

Scot Ober

Contemporary Business Communication

S E C O N D E D I T I O N



**SECOND
EDITION**

Contemporary Business Communication

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Preface

Students don't have to be convinced of the need for high-level communication skills. By the time they enter business communication classes, they know enough about business to appreciate the critical role communication plays in the contemporary organization and the role it will play in helping them get a job and be successful on the job. To sustain this inherent interest, students need a textbook that is current, fast paced, and interesting—just like business itself. Thus, the first objective of *Contemporary Business Communication (CBC)* is to present comprehensive coverage of real-world concepts in an interesting and lively manner.

At the same time, we know that many students have difficulty recognizing how to shape communications to meet the needs of a business situation. They need to be guided through the process of analyzing the problem and tailoring the message to their purpose. Thus, the second objective of *CBC* is to help students develop the analytical skills they will need on the job.

The response to the first edition of *Contemporary Business Communication* has been gratifying, especially the helpful comments and suggestions received from users around the country. Based on this feedback, changes in the discipline, and changes in the business workplace, this edition of *CBC* has been extensively revised to provide students with the skills they need to communicate effectively in the complex and ever-changing contemporary business environment.

FEATURES NEW TO THIS EDITION

Several features have been added to make this edition of *CBC* more effective for the student and more convenient for the instructor.

Instructor's Annotated Edition

Complementing the "easy-to-learn" approach of the first edition is the "easy-to-teach" approach of the second edition, made possible in large part by the addition of an *Instructor's Annotated Edition*. The IAE provides specific teaching aids right at the point where you need them; for example:

- Miniature copies of the transparencies and transparency masters are shown in the chapter margins of the IAE so that you can see immediately what enrichment materials are available for each section of the text. The 100 color transparencies and the 50 transparency masters included in the *Instructor's Resource Manual* are all new and all contain original material, such as summaries of key concepts, additional bad/good paired examples, and additional model documents.
- Marginal notes refer you to appropriate sections in the teaching support package for suggested solutions to text exercises, additional Microwriting exercises, additional examples, and the like.
- Teaching tips and interesting business examples offer resources to enrich your lectures.

“Say it directly”

Today's managers are busy and must make every minute count. They prefer—indeed, many even *demand*—directness in messages from their subordinates. Thus, for the first time, this text teaches a direct organizational plan (major idea first) for *all* messages (including persuasive and bad-news messages) that travel up the organization from subordinate to superior. Messages from superiors to subordinates continue to follow the familiar direct organizational plan for good news and routine messages and indirect plan for persuasive and bad-news messages.

Reference Manual

New to this edition is a 63-page built-in Reference Manual that students will use throughout the course and throughout their professional lives. The Reference Manual contains the following sections:

- Rules, examples, and exercises for correct *grammar, punctuation, and number usage*;
- Detailed *formatting standards* for all aspects of correspondence and reports;
- A *spelling list* of the 1,000 most commonly misspelled words in typical business writing;
- Appropriate methods for *documenting sources* (including footnotes, endnotes, and author/year citations) in both APA and MLA styles
- A list of *proofreading symbols* and commonly used grading symbols (including cross-references to related sections in the text).

Streamlined Content

Students learn to communicate by practicing communicating—not just by *reading* about communicating. Thus, the second edition of *CBC* has been streamlined in a number of ways to provide more efficient instruction. Every chapter has been tightened to present the needed information in the

most useful format. The report unit has been decreased from five to four chapters by deleting the chapter on specialized reports (proposals, policies, and procedures have been retained and are now covered in Chapter 10). In addition, all formatting instructions for letters, memos, and reports have been moved out of the text chapters and into the new Reference Manual, where they are available for easy reference.

These changes, combined with the smaller, more convenient physical size of the text, will help your students learn in a productive environment.

RETAINED FROM THE PREVIOUS EDITION

In addition to these features new to the second edition, many of the features introduced in the first edition have been expanded to make them even more effective.

Microwriting

Microwriting activities—detailed studies of typical communication tasks—proved to be one of the most popular features of the first edition, and they have been expanded in the present edition. Beginning with the first writing chapter (Chapter 5), each chapter contains a three-part Microwriting activity, which includes the *problem* (a situation that requires a communication task), the *process* (a series of questions with answers that provides step-by-step guidance for accomplishing the communication task), and the *product* (a fully formatted finished document). Microwriting activities require students to focus their efforts on developing a strategy for the message before beginning to compose the message, and they serve as a step-by-step model for composing the end-of-chapter exercises.

