ELEVENTH EDITION

Successful Writing at Work

PHILIP C. KOLIN

Successful Writing at Work

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ELEVENTH EDITION

Philip C. Kolin
University of Southern Mississippi

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Philip C. Kolin

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and
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Preface

Successful Writing at Work, Eleventh Edition, is a practical, comprehensive introductory text for business, technical, professional, and occupational writing courses. Regardless of a student's career choice, writing is a vital part of virtually every job, and as readers of earlier editions have learned, *Successful Writing at Work* can help them become better writers while they also learn to develop and design effective workplace documents for multicultural, global audiences. *Successful Writing at Work*, Eleventh Edition, is organized to take students step-by-step from the basic concepts of audience analysis, purpose, message, style, and tone to the processes of researching, drafting, revising, formatting/designing, and editing. Students will learn to write a variety of job-related documents, from emails, social media posts, and correspondence to more complex instructions, proposals, reports, websites, and presentations.

BUILDING ON PAST EDITIONS

Benefiting from the feedback of instructors, students, and employers over many editions, this revised Eleventh Edition continues to give students detailed, clear guidelines for preparing well-organized and readable business documents. Moreover, because effective models are critical for learning new skills, students will find a wide range of realistic, up-to-date, and rhetorically diverse examples (all of them annotated and visually varied) demonstrating the function, scope, format, and organization of numerous documents for audiences with differing needs. Each of these model documents focuses directly on practical issues in the world of work and portrays employees as successful writers, either individually or as part of a collaborative writing group. Furthermore, this new edition fully covers a broad spectrum of current workplace technologies and considerations, such as social media, messaging, Google Docs, professional networking sites, Skype, and Prezi.

VERSATILITY OF NEW ELEVENTH EDITION

As in past editions, this Eleventh Edition is as versatile as it is comprehensive. Full enough for a sixteen-week semester, it can also be easily adapted to shorter six-, eight-, or ten-week courses. *Successful Writing at Work*, Eleventh Edition, is designed to go beyond classroom applications: It is a ready reference that students can easily carry with them as they begin or advance in the workplace. As students will discover, this edition maintains the reputation of former editions by including numerous practical applications in each book chapter and also in the MindTap Reader version of the text. It can be as useful to readers with little or no job experience as to those with years of experience in one or several fields. This edition also addresses the needs of students re-entering the job market or changing careers.

DISTINCTIVE APPROACH OF *SUCCESSFUL WRITING AT WORK*

The distinctive approach that in the past has made *Successful Writing at Work* a student-friendly text in the contemporary workplace continues to be emphasized and expanded in this Eleventh Edition. This approach, stressing up-to-date strategies for teaching business, technical, and professional writing, can be found throughout this new edition.

- **Analyzing audiences.** The Eleventh Edition focuses on the importance of audience analysis and the writer's obligation to achieve the "you attitude" in every workplace document. In addition, the concept of audience extends to readers worldwide, as well as to non-native speakers of English, whether as co-workers, employers, clients, or representatives of various agencies and organizations. Memos, emails, social media posts, letters, résumés, reports, presentations, and other documents are written, designed, organized, and introduced with the intended audience(s) in mind.
- **Seeing writing as a problem-solving activity.** The Eleventh Edition continues to approach writing not merely as a set of rules and formats but as a problem-solving activity in which employees meet the needs of their employers, co-workers, customers, clients, community groups, and vendors worldwide by getting to the bottom line. This approach to writing, introduced in Chapter 1 and carried throughout the text, helps students to think through the writing process by asking the key questions of *who* (who is the audience?), *why* (why do they need this document?), *what* (what is the message?), and *how* (how can the writer present the most appropriate style, tone, and format?). As in earlier editions, this Eleventh Edition teaches students how to develop the critical skills necessary for planning, drafting, revising, editing, and formatting a variety of documents. To help them, numerous case studies and figures demonstrate how writers answer these key questions to solve problems in the world of work.
- **Being an ethical employee.** Companies expect their employees to behave and write ethically. As in earlier editions, the Eleventh Edition reinforces and expands discussions of ethical writing practices in almost every chapter. Beginning with enhanced coverage of ethical writing and solving ethical dilemmas at work, Chapter 1 further stresses "Ethical Writing in the Workplace." Subsequent chapters offer practical guidelines on and numerous examples of documents that illustrate the types of ethical choices workers must make in the business world. Special attention is given to editing to avoid sexism and biased language in Chapter 2; working cooperatively with a

collaborative writing team in Chapter 3; making ethical choices when writing e-communications, including email, messages, blogs, and social media posts in Chapter 4; drafting diplomatic letters in Chapters 5 and 6; preparing honest, realistic résumés and webfolios in Chapter 7; conducting truthful, objective, and carefully documented research in Chapter 8; using and constructing unbiased visuals and ethical websites in Chapters 10 and 11; preparing safe, legal instructions and procedures in Chapter 12; writing honest proposals and reports in Chapters 13 to 15; and making clear and accurate presentations in Chapter 16.

- **Writing for the global marketplace.** Effective employees must write for a variety of readers, both in the United States and across the globe. Consequently, this new Eleventh Edition throughout emphasizes writing for international readers and non-native speakers of English. The needs and expectations of these international audiences receive special attention in the Eleventh Edition, starting in "Writing for the Global Marketplace" in Chapter 1 and continuing with coverage of writing letters for international speakers of English in Chapter 5, designing appropriate visuals and documents for this audience in Chapter 10, preparing clear instructions in Chapter 12, and making presentations for global audiences in Chapter 16. Especially important is the long report in Chapter 15 on the role international workers play in a corporation that must meet their needs and those of their clients worldwide.
- **Viewing student readers as business professionals.** To encourage students in their job-related writing, this new Eleventh Edition treats them as professionals seeking success at different phases of their business. Students are asked to place themselves in the workplace setting (or, in the case of Chapter 7, in the role of job seekers) as they approach each topic, to understand the differences between workplace and academic writing better. Chapter 1 gives them an orientation to the kinds of corporate culture and protocols that they might find in the early days of their employment. Students are then asked to see themselves as members of a collaborative team drafting and developing an important workplace document in Chapter 3; in Chapters 4 to 6 they write to fellow employees and superiors and represent their company through routine e-communications and respectful and diplomatic correspondence; in Chapters 10 and 11 they are co-workers designing documents, visuals, and websites; in Chapters 12 through 15 they are employees designing and writing more complex documents, such as instructions, proposals, and reports; and in Chapter 16 they are company representatives making presentations before co-workers and potential clients worldwide.
- **Using the latest workplace technologies.** This new edition offers the most current coverage of communication technologies for writing successfully in the rapidly changing world of work, including social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, Flickr, YouTube, and Yelp), email, messaging, wikis, document tracking systems, Google Docs, business blogs, tablets, smartphones, videoconferencing tools, and presentation

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software such as PowerPoint and Prezi. Coverage of these technologies is integrated into each chapter through Tech Notes, Case Studies, sample documents, and text discussion, and Chapter 4 illustrates many of these new technologies in action. Easy-to-understand explanations and annotated models throughout this edition assist students in discovering the hows as well as the whys of writing and using visuals for the digital world of work.

- **Commitment to ecology.** The Eleventh Edition continues to stress environmental issues and greening the workplace though a section in Chapter 1 (“Thinking Green: Making Ethical Choices About the Environment”), instructions on fixing a leaky faucet and installing solar panels in Chapter 12, a progress report emphasizing the use of solar energy in Chapter 14, and several other sample documents and Exercises throughout the text.

