Fast Company Media Group.
66. Dodds, P. S., Muhamad, R., & Watts, D. J. (2003). An experimental study of search in global social networks. *Science*, 301, 827–829.
67. Marken, S., & Auter, Z. (2018, October 30). Recent college grads say professors most frequent mentors. *Gallup*. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/244019/recent-college-grads-say-professors-frequent-mentors.aspx>
68. Lyness, K. S., & Thompson, D. E. (2000). Climbing the corporate ladder: Do female and male executives follow the same route? *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85, 86–101; Gregory, M. (2009). Inside the locker room: Male homosociability in the advertising industry. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 16, 323–347.
69. Kram, K. E. (1983). Phases of the mentoring relationship. *Academy of Management Journal*, 12, 608–625.
70. Gardenswartz, L., & Rowe, A. (1997, January). Starting a mentoring program? *Managing Diversity*, 6, 1–2; Advancing Women. (2006). *Mentoring process*. Retrieved from http://www.advancingwomen.com/wk_mentprocess.html
71. Vanhoner, W. R. (2004, September). Guanxi networks in China. *China Business Review*, 31, 48–53.
72. Zhang, Y., & Zhang, Z. (2006). Guanxi and organizational dynamics in China: A link between individual and organizational levels. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 67, 375–392.
73. Driscoll, D. M., et al. (1997, June). Who says ethics are nice? *Across the Board*, 34, 47–50.
74. Cone Communications (2016, November 2). *2016 Cone Communications millennial employee engagement study*. Retrieved from https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56b4a7472b8dde3df5b7013f/t/5819e8b303596e3016ca0d9c/1478092981243/2016+Cone+Communications+Millennial+Employee+Engagement+Study_Press+Release+and+Fact+Sheet.pdf
75. Roberts, C. R. (2005, May 16). He argues for ethics. *Tacoma News Tribune*. Retrieved from <http://elibrary.bigchalk.com>
76. Velasquez, M., Ande, C., Shanks, S. J. T., & Meyer, M. J. (2012). Thinking ethically: A framework for moral decision making. In J. E. Richardson (Ed.), *Business ethics 11/12*. New York: McGraw Hill.
77. O'Connor, P. J., & Godar, S. H. (1999). How not to make ethical decisions: Guidelines from management textbooks. *Teaching Business Ethics*, 3, 69–86; Tinsley, D. B. (2005). Ethics can be gauged by three rules. In J. E. Richardson (Ed.), *Business ethics 05/06*. Dubuque, IA: McGraw Hill/Dushkin.



cybrain/Shutterstock.com RF

Chapter Two

Communication, Culture, and Work



chapter outline

The Nature of Culture

Communication in a Diverse Society

- Race and Ethnicity
- Social Class
- Generational Differences
- Regional Differences
- Disabilities
- Sex and Gender
- Military Veterans

Cultural Differences in International Business

- Customs and Behavior
- Fundamental Dimensions of Cultural Diversity

Diversity and Ethical Issues

- Legal Protections
- Responding to Ethical Challenges

Communicating across Diversity

- Become Culturally Literate
- Develop Constructive Attitudes
- Adapt Your Behavior

chapter objectives

After reading this chapter you should be able to:

1. Define culture and co-culture.
2. Identify ways in which race or ethnicity, class, generation, region, disability, gender, and military experience can influence business communication.
3. Describe two key intercultural differences in formality, social customs, dress, time, tolerance for conflict, and gender roles.
4. Explain how the hidden dimensions of culture (e.g., context, individualism/collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, long-term and short-term orientations) affect communication in a culturally diverse workforce.
5. Identify basic legal protections for employees and job applicants that make discrimination unlawful.
6. Describe additional factors of ethical communication.
7. Apply the guidelines in the section on Communicating across Diversity to describe six specific ways you and others can communicate more effectively in your workplace.
8. Describe the cultural challenges in a specific organization or career and identify specific approaches to communicate effectively within this culture.

Workplace diversity refers to the variety of differences that constitute the identities of people in an organization. As you will learn in this chapter, diversity encompasses many characteristics—race, ethnic affiliation, social class, generation, nationality, physical ability, gender, military experience, sexual orientation, and more.

Technological innovations, such as computer software and mobile apps, coupled with an increase in international trade and immigration mean that the likelihood of working with people from different

parts of the world is greater today than at any other time in history. According to the Office of the Governor of Texas, more than 1,145 foreign companies and their subsidiaries operate in Houston alone.¹ In 2019, more than 28 million U.S. workers—17.4% of the country's total labor force—were born outside the United States.²

Workplace diversity concerns, however, are not limited to persons working in international business. Even the owners of a mom-and-pop pharmacy or local boutique in Kearney, Nebraska, will find themselves communicating with individuals from a variety of

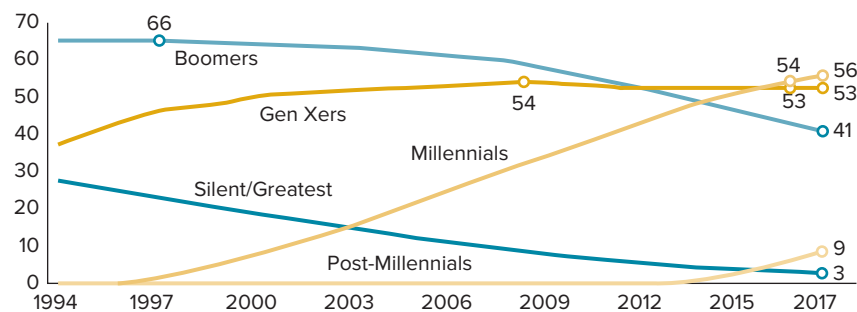
FIGURE 2.1 U.S. Labor Force by Generation, 1994–2017

Note: Millennials became the largest generation in the labor force in 2016.