The Microwriting activities in each chapter all contain the answers to the process questions. New to each chapter in this edition is an end-of-chapter Microwriting exercise that poses process questions and then requires the student to provide answers, thus more actively engaging the student in the problem-solving process. The *Instructor's Resource Manual* contains additional Microwriting exercises.

Spotlight on Contemporary Issues

Chapter 2 of the present edition continues the first edition's introduction of three contemporary issues that are having an impact on business communication: the increasing international and intercultural nature of contemporary business, technology in the workplace, and the growing importance of the legal and ethical dimensions of business.

In addition, throughout the text, boxed features called Spotlights show how these issues affect the specific topic covered in each chapter. These Spotlights (entitled *Spotlight Across Cultures*, *Spotlight on Technology*, and *Spotlight on Law and Ethics*) have been updated and expanded—from 17 in the first edition to 24 in the present edition.

The Spotlights are specifically designed to reinforce criteria from the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) for teaching the international, technological, and ethical dimensions of business. As a matter of fact, the entire text has been designed to meet AACSB Accreditation Standard C.1.2.c, which now states directly that “the business curriculum should include written and oral communication as an important characteristic” (*Standards for Business and Accounting Accreditation*, American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, St. Louis, MO, 1991).

Urban Systems: An Ongoing Case Study

As in the first edition, every chapter in the present edition ends with a case study involving Urban Systems (US), a small entrepreneurial company whose primary product is Ultra Light, a new paper-thin light source that promises to revolutionize the illumination industry. A company profile (complete with a photograph of each major player) is contained in the Appendix to Chapter 1, and each chapter presents a communication problem faced by one of these managers. As students systematically solve these 17 case studies, they face communication problems similar to those typically found in the workplace.

The continuing nature of the case study provides these positive learning experiences:

- Students are able to use richer contextual clues to solve communication problems than are possible in the shorter end-of-chapter exercises.
- Students become intimately familiar with the managers and the company and must select what is relevant from a mass of data, thereby learning to deal with information overload.
- Because the same situations frequently carry over into subsequent chapters, students must face the consequences of their earlier decisions.
- Many cases require students to solve the same communication problem from two different perspectives.
- The cases provide excellent opportunities for practicing collaborative communication.

New to this edition is the addition of a Critical Thinking section to each case, which requires higher-order reasoning skills to analyze the situation before beginning to communicate.

Continuing Examples and Exercises

Continuing examples are often used throughout the chapter (or even carried forward to the next chapter) in both the text and in the end-of-chapter exercises. For example, in Chapter 6, students first assume the role of buyer and write a claim letter and later assume the role of seller and answer the same claim letter by writing an adjustment letter.

These continuing examples and exercises show that communication problems are not solved in a vacuum. They’re more realistic because they

give a sense of following a problem through to completion; they're more interesting because they provide a continuing thread to the chapter; and they reinforce the concept of audience analysis because students must first assume the role of sender and later the role of receiver for the same communication task.

Full-Page Annotated Models

Even more full-page models of each major writing task appear in this edition (now more than 60 in all, including 17 models in the Reference Manual). Each model is shown in complete, ready-to-send format so that students become familiar with the appropriate format for each kind of writing assignment. A variety of correct styles are illustrated and annotated, and each model provides step-by-step composing notes in the side margin. Unique to this text are the grammar and mechanics notes in the bottom margin, which call attention to specific illustrations of the grammar and mechanics rules presented in the Reference Manual.

Efficient Organizational Plan

The present edition follows the same logical organizational plan introduced in the previous edition:

- Part I—Communicating in Business (Chapters 1–2) presents basic communication theory in a nontechnical manner and introduces three contemporary issues that affect business communication.
- Part II—Developing Your Writing Skills (Chapters 3–5) introduces and illustrates basic writing principles, with one complete chapter devoted to the writing process.
- Part III—Basic Correspondence (Chapters 6–9) provides instruction and many annotated, fully formatted models of routine, persuasive, bad-news, and special messages. Audience analysis and legal/ethical implications are discussed throughout.
- Part IV—Report Writing (Chapters 10–13) includes separate chapters on data collection and on data analysis. The implications of technology are covered at each stage of the reporting process, including computerized data searches, computerized data analysis, and document design (desktop publishing).
- Part V—Oral Communication (Chapters 14–15) takes students completely through planning and giving a business presentation. Also covered are business meetings (including parliamentary procedure), listening skills, telephone communication (including voice mail), dictation, and business etiquette.
- Part VI—Employment Communication (Chapters 16–17) covers every part of the job-search process, including the legal and ethical dimensions of the job campaign.

