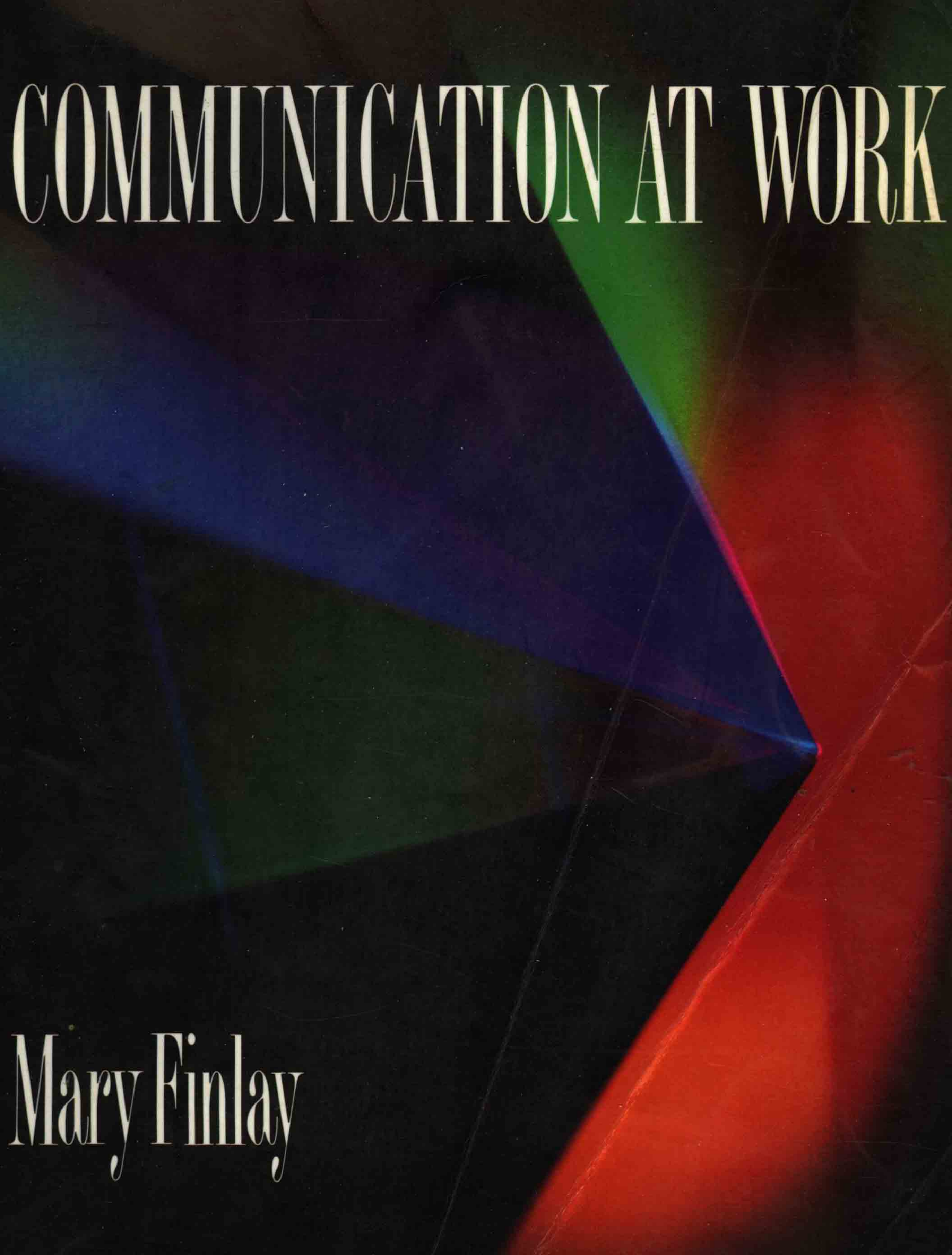

COMMUNICATION AT WORK

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Communication at Work

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Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, Limited
Toronto

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Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Finlay, Mary
Communication at work

ISBN 0-03-922582-8

1. Business communication. 2. Commercial correspondence. 3. Business report writing.
I. Title.

HF5718.F5 1990 651.7 C89-094729-5

Publisher: David Dimmell
Acquisitions Editor: Heather McWhinney
Developmental Editor: Graeme Whitley
Publishing Services Manager: Karen Eakin
Editorial Co-ordinator: Jill Parkinson
Editorial Assistant: Tess Fragoulis
Copy Editor: Cy Strom
Interior Design: Bob Garbutt
Cover Design: Daniel Kewley
Typesetting and Assembly: True to Type Inc.
Printing and Binding: The Alger Press Limited

Printed in Canada
1 2 3 4 5 94 93 92 91 90

Preface

TO THE INSTRUCTOR

Communication at Work is designed to help students apply the communication skills that they have acquired in school, at work, and in their personal lives to speaking and writing situations that they will encounter in their full-time careers. Case studies and scenarios showing likely work situations encourage students to discover and analyze what they already know about effective communication, as well as introducing them to new ideas. The text then organizes this analysis into concrete, problem-solving steps, illustrated by examples taken from a wide range of employment areas. Students are then given the opportunity to apply these steps to new situations, reinforcing the problem-solving approach and providing immediate feedback on their understanding of the material.