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR CHANGES IN THE ELEVENTH EDITION

In response to reviewer feedback and that of instructors and their students, the new Eleventh Edition has undergone some major changes to make it more useable and effective:

- This new edition has been streamlined, shortened, updated, and redesigned to provide essential and current coverage of major communication strategies with real-world examples that students need to succeed in today’s e-world of work. Chapter 8, for example, has been thoroughly revised to make it even more student-friendly, retaining only the most important information students need to conduct research and properly evaluate and document sources in the workplace. The discussion of memos has been moved to Chapter 6 to show how letters and memos work together in the business world.
- The new edition features a strong emphasis on and integration of social media throughout, including a new section on cyberbullying in Chapter 1, a section on ethical guidelines to follow when writing for social media and other e-communications in Chapter 4, a new section in Chapter 4 that highlights how to write effectively in the medium and includes examples of Facebook and Twitter posts, examples of Facebook and LinkedIn profiles and a list of social media “do’s and don’ts” when looking for a job in Chapter 7, an extended example showing how social media can help rent units in a new apartment complex in the updated business report in Chapter 8, examples of how social media can help shape proposals in Chapter 13, and a discussion of how it can influence the findings in a long report in Chapter 15.
- The use of tablets and smartphones in the workplace has been included and addressed throughout the text, including a discussion of their use in e- and m-communications in Chapter 4. The rise of m-commerce is also addressed in proposals in Chapter 13 and a short report in Chapter 14. Additionally, many exercises have been revised throughout the text to showcase the importance of these communication tools.

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- Many new Tech Notes and exercises have been added, as well as new Case Studies tied to technology. All existing Tech Notes have been updated with the latest information and technological advances.
- **Now available with MindTap!** MindTap is the digital learning solution that helps instructors engage and transform today's students into critical thinkers, communicators, and writers. Numerous real-world examples and strong visuals come to life in the MindTap Reader, where students can search, highlight, and take notes, right on the text. Students build grammar, mechanics, and writing skills with interactive activities and apply those skills to project and writing assignments. A variety of writing and research apps allow students to collaborate and improve their research. Instructors can customize the course by blending their own materials with curated content, and incorporate additional examples and models, as desired. An easy-to-use paper management system allows for submission, grading, peer review, and plagiarism prevention. With MindTap for *Successful Writing at Work*, Eleventh Edition, students reveal mastery of the text's skills and strategies to find their voice as professional writers.

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER UPDATES

Here, then, chapter-by-chapter, are the specific new additions and features of the Eleventh Edition.

Chapter 1 Getting Started: Writing and Your Career

- Revised case study on adapting technical information to meet the needs of diverse audiences within a corporate setting
- Revised section, "Employers Insist on and Monitor Ethical Behavior"
- Expanded discussion in "Ethical Requirements on the Job"
- *New* section, "Cyberbullying"
- Further attention to solving ethical dilemmas in the workplace
- Revised Tech Note, "Know Your Computer at Work"
- Revised section, "Using International English" with expanded guidelines

Chapter 2 The Writing Process at Work

- Enhanced coverage of drafting, revising, and editing on the job
- Revised, updated case study, "A 'Before' and 'After' Revision of a Short Report"
- Revised Tech Notes on "Drafting," "Revising," and "Editing"
- Updated advice on avoiding stereotypical language, including eliminating sexism

Chapter 3 Collaborative Writing and Meetings in the Workplace

- Increased emphasis on being a team player in the world of work
- Greater attention to collaborative communication technologies

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- Heavily revised Case Study on collaboratively written documents
- Revised sections, case studies, and figures illustrating the use of Track Changes in Microsoft Word and Google Docs for collaborative writing
- *New* Tech Note, "Virtual Meetings"
- Revised Tech Note, "Videoconferencing with Skype"
- *New* coverage on using social media with collaboration (including office collaboration software like Yammer, FB@Work, and Slack)
- *New* section on preparing for and conducting a meeting at work—setting an agenda, taking notes, summarizing ethically, and writing the minutes

***Brand New* Chapter 4** E-Communications at Work: Email, Blogs, Messaging, and Social Media

- Discusses the importance of and differences between business and personal emails, messages, blogs, and social media posts
- Revised section, "Legal/Ethical Guidelines to Follow in Writing E-Communications"
- Substantially revised sections on email in the workplace, including a revised "Guidelines for Using Email on the Job" with up-to-date, practical advice
- Revised "Messaging" section focusing on both using a networked company system and texting on smartphones.
- Expanded discussion of business blogs
- *New* section, "Writing for Social Media in the Workplace"
- New figures showcasing business social media posts on Facebook and Twitter
- Includes new exercises related to writing for social media in the workplace

Chapter 5 Writing Letters: Some Basics for Communicating with Audiences Worldwide

- Further emphasis on the importance of letters in the Internet Age
- Strengthened discussions of the business contexts for correspondence
- Revised section, "Essential Advice on Writing Effective Letters"
- *New* section on "Different Ways to Send Letters"
- Revised section on "The Appearance of Your Letter," reflecting contemporary document designs
- Expanded sections on writing different correspondence
- Greater attention to needs of international readers with an enhanced Case Study on adapting letters to international readers
- Revised exercises on up-to-date topics reflecting international readers' needs

Chapter 6 Types of Business Letters and Memos

- Revised "Preliminary Guidelines" section for sales letters
- *New* Tech Note, "Mail Merge"
- Revised section, "Getting the Reader's Attention"
- Revised section, "Showing the Customer the Product's or Service's Application"
- Revised section on "Adjustment Letters"

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- Heavily revised section on "Memos"
- Thirteen redesigned letters and memos
- Revised exercises with up-to-date topics and subjects

Chapter 7 How to Get a Job: Searches, Networking, Dossiers, Portfolios/Webfolios, Résumés, Transitioning to a Civilian Job, Letters, and Interviews

- Revised section on identifying and emphasizing marketable job skills
- Updated coverage on where to look for a job, with further examples of and advice on using job-posting sites
- *New* section, "Transitioning to the Civilian Workforce," aimed at helping veterans prepare successful job applications; *new* sample résumé
- Updated section on "Looking in the Right Places for a Job"
- Revised section on "Using Online Social and Professional Networking Sites in Your Job Search"
- *New* sample LinkedIn profile page; updated discussion of using Facebook as part of your job search
- Revised and updated "Do's and Don'ts When Creating Your Online Profile"
- Updated and redesigned letters and résumés throughout
- Chapter now includes ten print and digital résumés
- Revised section on "The Digital Résumé"
- Revised Case Study on creating a digital résumé for a job search
- *New* section with tips on "Being Ready for a Phone Interview"
- Revised Tech Note, "Skype Interviews"
- Revised and updated section on "Questions to Expect at Your Interview"
- New information on "What Interviewer(s) Can't Ask You"
- Updated, practical advice inquiring about salary and salary ranges
- *New* section, "Keep a Job Search Record"

***Streamlined* Chapter 8** Doing Research, Evaluating Sources, and Preparing Documentation in the Workplace

- Useful, updated section on "Use of Social Networking Sites as a Recruiting Tool"
- *New* section on "Online Survey Builders"
- Revised and updated Tech Note, "Intranets"
- Revised and updated sections on searching online catalogs, e-libraries, and reference materials
- Revised Tech Note, "Gray Literature"
- *New* section, "How to Conduct Keyword Searches: Some Guidelines"
- Coverage of latest Modern Language Association (MLA) and American Psychological Association (APA) documentation styles, including for podcasts, blogs, emails, tweets, and Facebook posts
- Updated and reformatted business report, marketing a large real estate project (written in MLA style)
- *New* exercises with current business topics