Other Student Aids

CBC contains the following additional features to help students master the concepts presented:

- The end-of-chapter exercises have been updated and substantially expanded, with 50% more exercises than in the first edition. They deal with such current real-world problems as environmental concerns, smokers' versus nonsmokers' rights, NAFTA, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, and AIDS in the workplace.
- Chapter-opening vignettes illustrate the communication tasks of actual managers at real corporations. New to this edition is an end-of-chapter exercise that relates specifically to the corporation introduced in the opening vignette.
- Nineteen checklists provide brief, step-by-step outlines for completing specific types of communication tasks.
- Five self-instructional LABS (Language Arts Basics) in the Reference Manual cover standard English usage in short, easy-to-manage installments. Each LAB presents the most important rules for that topic, plenty of illustrations of each rule, and exercises to test student mastery.
- Each chapter is packed with practical, easy-to-understand illustrations of each concept introduced.
- Marginal notes summarize the important points in the chapter, and a list of key terms at the end of each chapter defines all technical vocabulary introduced in the chapter.
- The revision stage of the writing process receives full attention, beginning with detailed instructions in Chapter 5 and reinforced in the report chapters and in every Microwriting activity.
- A lively and crisp writing style speaks directly to the student.

COMPLETE PACKAGE OF SUPPORT MATERIALS

In addition to the Instructor's Annotated Edition, the teaching and learning package for *Contemporary Business Communication*, Second Edition, includes:

- *Instructor's Resource Manual* with 50 transparency masters
- 100 acetate transparencies
- *Study Guide* with *The Job Seeker's Handbook*
- *Test Bank* with approximately 1,200 questions
- *Computerized Test Bank*
- Video case studies for *Contemporary Business Communication*
- *CBC Grammar Review Software*

Instructor's Resource Manual

The Instructor's Resource Manual presents useful guidelines and additional teaching materials, including chapter overviews, answers to review and discussion questions, suggestions for and sample solutions to chapter exercises, fully formatted solutions to all letter-writing exercises, solutions to Urban Systems cases, sample reports, additional Microwriting samples, and answers to all exercises in the Reference Manual. Over 50 transparency masters include solutions to selected in-text exercises.

Acetate Transparencies

100 acetate transparencies include summaries of key concepts, good/bad paired examples, text figures, and additional model documents.

Study Guide with The Job Seeker's Handbook

This specially priced student resource reinforces the principles of successful business communication, and provides valuable career-planning guidance. To extend students' understanding of every chapter, *The Study Guide* offers objective, short-answer, and revision exercises. Additional drills strengthen grammar, mechanics, and spelling skills. The *Study Guide* contains diverse samples of real-world correspondence.

The Job Seeker's Handbook included in the *Study Guide* provides to-the-point coverage of important job-hunting techniques, useful tips on self-assessment, and a wide variety of practical exercises. It includes special sections on developing a powerful résumé, writing persuasive cover letters, successful interviewing, follow-up tactics, and results-oriented career strategies.

Test Bank

The all-new *Test Bank* contains approximately 1,200 test questions for 17 chapters, including multiple-choice and true/false items, short-answer questions, revision exercises, and writing cases.

Computerized Test Bank

This microcomputer program aids instructors in preparing examinations consisting of any quantity and combination of questions. With the program, the instructor selects questions from the *Test Bank* and produces a test master—and alternate versions, if desired—for easy duplication.

Video Case Studies

Five video case studies reinforce business communication concepts, covering such topics as oral communication, new communication technologies, business writing, and intercultural issues. The case studies introduce stu-

dents to the changing communication environment at companies such as Au Bon Pain, Ronald McDonald Children's Charities, and Chemical Bank. For each video, discussion questions and suggested writing assignments are provided.

CBC Grammar Review Software

The concise explanations, clear examples, and nearly 300 interactive exercises in this review program supplement the grammar and mechanics coverage in the text. This software is available for IBM and Macintosh computers.

American Heritage Dictionary

The American Heritage Dictionary is an invaluable resource for college and career success. The best-selling third edition is the most complete, up-to-date, and heavily illustrated dictionary available. Instructors may order the hardcover, thumb-indexed *American Heritage College Dictionary, Third Edition* in a shrink-wrapped package with *Contemporary Business Communication*. Also available is a brief hardcover version, *The American Heritage Concise Dictionary, Third Edition*, which also may be shrink-wrapped with *Contemporary Business Communication*.