Source: Pew Research Center, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/04/11/millennials-largest-generation-us-labor-force/>

Millennials became the largest generation in the labor force in 2016

U.S. labor force, in millions



backgrounds on a regular basis. As Figure 2.1 shows, in 2016, Millennials became the largest generational component of the U.S. labor force.³ As of 2017, 56 million Millennials were working or looking for work, and this number is expected to grow, partly due to immigration.⁴

Given these statistics, it is no surprise that intercultural competence has been identified as one of the top skills for the workforce in 2020.⁵ For companies and individuals who can take advantage of the trend toward increasing cultural diversity, the opportunities are great. The quality of life services company, Sodexo, for example, has a policy of ensuring men and women have equal access to growth opportunities in the company. Its goal is to have women make up at least 40% of its senior leadership by 2025. In fact, Sodexo launched its Gender Balance Study in 2018 and found that gender-balanced management teams scored higher on operating margins, employee and client retention, safety, and employee engagement.⁶

Elena Rodriguez, global head of diversity and inclusion at Novartis, says, “Our business needs diverse people working in an inclusive environment in order to spark more innovation, improve our productivity and be sustainable.”⁷ According to Ajay Banga, president and CEO of MasterCard, “Diversity is what drives better insights, better decisions, and better products...It’s what defines a great leadership culture...”⁸ Whether you are working abroad, for or with foreign nationals at home, or with native-born people from different backgrounds, understanding cultural differences is an essential part of being an effective communicator.

• The Nature of Culture

When most people use the word *culture*, they think of people from different national backgrounds. National cultures certainly do exist, and they play an important role in shaping the way people communicate. In addition, differences related to factors such as race/ethnicity, socioeconomic class, gender, and age play a role in communication. Taking all these factors into account, we can define **culture** as a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, and norms that affect the behaviors of a relatively large group of people.⁹

It is important to realize that culture is learned, not innate. A Korean-born infant adopted soon after birth by non-Korean parents and raised in the United States will think and act differently from their cousins who grew up in Seoul. An African American may view the world differently depending on the region in which she was raised or where she chooses to live. For example, if she moves to France for a job opportunity,

she will find that African heritage has a different significance from that in the United States.

Organizations are cultures, too. Every organization has its own way of doing business. Anyone who has worked for more than one restaurant or retail store, attended more than one college or university, belonged to more than one team, or volunteered for multiple worthy causes knows that even when the same job is being performed, the way it is done can be radically different. Theorists use the term **organizational culture** to describe these unique traits. An organization's culture is a relatively stable, shared set of rules that describe how to behave and a set of values that indicate what is important. In everyday language, culture is the insiders' view of "the way things are around here."

Organizational culture can affect you in many ways, large and small. Among other things, your organization's culture can determine where and how long you will work. For many professions or industries, designated work hours may not be the norm. A "workday" may consist of standard 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. work hours or it may be conducted 24/7, such as in the case of firefighters, first responders, or physicians. Organizational culture can shape the emotional environment, including the degree of cooperation or competition, and notions of how much and which kinds of fun are appropriate. Culture will surely influence the way you and others dress and the physical environment in which you will spend your time. Organizational culture will govern the amount and types of interactions you have (both on and off the job) with other employees, both coworkers and management.¹⁰

Your fit with an organization's culture can make all the difference between a satisfying experience and a disappointing job. A Workplace by Facebook study of more than 4,000 frontline workers and managers across the United States and United Kingdom found only 45% of workers share their ideas with managers; alternatively, 90% of managers feel that their frontline workers are empowered to share ideas with them.¹¹ This disconnect is part of the culture of these organizations and plays a role in whether employees will stay with the company. In this study, 21% of frontline workers claimed they'd consider quitting their jobs if they felt their voices were not heard.¹²

You can get a sense of a company's culture by talking with people who work there. Besides asking about culture in a formal job interview, off-the-record conversations with potential colleagues can provide valuable insights about the way the company operates. For example, ask how employees spend their time. A surprising amount of effort might go into activities only remotely related to getting the job done: dealing with paperwork, playing office politics, struggling with balky equipment, or attending one unproductive meeting after another. Even if you do not learn much about the organization as a whole, you will get a good picture of the kind of people with whom you will be working.

You can also get clues about an organization's culture by observing how it operates. Communication practices are a good place to begin. How are you treated when you visit a company or deal with its employees? Do e-mails and other written correspondence suggest a welcoming culture?¹³ An organization's physical presence also says something about its culture. Are workers' areas personalized or standardized? Is the workplace clean or dirty? Does the organization seem prosperous, or is it operating on a shoestring? You are likely to spend more waking hours on the job than anywhere else. For this reason, thinking about the "personality" of an organization where you work can be just as important as the kind of person whom you desire as a life partner.

Organizational culture is constantly changing. The simple addition of a new employee in the workplace can change the vibe of the entire department, for example. Research from global staffing firm Accountemps reveals how office etiquette has