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Chapter 9 Summarizing Information at Work

- In response to user and reviewer feedback, the chapter has been streamlined and shortened to make it more reader-friendly and applicable to the needs of today's students
- Thoroughly revised section, "Summaries in the Information Age"
- Updated Case Study with annotated summary of an article on virtual reality and law enforcement
- *New* advice on "What Managers Want to See in an Executive Summary"
- Revised section, "Writing Successful News Releases"
- *New* figure of a news release posted on the Web
- *New* article on security considerations for mobile app developers in exercises

Chapter 10 Creating Clear Visuals

- Revised section, "Using Appropriate Visuals for International Audiences"
- *New* examples of bar graphs, line graphs, flow charts, photographs, and pictographs
- Revised and updated advice in "Choosing Effective Visuals" and "Insert Your Visuals Appropriately"
- *New* Tech Note, "Using Photoshop"
- *New* section on using infographs
- Greater attention to creating ethical visuals

Chapter 11 Designing Successful Documents and Websites

- Revised section on "The ABCs of Print Document Design"
- Updated discussion on differences between writing for a print source versus a Web source
- Revised section on "Desktop Publishing"
- *New* Case Study on designing a company newsletter
- Greatly enhanced, updated Case Study on the differences between print document design organization and website organization
- *New* Tech Note, "Website Accessibility"

Chapter 12 Writing Instructions and Procedures

- Updated coverage of preparing legally and ethically proper instructions and procedures
- *New*, annotated examples of online and print instructions
- Revised section on "Using Word-Processing Software to Help You Design Instructions"
- *New* case study on meeting your audience's needs, including new figure
- Revised section on "Warnings, Cautions, and Notes," with more attention to needs of international readers

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- Enhanced discussion of workplace procedures, including a revised Case Study
- Seven new exercises

Chapter 13 Writing Winning Proposals

- Updated examples of sales and internal proposals
- Revised Tech Note, "Online RFPs"
- Heavily revised Case Study on drafting an internal proposal to create a mobile app for a health food store
- *New*, fully annotated internal proposal on purchasing inventory tracking software
- Revised figure of a sales proposal responding to a request from a company
- *New* figure of a student proposal on writing a report on the ethical issues involved in using apps in m-commerce
- Additional coverage of researching and collaborating in preparing proposals
- Six *new* exercises

Chapter 14 Writing Effective Short Reports

- Heavily revised and expanded coverage of guidelines for writing short reports
- *New* Case Study on preparing a periodic report
- Revised section on "How to Write the Body of a Progress Report"
- Expanded discussion of how and why different audiences read a report
- Revised progress report for a student research report
- Revised section on "Common Types of Trip/Travel Reports"
- Six revised exercises

Chapter 15 Writing Careful Long Reports

- Revised guidelines on the process of writing a long report
- Revised discussion of transmittal letters
- Revised coverage of developing and documenting conclusions and recommendations
- Completely revised, updated model long report (written in APA style) on cultural sensitivity for multinational workers

Chapter 16 Making Successful Presentations at Work

- Enhanced section on informal briefings with a new figure instructing bank employees how to detect and report counterfeit currency
- Revised advice and slides for a PowerPoint presentation
- Revised section on "Presentation Software," including a discussion of web-based software such as Prezi and new presentation technologies such as SMART boards

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- Revised section, "Delivering the Presentation"
- Revised discussion on evaluating a presentation

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

MindTap® English for Kolin's *Successful Writing at Work*, Eleventh Edition engages your students to become better thinkers, communicators, and writers by blending your course materials with content that supports every aspect of the writing process.

- Interactive activities on grammar and mechanics promote application in student writing.
- Easy-to-use paper management system helps prevent plagiarism and allows for electronic submission, grading, and peer review.
- A vast database of scholarly sources with video tutorials and examples supports every step of the research process.
- Professional tutoring guides students from rough drafts to polished writing.
- Visual analytics track student progress and engagement.
- Seamless integration into your campus learning management system keeps all your course materials in one place.

MindTap lets you compose your course, your way.

Online Instructor's Resource Manual. Streamline and maximize the effectiveness of your course preparation using such resources as teaching suggestions, sample course schedules, assignments, chapter test banks, and many other classroom support materials. This password-protected Instructor's Resource Manual is easily downloadable by accessing www.cengagebrain.com.

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P.C.K.
January 2016

Successful Writing at Work

PART I

Part Opening Image: fotog/Tetra/Corbis

Backgrounds

1 **Getting Started**
Writing and Your Career

2 **The Writing Process at Work**

3 **Collaborative Writing and Meetings in the Workplace**

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CHAPTER

1

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Getting Started

Writing and Your Career

CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Writing—An Essential Job Skill
- Writing for the Global Marketplace
- Four Keys to Effective Writing
- Characteristics of Job-Related Writing
- Ethical Writing in the Workplace
- Successful Employees Are Successful Writers

WRITING—AN ESSENTIAL JOB SKILL

Writing is a part of every job, from your initial letter of application conveying first impressions to memos, emails, tweets, texts, blogs, letters, websites, proposals, instructions, and reports. Writing keeps businesses moving. It allows employees to communicate with one another, with management, and with the customers, clients, and agencies a company must serve to stay in business. The average office worker receives 80 emails daily, and that means that most [people] are receiving at least one email message every 6 or 7 minutes while at work.[1] A survey conducted by the McKinsey Global Insitute found that workers spend more than 2½ hours a day just reading and answering their emails.

How Writing Relates to Other Skills

Almost everything you do at work is related to your writing ability. Deborah Price, a human resource director with thirty years of experience, stresses that "Without the ability to write clearly an employee cannot perform the other duties of the job, regardless of the company he or she works for." Here is a list of the common tasks you will be expected to perform in the workplace that will require clear and concise writing to get them done well.

- Assess a situation, a condition, a job site, etc.
- Research and record the results accurately.
- Summarize information concisely and identify main points quickly.
- Work as part of a team to collect, to share, and to evaluate information.
- Tackle and solve problems and explain how and why you did.

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[1] Stephens, M. (2012, January 10). Volume of email reaching a tipping point. *SME: Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises.* Retrieved from http://www.smeweb.com/technology/features/4639-volume-of-email-reaching-tipping-point

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- Display cultural sensitivity in the workplace.
- Network with individuals in diverse fields outside your company and across the globe.
- Answer customer questions and meet their needs.
- Make a post to your company's social media site to get information out about its brand.
- Prepare and test instructions and procedures.
- Justify financial, personnel, or other actions and decisions.
- Make persuasive presentations to co-workers, employers, and clients.

To perform each of these essential workplace tasks, you have to be an effective writer—clear, concise, accurate, ethical, and persuasive.

The High Cost of Effective Writing

Clearly, then, writing is an essential skill. According to Don Bagin, a communications consultant, most people need an hour or more to write a typical business letter. If an employer is paying someone $30,000 a year, one letter costs $14 of that employee's time; for someone who earns $50,000 a year, the cost for the average letter jumps to $24. The National Commission on Writing estimates that American businesses spent $3.1 billion annually in training employees to write.[2]

Unfortunately, as the Associated Press (AP) reported in a recent survey, "Most American businesses say workers need to improve their writing . . . skills." Yet that same report cited a survey of more than 400 companies that identified writing as "the most valuable skill employees can have." In fact, the employers polled in that AP survey indicated that 80 percent of their workforce needed to improve their writing. Beyond a doubt, your success as an employee will depend on your success as a writer. The higher you advance in an organization, the more and better writing you will be expected to do. Promotions, and other types of job recognition, are often based on an employee's writing skills.