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Brief Contents

PART I

Communicating in Business 1

CHAPTER 1 Understanding Business Communication 2

Appendix to Chapter 1 27

CHAPTER 2 Contemporary Issues in Business Communication 32

PART II

Developing Your Writing Skills 55

CHAPTER 3 Writing with Style: Individual Elements 56

CHAPTER 4 Writing with Style: Overall Tone 87

CHAPTER 5 The Process of Writing 108

PART III

Basic Correspondence 141

CHAPTER 6 Routine Messages 142

CHAPTER 7 Persuasive Messages 177

CHAPTER 8 Bad-News Messages 215

CHAPTER 9 Special Messages 250

PART IV

Report Writing 291

CHAPTER 10 Planning the Report 292

CHAPTER 11 Collecting the Data 324

CHAPTER 12 Analyzing the Data and Preparing Visual Aids 362

CHAPTER 13 Writing the Report 401

PART V

Oral Communication 451

CHAPTER 14 Business Presentations 452

CHAPTER 15 Other Types of Nonwritten Communication 494

PART VI

Employment Communication 529

CHAPTER 16 Your Résumé and Job-Application Letter 530

CHAPTER 17 The Job Interview and Follow-Up 567

REFERENCE MANUAL 593

SECTION A Language Arts Basics 594

SECTION B Basic Spelling List for Business Writing 624

SECTION C Formatting Business Documents 629

SECTION D Grading Symbols 653

Contents

PART I

Communicating in Business 1

CHAPTER

Understanding Business Communication 2

Communicating in Organizations	3
The Components of Communication	4
The Stimulus	6
The Filter	6
The Message	8
The Medium	8
The Destination	8
The Dynamic Nature of Communication	9
Urban Systems: A Continuing Case Study	9
Types of Communication	10
Verbal Communication	10
■ Spotlight on Technology: Overcoming Information Anxiety	12
Nonverbal Communication	12
Directions of Communication	15
The Formal Communication Network	15
The Informal Communication Network	17
Barriers to Communication	18
Verbal Barriers	18
Nonverbal Barriers	21
Summary	22

Key Terms	23
Review and Discussion	23
Exercises	24

- Continuing Case 1: Urban Systems Jumps the Gun 25

Wordwise	26
Appendix to Chapter 1: Urban Systems, Inc.	27

CHAPTER

2 Contemporary Issues in Business Communication 32

Three Issues Affecting Communication	33
Diversity and Communication	34
Language Differences	35
Cultural Differences	36
Group-Oriented Behavior	37
Strategies for Communicating Across Cultures	38
Technology and Communication	39
Word Processing	40
Electronic Communications	41
Implications of Technology for Communications	43
Ethics and Communication	45
Defamation	45
Invasion of Privacy	45
Fraud and Misrepresentation	46
Other Ethical Considerations	46
■ Spotlight on Law and Ethics: How Would You Respond?	47

Summary 48
 Key Terms 48
 Review and Discussion 49
 Exercises 50

■ *Continuing Case 2: Urban Systems Sees the Light* 52

Wordwise 53

PART II

Developing Your Writing Skills 55

CHAPTER

3 Writing with Style: Individual Elements 56

What Do We Mean by Style? 57

Choosing the Right Words 59

1. Write Clearly 60
2. Prefer Short, Simple Words 63
3. Write with Vigor 64

■ *Spotlight Across Cultures: Same Rules the World Over* 66

4. Write Concisely 67
5. Prefer Positive Language 70

Writing Effective Sentences 71

6. Use a Variety of Sentence Types 71
7. Use Active and Passive Voice Appropriately 73

Developing Logical Paragraphs 74

8. Keep Paragraphs Unified and Coherent 75
9. Control Paragraph Length 78

Summary 79

Key Terms 80

Review and Discussion 80

Exercises 81

■ *Continuing Case 3: Stetsky Corrects the Boss* 85

Wordwise 86

CHAPTER

4 Writing with Style: Overall Tone 87

What Do We Mean by Tone? 88

10. Write Confidently 88
11. Use a Courteous and Sincere Tone 89
12. Use Appropriate Emphasis and Subordination 90

■ *Spotlight on Technology: Electronic Punctuation Tones Up E-Mail* 91

13. Use Nondiscriminatory Language 93
14. Stress the "You" Attitude 96
15. Write at an Appropriate Level of Difficulty 98

■ *Checklist 1: Writing with Style* 100

Effective Business Writing 101

Summary 102

Key Terms 102

Review and Discussion 102

Exercises 103

■ *Continuing Case 4: Drew Drafts a Drab Memo* 106

Wordwise 107

CHAPTER

5 The Process of Writing 108

An Overview of the Writing Process 109

Planning 111

- Purpose 111
- Audience Analysis 112
- Content 116
- Organization 116

Drafting 117

- Getting Started 118

Revising 120

- Revising for Content 121
- Revising for Style 121
- Revising for Correctness 122

Formatting 122

- *Spotlight on Technology: Revising on the Computer* 123
- *Checklist 2: The Writing Process* 124