How This Book Will Help You

This book will show you, step by step, how to write clearly and efficiently the job-related communications you need for success in the world of work. Chapter 1 gives you some basic information about writing in the global marketplace and raises major questions you need to ask yourself to make the writing process easier and the results more effective. It also describes the basic functions of on-the-job writing and introduces you to one of the most important requirements in the business world—writing ethically.

WRITING FOR THE GLOBAL MARKETPLACE

The Internet, teleconferencing, digital communications, social media, and m-commerce have shrunk the world into a global village. Many companies are multinational corporations with offices throughout the world. In fact, many U.S. businesses are branches of international firms. A large, multinational corporation may have its equipment designed in Japan; built in Bangladesh; and sold in Detroit, Atlanta, and Los Angeles. Its stockholders may be in Mexico City as well as Saudi Arabia—in fact, anywhere.

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[2] Combest, T. What is the importance of business letters? *eHow*. Retrieved from http://www.ehow.com/facts_5595243_importance-business-letters_.html

Competing for International Business

Companies must compete for international sales to stay in business. Every business, whether large or small, has to appeal to diverse international markets to be competitive. Each year a larger share of the U.S. gross national product (GNP) depends on global markets. Some U.S. firms estimate that 50 to 60 percent of their business is conducted outside of the United States. Walmart, for example, has opened hundreds of stores in mainland China, and General Electric has plants in more than fifty countries. In fact, estimates suggest that 75 percent of the global Internet population lives outside the United States. If your company, however small, has a website, then it is an international business.

Communicating with Global Audiences

To be a successful employee in our highly competitive global market, you have to communicate clearly and diplomatically with a host of readers from different cultural backgrounds. Notice how the ad for Digital World Technologies emphasizes diversity (see Figure 1.1). Adopting a global perspective on business will help you communicate and build goodwill with the customers you write to, no matter where they live—across town, in another state, or on other continents, miles and time zones away.

As a result, don't presume that you will be writing only to native speakers of American English. You may communicate with readers in Singapore, Jamaica, and South Africa, for example, who speak varieties of English quite different from American English. You will also very likely be writing to readers for whom English is not their first (or native) language. Your international readers will have varying degrees of proficiency in English, from a fairly good command (as with many readers in India and the Philippines, where English is widely spoken), to little comprehension without the use of a foreign language dictionary and a grammar book. Non-native speakers, who may reside either in the United States or in a foreign country, will constitute a large and important audience for your work.

Seeing the World Through the Eyes of Another Culture

Writing to international readers with proper business etiquette means first learning about their cultural values and assumptions—what they value and also what they regard as communication taboos. They may not conduct business exactly the way it is done in the United States, and to think they should is wrong. Your international audience is likely to have different expectations of:

- how they want communications addressed to them
- whether they allow you to use their first name

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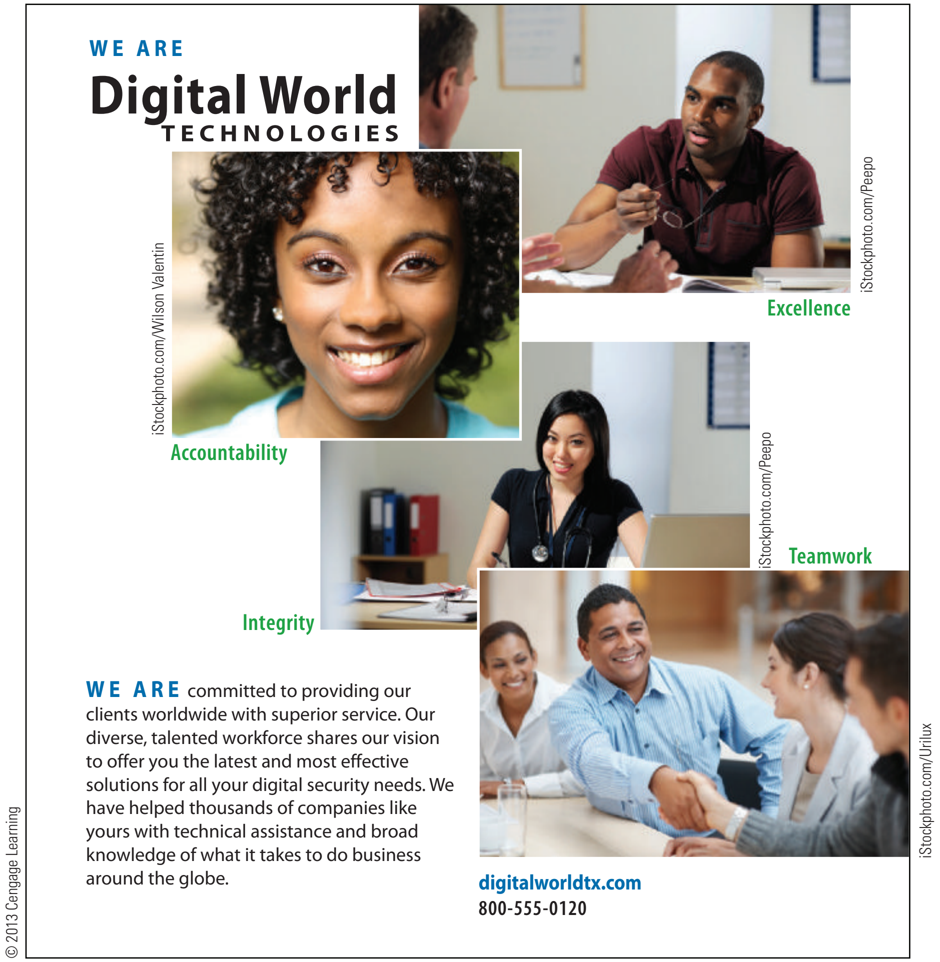
FIGURE 1.1 How a Company Appeals to a Global Audience



WE ARE
Digital World
TECHNOLOGIES

Accountability

Excellence

Integrity

Teamwork

WE ARE committed to providing our clients worldwide with superior service. Our diverse, talented workforce shares our vision to offer you the latest and most effective solutions for all your digital security needs. We have helped thousands of companies like yours with technical assistance and broad knowledge of what it takes to do business around the globe.

digitalworldtx.com
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- how they wish a business meeting to be conducted
- how they think questions should be asked and agreements reached
- concepts of time, family, money, the world, and the environment; they may be nothing like those in the United States
- visuals, including icons; those easily understood in the United States may be baffling elsewhere in the world

If you misunderstand your audience's culture and inadvertently write, create, or say something inappropriate, it can cost your company a contract and you your job.

Cultural Diversity at Home

Cultural diversity exists inside as well as outside the company you work for. Don't conclude that your boss or co-workers are all native speakers of English, either, or

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TECH NOTE

Know Your Computer at Work

A major part of any job is knowing your workplace technology, which now can include smartphones and tablets. You need to know not just how to use the applications installed on your computer or other device but also what to do if there is a computer emergency.

Given the kinds of security risks businesses face today, employees have to be especially careful. As Kim Becker cautions in *Nevada Business*, "With malware, spyware, adware, viruses, Trojans, worms, phishing, and server problems, it's time for every business to review its IT strategy and security before a loss occurs."*

Here are some guidelines on how to use your computer effectively on the job:

- **Understand how to use the software programs required for your job.** Your office will most likely require employees to use many different kinds of software—not just the word-processing application, but also the filing, formatting, spreadsheet, presentation, and tables/graphics programs. They will also expect you to be adept at using many different kinds of social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter.
- **Get training on how to use company-specific applications.** You will be expected to know how to use company-created databases, templates, and other customized applications on the job. If your company offers classes on how to use these programs, take them. Otherwise, ask for the advice of a co-worker or someone in your company's information technology (IT) department who knows the programs.
- **Learn how to back up your files.** You will save yourself, your boss, your co-workers, and your clients time and stress by backing up your essential files regularly.

*Kim Becker, "Security in the Workplace: Technology Issues Threaten Business Prosperity," *Nevada Business*, July 2008.

that they come from the same cultural background that you do. In the next decade, as much as 40 to 50 percent of the U.S. skilled workforce may be composed of international workers who bring their own traditions and languages with them. These are highly educated, multicultural, and multinational individuals who have acquired English as a second or even a third language.

For the common good of your company, you need to be respectful of your international colleagues. In fact, multinational employees can be tremendously important for your company in making contacts in their native country and in helping your firm understand and appreciate ethical and cultural differences among customers. The model long report in Chapter 15 (Figure 15.3, pages 607–621) describes ways a company can both acknowledge and respect the different cultural traditions of its international employees. Businesses want to emphasize their international commitments. A large corporation such as Citibank, for instance, is eager to promote its image of helping customers worldwide, as Figure 1.2 shows.

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FIGURE 1.2 A Company's Dedication to Globalization

How Citigroup Meets Banking Needs Around the World

WITH A BANKING EMPIRE that spans more than 100 countries, Citigroup is experienced at meeting the diverse financial services needs of businesses, individuals, customers, and governments. The bank is headquartered in New York City but has offices in Africa, Asia, Central and South America, Europe, the Middle East, as well as throughout North America. Live or work in Japan? You can open a checking account at Citigroup's Citibank branch in downtown Tokyo. How about Mexico? Visit a Grupo Financiero Banamex-Accival branch, owned by Citigroup. Citigroup owns European American Bank and has even bought a stake in a Shanghai-based bank with an eye toward attracting more of China's $1 trillion in bank deposits. Between acquisitions and long-established branches, Citigroup covers the globe from the Atlantic to the Pacific and the Indian Oceans.

花旗银行
citibank
citibank
24 小时银行服务 Hour Banking

AP Photo/Greg Baker

Citigroup is active in communities around the world through . . . financial literacy seminars, volunteerism, and supplier diversity programs. This financial services giant strives for the best of both worlds, wielding its global presence and resources to meet banking needs locally, one customer at a time.

Source: From William M. Pride, Robert J. Hughes, and Jack R. Kapoor, *Business*, 8th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 587.

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Using International English

Whether your international readers are customers or colleagues, you need to adapt your writing to respect their language needs and cultural protocols. To communicate with non-native speakers, use "international English," a way of writing that is easily understood, culturally appropriate, and diplomatic. International English is user friendly in terms of the words, sentences, formats, and visuals you choose. The global use of social networking makes it essential that international English plays a role in effective communication.

To write international English means you re-examine your own writing. The words, idioms, phrases, and sentences you select instinctively for U.S. readers may not be appropriate for an audience for whom English is a second, or even a third, language. If you find the set of instructions accompanying your software package confusing, imagine how much more intimidating such a document would be for non-native speakers of English. You can eliminate such confusion by making your message clear, straightforward, and appropriately polite for readers who are not native speakers.

Here are some basic guidelines to help you write international English:

- Use clear, easy-to-understand sentences, not rambling, complex ones. That does not mean you write insultingly short and simple sentences but that you take into account that readers will find your message easier to translate if your sentences do not exceed 15 to 20 words.
- Do not try to pack too much information into a single sentence; consider using two or more sentences instead (see "Editing Guidelines for Writing Lean and Clear Sentences," pages 59–62)
- Avoid punctuation difficult to translate, for example, dashes, parentheses, and slashes meaning and/or.
- Avoid jargon, idioms (such as "to line one's pockets"), and abbreviations ("FEMA" instead of "Federal Emergency Management Agency") that international readers may not know.
- Do not use slang, acronyms, or cliches. And stay away from using compound verb phrases ("fill in", "file away") for simple active verbs.
- Choose clear, commonly used words that unambiguously translate into the non-native speaker's language. Avoid symbols such as an ampersand (&), Latin abbreviations (for example, "c.f.," "e.g.," and "i.e.") or flowery or pretentious language ("amend" instead of "change").
- Select visuals and icons that are free from cultural bias and that are not taboo in the non-native speaker's country. (For more on this, see "Using Appropriate Visuals for International Audiences," pages 438–441).
- When in doubt, consult someone from the native speaker's country—a co-worker or an instructor, for example.

Because it is so important, international English is discussed in greater detail in "International Business Correspondence" on pages 169–180. Later chapters of this book will also give you additional practical guidelines on writing correspondence,

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instructions, proposals, reports, websites, PowerPoint presentations, and other work-related documents suitable for a global audience.

FOUR KEYS TO EFFECTIVE WRITING

Effective writing on the job is carefully planned, thoroughly researched, and clearly presented. Its purpose is always to accomplish a specific goal and to be as persuasive as possible. Whether you send a routine email to a co-worker in Cincinnati or Shanghai or a commissioned report to the president of the company, your writing will be more effective if you ask yourself these four questions:

1. Who will read what I write? (Identify your audience.)
2. Why should they read what I write? (Establish your purpose.)
3. What do I have to say to them? (Formulate your message.)
4. How can I best communicate? (Select an appropriate style and tone.)

The questions *who, why, what,* and *how* do not function independently; they are all related. You write (1) for a specific audience (2) with a clearly defined purpose in mind (3) about a topic your readers need to understand (4) in language appropriate for the occasion. Once you answer the first question, you are off to a good start toward answering the other three. Now let's examine each of the four questions in detail.

Identifying Your Audience

Knowing *who* makes up your audience is one of your most important responsibilities as a writer. Keep in mind that you are not writing for yourself but for a specific reader or group of readers. Expect to analyze your audience throughout the composing process.

Look at the public safety messages in Figures 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5. The main purpose of all three messages is the same—to discourage people from smoking. The underlying message in each poster—smoking is dangerous to your health—is also the same. But note how the different details—words, photographs, situations—have been selected to appeal to three different audiences.

The poster in Figure 1.3 is aimed at fathers who smoke. As you can see, it shows an image of a father smoking next to his son, who is reaching for his pack of cigarettes. Note how the headline "Will your child follow in your footsteps?" plays on the fact that the father and son are both literally sitting on steps, but at the same time it implies that the son will imitate his father's behavior as a smoker. The statistic at the bottom of the advertisement reinforces both the headline and the image, hitting home the point that parental behavior strongly influences children's behavior. The child in the photograph already is following his father by showing a clear interest in smoking, picking up his father's pack of cigarettes.