Proofreading 125

Introducing Microwriting Activities 126

Microwriting: A Simple Memo 127

Summary 132

Key Terms 132

Review and Discussion 132

Exercises 133

- *Continuing Case 5: Two Heads are Better Than One* 138

Wordwise 139

PART III

Basic Correspondence 141

CHAPTER

6 Routine Messages 142

Planning the Routine Message 143

Routine Requests 145

Major Idea First 145

Explanation and Details 146

- *Spotlight Across Cultures: When in Rome . . .* 147
- Friendly Closing 148
- Routine Replies 148

- *Checklist 3: Routine Requests and Replies* 152

Routine Claim Letters 152

Routine Adjustment Letters 157

Overall Tone 157

Good News First 158

Explanation 158

Positive, Forward-Looking Closing 160

- *Checklist 4: Routine Claim and Adjustment Letters* 163

Microwriting: A Routine Adjustment Letter 164

Summary 167

Key Terms 167

Review and Discussion 167

Exercises 168

- *Continuing Case 6: The Case of the Briefcase* 175

Wordwise 176

CHAPTER

7 Persuasive Messages 177

Planning the Persuasive Message 178

Purpose 179

Audience Analysis 180

- *Spotlight on Technology: A Personal Letter to 5,000 People?* 181

Types of Appeals 182

Organizing a Persuasive Request 184

Determining How to Start the Message 184

Creating Interest and Justifying Your

Request 187

Dealing with Obstacles 188

Motivating Action 188

- *Checklist 5: Persuasive Requests* 189

Common Types of Persuasive Requests 190

Selling an Idea 190

Requesting a Favor 190

Writing a Persuasive Claim 192

Writing a Sales Letter 194

Selecting a Central Selling Theme 194

Gaining the Reader's Attention 196

Creating Interest and Building Desire 197

- *Spotlight on Law and Ethics: What May You Say in a Sales Letter?* 199

Motivating Action 200

- *Checklist 6: Sales Letters* 202

Microwriting: A Sales Letter 203

Summary 206

Key Terms 206

Review and Discussion 206

Exercises 207

- *Continuing Case 7: Flying High at Urban Systems* 213

Wordwise 214

CHAPTER

8 Bad-News Messages 215

Planning the Bad-News Message 216

- Organizing to Suit Your Audience 217
- Justifying Your Decision 221
- Giving the Bad News 222

- *Spotlight on Law and Ethics: Ten Reasons to Consult Your Lawyer* 223

- Closing on a Pleasant Note 223

- *Checklist 7: Bad-News Messages* 225

Bad-News Replies 225

- Rejecting an Idea 226
- Refusing a Favor 226
- Refusing a Claim 228

Bad-News Announcements 232

- Bad News About Normal Operations 232
- Bad News About the Organization 235

- Microwriting: A Bad-News Message* 238

Summary 241

Key Terms 241

Review and Discussion 241

Exercises 242

- *Continuing Case 8: No Such Thing as a Free Flight* 248

Wordwise 249

CHAPTER

9 Special Messages 250

Planning the Special Message 251

Mixed-News Messages 252

- Good News and Bad News 252
- Bad News and Persuasion 252

Messages with Legal Implications 255

- Letters of Recommendation 255

- *Spotlight on Law and Ethics: Legal Implications of Personnel Messages* 256

- Applicant-Rejection Letters 260

- Personnel Evaluations 260

- *Checklist 8: Personnel Messages* 262

- Credit Letters 262

- *Checklist 9: Credit Letters* 267

- Collection Letters 267

- *Checklist 10: Collection Letters* 272

Goodwill Messages 273

- General Guidelines 273

- Congratulatory Messages 274

- Thank-You Notes 274

- Sympathy Notes 275

- Microwriting: A Letter of Recommendation* 277

Summary 280

Key Terms 280

Review and Discussion 280

Exercises 281

- *Continuing Case 9: The Good, the Bad, and the Persuaded* 288

Wordwise 289

PART IV

Report Writing 291

CHAPTER

10 Planning the Report 292

Who Reads and Writes Reports? 293

Characteristics of Business Reports 294

- Reports Vary Widely 294

- The Quality of the Process Affects the Quality of the Product 295

- *Checklist 11: The Reporting Process* 296

- Reports Are Often a Collaborative Effort 297

- Accuracy Is the Most Important Trait 297

Common Types of Reports 298

- Periodic Reports 299

- Proposals 299

- Policies and Procedures 303

- Situational Reports 306

Purposes of Reports 310

Audience Analysis 311

- Internal Versus External Audiences 311

- Authorized Versus Voluntary Reports 311