The advertisement in Figure 1.4, however, is aimed at an audience of pregnant women and shows a new mother with a photo of her premature baby in an incubator. The headline addresses both the act of quitting smoking and smoking's effects on a newborn child. The headline, the photo of a mother unable hold her child, and

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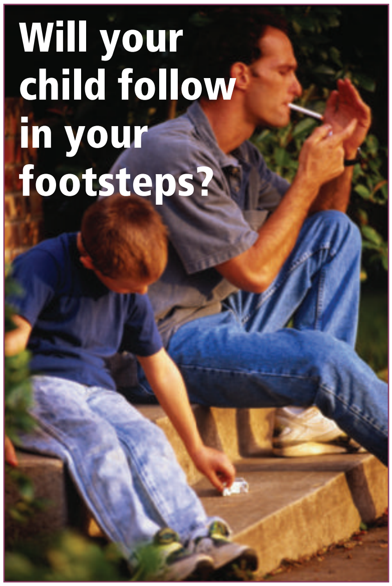
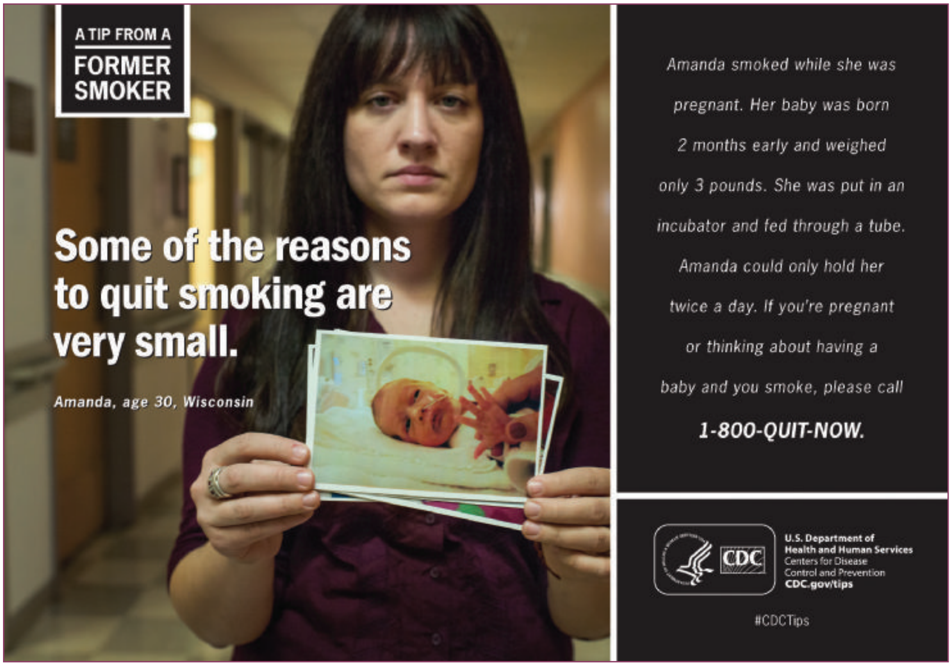
FIGURE 1.3 No-Smoking Advertisement Aimed at Fathers Who Smoke


Will your child follow in your footsteps?

Peter Poulides/Getty Images

FIGURE 1.4 No-Smoking Advertisement Directed at Pregnant Women


A TIP FROM A FORMER SMOKER
Some of the reasons to quit smoking are very small.
Amanda, age 30, Wisconsin

Amanda smoked while she was pregnant. Her baby was born 2 months early and weighed only 3 pounds. She was put in an incubator and fed through a tube. Amanda could only hold her twice a day. If you're pregnant or thinking about having a baby and you smoke, please call

1-800-QUIT-NOW.

CDC
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC.gov/tips
#CDCTips

United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control, Office on Smoking and Health's Health Communication Branch (OSH/HCB)

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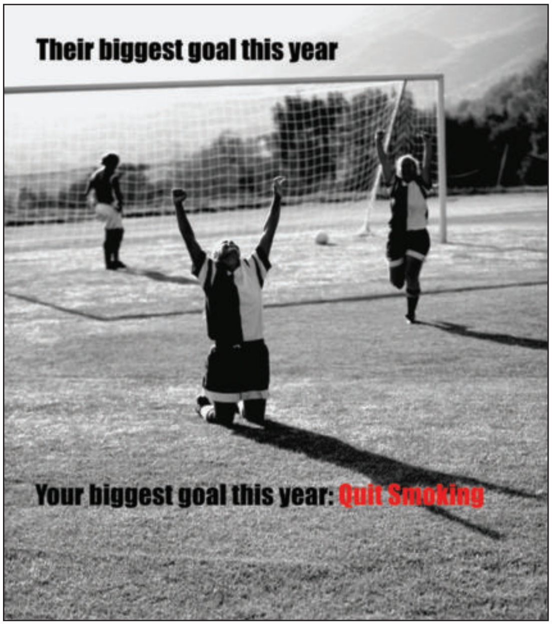
FIGURE 1.5 No-Smoking Advertisement Appealing to Young Athletes


Their biggest goal this year
Your biggest goal this year: Quit Smoking

United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control, Office on Smoking and Health's Health Communication Branch (OSH/HCB)

the background information provided are designed to appeal to a mother's sense of responsibility and to encourage pregnant women to stop smoking to avoid harming their unborn children.

Figure 1.5 is directed toward another audience: young athletes. The appeal here is direct and to the point (no background or supplemental information is needed or provided, in contrast to the messages in Figures 1.3 and 1.4). It appeals to a young person's sense of being able to achieve two goals: (a) winning at soccer and (b) quitting smoking.

The copywriters who created these public service messages have chosen appropriate details—words, pictures, captions, and so on—to persuade each audience not to smoke. With their careful choices, they successfully answered the question "How can we best communicate with each audience?" Note that details relevant for one audience (athletes, for example) could not be used as effectively for another audience (such as mothers).

The three posters in Figures 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5 illustrate some fundamental points you need to keep in mind when identifying your audience:

- Members of each audience differ in their backgrounds, experiences, and needs.
- How you picture your audience will determine what you say to them.
- Viewing something from the audience's perspective will help you to select the most relevant details for that audience.

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Some Questions to Ask About Your Audience

You can form a fairly accurate picture of your audience by asking yourself key questions before you write. For each audience you need to reach, consider the following questions:

1. **Who is my audience?** What individual(s) will most likely be reading my work?

   If you are writing for colleagues or managers at work:

   - What is my reader's job title? Is he or she a co-worker? Immediate supervisor? Vice president?
   - What kinds of job experience, education, and interests does my reader have?

   If you are writing for clients or consumers (a very large, often diverse audience):

   - How can I find out about their interest in my product or service?
   - How much will this audience know about my company? About me?
   - Does my company have data or statistics that might help inform my writing? Can my company's social media sites provide any relevant information about the audience I'm writing for—what they like and what they tell others about my company and its products?

2. **How many people will make up my audience?**

   - Will just one individual read what I write (the nurse on the next shift, the production manager), or will many people read it (all the consumers of my company's product or service, those viewing my company's Facebook page or Twitter feed)?
   - Will my boss want to see my work (say, an email or social media post to a consumer in response to a complaint) to approve it?
   - Will I be sending my message to a large group of people sharing a similar interest in my topic?

3. **How well does my audience understand English?**

   - Are all my readers native speakers of English?
   - Will I be communicating with people around the globe?
   - Will some of my readers speak English as a second or even a third language and thereby require extra sensitivity on my part to their needs?
   - Will some of my readers speak no English and instead use an English grammar book, a foreign language dictionary, or perhaps an online translator, such as Google Translate (**translate.google.com**)?

4. **How much does my audience already know about my topic?**

   - Will my readers know as much as I do about the particular problem or issue, or will they need to be briefed, be given background information, or be updated?
   - Are my readers familiar with, and do they expect me to use, technical terms and descriptions, or will I have to provide definitions and easy-to-understand, nontechnical wording and visuals?

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CASE STUDY

Writing to Different Audiences in a Large Corporation

Jan Melius works in the Communication Department of GrandCo, a firm that designs and produces large heavy-duty equipment. As a regular part of her job, Melius has to prepare documents for several different audiences, including the management and staff at GrandCo, current and potential customers, and the greater community of Fairfield where the company is located. Each group of her readers has different requirements and expectations, and she has to understand those differences if she wants to meet their needs. Often the documents that she prepares are a result of collaborations with individuals (accountants, engineers, safety and security) at GrandCo as well as at other companies (vendors) and community leaders. Melius also has to decide on the right type of document (e.g., email, memo, report, blog, social media post) to send to her readers.

Below is a list of the audiences that Melius writes for or to, along with the kinds of documents they need with examples of appropriate information found in these documents.

Audience	**Types of Information/Documents to Supply**
Customer	Ads, websites, proposals urging customers to buy a GrandCo model, stressing its state-of-the-art advantages over the competition's and the specific benefits GrandCo offers (cost, service, quality, efficiency)
Owner or Principal Executive	Short and long reports on sales, cash flow, productivity, market trends; research about potential competition
Production Engineer	Reports on design and manufacturing models, including spec sheets, diagrams, etc., on transmissions, strength of materials; status reports following Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines
Production Supervisor	Service reports about schedules, staffing needs, and employee activity reports; availability of parts from vendors
Operator	Instructions in manuals on operating equipment safely and responsibly; warnings about any type of precautions; information on necessary special training
Maintenance Worker	Reports and guidelines about maintenance procedures; schedules; checklists of items to be inspected; troubleshooting procedures
Community Residents	News releases about GrandCo's sponsoring events, offering tours or demonstrations; blogs and social media posts on how the company is greening the workplace; articles on GrandCo's dedication to community environment and safety; hiring notices

As these examples show, to succeed in the world of work, give each reader the details he or she needs to accomplish a given job.

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5. **What is my audience's reason for reading my work?**
    - Is my communication part of their routine duties, or are they looking for information to solve a problem or make a decision?
    - Am I writing to describe benefits that another writer or company cannot offer?
    - Will my readers expect complete details, or will a short summary be enough?
    - Are they looking at my work to make an important decision affecting a co-worker, a client, a community, government agency, or the environment?
    - Are they reading something I write because they must (a legal notification or an incident report, for instance)?
6. **What are my audience's expectations about my written work?**
    - Do they want a response via social media, an email, or will they expect a formal letter?
    - Will they expect me to follow a company format and style?
    - Are they looking for a one-page memo or for a comprehensive report?
    - Should I use a formal tone or a more relaxed and conversational style?
7. **What is my audience's attitude toward me and my work?**
    - Will I be writing to a group of disgruntled and angry customers or vendors about a sensitive issue (a product recall, the discontinuation of a service, a refusal of credit, or a shipment delay)?
    - Will I have to be sympathetic while at the same time give firm, convincing reasons for my company's (or my) decision?
    - Will my readers be skeptical, indifferent, or accepting about what I write?
    - Will my readers feel guilty that they have not answered an earlier message of mine, not paid a bill now overdue, or not kept a commitment?
8. **What do I want my audience to do after reading my work?**
    - Do I want my readers to purchase something from me, approve my plan, or send me additional documentation?
    - Do I expect my readers to acknowledge my message, save it for future reference, or review and email it to another individual or office?
    - Do my readers have to take immediate action, or do they have several days or weeks to respond?
    - Do I simply want my readers to get my message and not respond at all?

As your answers to these questions will show, you may have to communicate with many different audiences on your job. Each group of readers will have different expectations and requirements; you need to understand those audience differences if you want to supply relevant information.

Establishing Your Purpose

By knowing *why* you are writing, you will communicate better and find the writing process itself to be easier. The reader's needs and your goal in communicating will help you to formulate your purpose. It will guide you in determining exactly what you can and must say.

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Make sure you follow the most important rule in occupational writing: *Get to the point right away*. At the beginning of your message, state your goal clearly. Don't feel as if you have to entertain or impress your reader.

> I want new employees to know how to log on to the company server.

Think over what you have written. Rewrite your purpose statement until it states precisely why you are writing and what you want your readers to do or to know.

> I want to teach new employees the security code for logging on to the company server.

Since your purpose controls the amount and order of information you include, state it clearly at the beginning of every email, memo, letter, and report.

> This email will acquaint new employees with the security measures they must take when logging on to the company server.

In the opening purpose statement that follows, note how the author clearly informs the reader what the report will and will not cover.

> As you requested at last month's organizational meeting, I have conducted a survey of how well our websites advertise our products. This survey describes users' responses but does not prioritize them.

Formulating Your Message

Your message is the sum of the facts, responses, and recommendations you put into writing. A message includes the scope and details of your communication.

- **Scope** refers to how much information you give readers about key details.
- **Details** are the key points you think readers need to know.

Some messages will consist of one or two phrases or sentences: "Do not touch; wet paint." "Order #756 was sent this afternoon by express shipment. It should arrive at your office on March 22." At the other extreme, messages may extend over many pages. Messages may carry good news or bad news. They may deal with routine matters, or they may handle changes in policy, special situations, or problems.

Keep in mind that you will need to adapt your message to fit your audience. For some audiences, such as engineers or technicians, you may have to supply a complete report with every detail noted or contained in an appendix. For other readers—busy executives, for example—include only an abstract or quick summary of financial or managerial significance. See Figure 8.10 (page 350) and Figure 15.3 (page 609) for examples of an abstract.

Selecting Your Style and Tone

Style

Style refers to *how* something is written rather than what is written. Style helps to determine how well you communicate with an audience and how well your readers understand and receive your message. It involves the choices you make about

- the construction of your paragraphs
- the length and patterns of your sentences
- your choice of words

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You will have to adapt your style to take into account different messages, different purposes, and different audiences. Your words, for example, will certainly vary with your audience. If all your readers are specialists in your field, you may safely use the technical language and symbols of your profession. Nonspecialists, however, will be confused and annoyed if you write to them in the same way. The average consumer, for example, will not know what a potentiometer is; but if you write "volume control on a radio" instead, you will be using words that the general public can understand. And as we saw, when you write for an international audience you have to take into account their proficiency in English and choose your words and sentences with their needs in mind (see "Writing for the Global Marketplace," pages 5–11).

CASE STUDY

Adapting a Description of Heparin for Two Different Audiences

In the workplace you will often be faced with the problem of presenting the same information to two completely different audiences. To better understand the impact that style and tone can have when you have to solve this problem, read the following two descriptions of heparin, a medication used to prevent blood clots. In both descriptions, the message is basically the same. Yet because the audiences differ, so do the style and the tone.

The first description of heparin appears in a reference work for physicians and other health care providers and is written in a highly technical style with an impersonal tone appropriate for the contexts in which this medicine is discussed.

The writer has made the appropriate stylistic choices for the audience, the purpose, and the message. Health care providers understand and expect the jargon and the scientific explanations, which enable them to prescribe or administer heparin correctly. The writer's authoritative, impersonal tone is coldly clinical, which, of course, is also appropriate because the purpose is to convey the accurate, complete scientific facts about this medication, not the writer's or reader's personal opinions or beliefs. The writer sounds both knowledgeable and objective.

Technical Description

Heparin Sodium Injection, USP Sterile Solution

Description: Heparin Sodium Injection, USP is a sterile solution of heparin sodium derived from bovine lung tissue, standardized for anticoagulant activity.

Each ml of the 1,000 and 5,000 USP units per ml preparations contains heparin sodium 1,000 or 5,000 USP units; 9 mg sodium chloride; 9.45 mg benzyl alcohol added as preservative. Each ml of the 10,000 USP units per ml preparations contains heparin sodium 10,000 units; 9.45 mg benzyl alcohol added as a preservative.

When necessary, the pH of Heparin Sodium Injection, USP was adjusted with hydrochloric acid and/or sodium hydroxide. The pH range is 5.0–7.5.

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Clinical pharmacology: Heparin inhibits reactions that lead to the clotting of blood and the formation of fibrin clots both *in vitro* and *in vivo*. Heparin acts at multiple sites in the normal coagulation system. Small amounts of heparin in combination with antithrombin III (heparin cofactor) can inhibit thrombosis by inactivating activated Factor X and inhibiting the conversion of prothrombin to thrombin.

Dosage and administration: Heparin sodium is not effective by oral administration and should be given by intermittent intravenous injection, intravenous infusion, or deep subcutaneous (intrafrat, i.e., above the iliac crest or abdominal fat layer) injection. **The intramuscular route of administration should be avoided because of the frequent occurrence of hematoma at the injection site.**[3]

The second description of heparin below, however, is written in a nontechnical style and with an informal, caring tone. This description is similar to those found on information sheets given to patients about the medications they are receiving in a hospital.

The writer of this patient-centered description has also made appropriate choices for nonspecialists, such as patients or their families, who do not need elaborate descriptions of the origin and composition of the medicine. Using familiar words and adopting a personal, friendly tone help to win the patients' confidence and enable them to understand why and how they should take the drug.

Nontechnical Description

Patient Information Sheet

Your doctor has prescribed a medicine called *heparin* for you. It will prevent any new blood clots from forming in your body. Since heparin cannot be absorbed from your stomach or intestines, you can not receive it in a capsule or tablet. Instead, it will be given into a vein or the fatty tissue of your abdomen. After several days, when the danger of clotting is past, your dosage of heparin will be gradually reduced. Then another medication you can take by mouth will be started.

Tone

Tone in writing, like tone of voice, expresses your attitude toward a topic and toward your audience. Your tone can range from formal and impersonal (a scientific report) to informal and personal (an email to a friend or a how-to article for consumers). Your tone can be unprofessionally sarcastic or diplomatically agreeable.

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[3] *Source: Physicians' Desk Reference*® 45th edition, 1991, published by Medical Economics, Montvale, NJ 07645.

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Tone, like style, is indicated in part by the words you choose. For example, saying that someone is "concerned about details" conveys a more positive tone than saying the person is a "nitpicker." The word *economical* is more positive than *stingy* or *cheap*.

The tone of your writing is especially important in occupational writing because it reflects the image you project to your readers and thus determines how they will respond to you, your work, and your company. Depending on your tone, you can appear sincere and intelligent or angry and uninformed. Of course, in all your written work, you need to sound professional and knowledgeable. The wrong tone in a letter or a proposal might cost you a customer. Sarcastic or hostile language will alienate you from your readers, as the letter in Figure 5.5 demonstrates (see page 165).

CHARACTERISTICS OF JOB-RELATED WRITING

Job-related writing characteristically serves six basic functions: (1) to provide practical information, (2) to give facts rather than impressions, (3) to supply visuals to clarify and condense information, (4) to give accurate measurements, (5) to state responsibilities precisely, and (6) to persuade and offer recommendations. These six functions tell you what kind of writing you will produce after you successfully answer the *who, why, what,* and *how*.

1. Providing Practical Information

On-the-job writing requires a practical "here's what you need to do or to know" approach. One such practical approach is **action oriented**. You instruct the reader to do something—assemble a ceiling fan, test for bacteria, perform an audit, or create a website. Another practical approach of job-related writing is **knowledge oriented**. You explain what you want the reader to understand—why a procedure was changed, what caused a problem or solved it, how much progress was made on a job site, or why a new piece of equipment should be purchased.

The following description of the Energy Efficiency Ratio combines both the action-oriented and knowledge-oriented approaches of practical writing.

> Whether you are buying window air-conditioning units or a central air-conditioning system, consider the performance factors and efficiency of the various units on the market. Before you buy, determine the Energy Efficiency Ratio (EER) of the units under consideration. The EER is found by dividing the BTUs (units of heat) that the unit removes from the area to be cooled by the watts (amount of electricity) the unit consumes. The result is usually a number between 5 and 12. The higher the number, the more efficiently the unit will use electricity.[4]

2. Giving Facts, Not Impressions

Occupational writing records what can be seen, heard, felt, tasted, or smelled. The writer uses **concrete language** and specific details. The emphasis is on facts rather than on the writer's feelings or guesses.

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[4] *Source:* New Orleans Public Services, Inc.

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The discussion below, addressed to a group of scientists about the sources of oil spills and their impact on the environment, is an example of writing with objectivity. It describes events and causes without anger or tears. Imagine how much emotion would have been packed into a paragraph by the residents of the coastal states who have watched massive spills come ashore.

> The most critical impact results from the escapement of oil into the ecosystem, both crude oil and refined fuel oils, the latter coming from sources such as marine traffic. Major oil spills occur as a result of accidents such as blowout, pipeline breakage, etc. Technological advances coupled with stringent regulations [can] reduce the chances of such major spills; however, there is [still] a chronic low-level discharge of oil associated with normal drilling and production operations. Waste oils discharged through the river systems and practices associated with tanker transports dump more significant quantities of oils into the ocean, compared to what is introduced by the offshore oil industry. All of this contributes to the chronic low-level discharge of oil into world oceans. The long-range cumulative effect of these discharges is possibly the most significant threat to the ecosystem.[5]

3. Supplying Visuals to Clarify and Condense Information

Visuals are indispensable partners of words in conveying information to your readers. On-the-job writing makes frequent use of visuals—such as tables, charts, photographs, infographs, flow charts, diagrams, and drawings—to clarify and condense information. Thanks to various software packages, you can easily create and insert visuals into your writing. Visuals are discussed in detail in Chapters 10 and 11, and PowerPoint and Prezi presentations are covered in Chapter 16.

Visuals play an important role in the workplace. Note how the photograph in Figure 1.6 can help employees to better understand and follow the accompanying written ergonomics guidelines. A visual like this, reproduced in an employee handbook or displayed on a website, can significantly reduce physical stress and increase a worker's productivity.

The following graphic devices in your letters, reports, and websites can also make your writing easier to read and follow:

- headings, such as "Four Keys to Effective Writing" or "Characteristics of Job-Related Writing"
- subheadings to divide major sections into parts, such as "Providing Practical Information" or "Giving Facts, Not Impressions"
- numbers within a paragraph, or even a line, such as (1) this, (2) this, and (3) also this
- different types of s p a c i n g
- CAPITALIZATION (use sparingly only when necessary)
- *italics* (easily made by a word processing command or indicated in typed copy by underscoring)
- **boldface** (darker print for emphasis)
- symbols (visual markers such as →)
- hypertext (Internet links, often presented underscored, in boldface, or in a different color)

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[5] *Source:* The Offshore Ecology Investigation.

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