The oral communication sections have been integrated into each chapter to emphasize the similarities between for instance, say, relating good news orally and giving good news in writing. This approach recognizes the fact that the oral communication skills required by college graduates are not limited to formal oral presentations, but include sales calls, interviews, telephone inquiries, and meetings.

Similarly, rather than leaving electronic media to a separate "electronic office" section, each chapter contains a segment introducing students to computer and other technologies that can help them achieve the communication objectives of that chapter more efficiently. This approach reinforces the important point that new technology does not render good writing and speaking skills obsolete, but rather extends them and allows them to be applied with less mechanical effort. Removing many of the boring and repetitive elements of communicating on the job leaves more time for planning and revising.

Finally, a Handbook of English Grammar and Usage has been included as an appendix to aid students in communicating effectively. Although not exhaustive, the handbook provides students with useful references without the added expense of buying a separate grammar text.

Communication at Work has come from my experience teaching students in a wide variety of business and applied arts programs. I believe that offering a foundation in thinking and planning skills, along with the opportunity for frequent writing and speaking practice, will prepare students to communicate successfully.

TO THE STUDENT

Communication at Work is designed to help you apply your speaking and writing skills to the type of communication situations you are likely to encounter at work.

Whatever career you plan to pursue, the ability to communicate effectively will be important to your success. When employers are surveyed about the skills they look for in hiring and promoting personnel, communication skills always rank near the top of the list. While the technical expertise or subject content you acquire in other courses will quickly become obsolete, you will be able to apply the principles of good communication to whatever you do. Furthermore, your ability as a reader, writer, speaker, and listener will help you acquire new information and new technical skills that will keep you productive and motivated throughout your career.

To get the most out of your textbook, in conjunction with your classroom participation and take-home assignments, take the following steps:

1. When your instructor assigns a chapter, read the learning objectives on the first page to get an overview of the material.
2. The case studies that introduce major topics in each chapter are a chance for you to identify what you already know about effective writing and speaking at work. Read the cases carefully and answer the questions in writing. Your instructor may ask you to do this in class. Compare your answers to the ones in the text and take note of any significant differences. These steps will help you to integrate new insights with what you already know.
3. Sections of the text after the case studies break down general principles into practical step-by-step explanations. You will have frequent opportunities to practice these steps by doing the exercises in your book. Again, your teacher may ask you to work on these in class.
4. The fill-in-the-blank section gives you an opportunity to review your understanding of the material in the chapter. When completed, it will give you a synopsis of the key points.
5. Reread the learning objectives. Each objective is an action that you should now be able to carry out.
6. Your instructor may assign one or more of the exercises in the textbook, or may give you an alternative assignment to test your success at achieving the objectives of the chapter.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Kim Edwards for her unfailing support in preparing *Communication at Work*. I wish to thank the people who provided their editorial advice, John Roberts, Mohawk College, Philip Walsh, Algonquin College, and Ed Bebee for his technical advice in preparing the technological communication elements of this text. I also wish to thank my colleagues in Canadian post-secondary institutions who reviewed the manuscript and made constructive comments, in particular; Joe Aversa, of Humber College, Elizabeth Reynolds, of the Cabot Institute, Ernest Chiasson, of N.A.I.T., and David Parsons, of Lakehead University. Finally, I would like to thank the people at Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada; in particular, David Dimmell, Publisher, Heather McWhinney, Acquisitions Editor, Graeme Whitley, Developmental Editor, Jill Parkinson, Editorial Co-ordinator, and Tess Fragoulis, Editorial Assistant.

M.F.

Publisher's Note to Instructors and Students

This text book is a key component of your course. If you are the instructor of this course, you undoubtedly considered a number of texts carefully before choosing this as the one that will work best for your students and you. The authors and publishers of this book spent considerable time and money to ensure its high quality, and we appreciate your recognition of this effort and accomplishment.

If you are a student, we are confident that this text will help you meet the objectives of your course. You will also find it helpful after the course is finished, as a valuable addition to your personal library. So hold on to it.

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And since we want to hear what you think about this book, please be sure to send us the stamped reply card at the end of the text. This will help us to continue publishing high-quality books for your courses.

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PART ONE

Introduction to Communication

CHAPTER 1

The Communication Process

Chapter Objectives

Successful completion of this chapter will enable you to:

1. Identify five advantages of oral communication.
2. Identify ten barriers to oral communication originating with the speaker.
3. Identify ten barriers to oral communication originating with the listener.
4. Identify five advantages to written communication.
5. Identify five barriers to written communication.
6. Select the medium, oral or written, best suited for your message, audience, and purpose.
7. Plan your oral and written communication to overcome communication barriers.

Introduction

Communication is a process. A process is a set of actions or changes that brings about a specific result. In the communication process, a message is conveyed from sender to receiver. Because a message is something you can see or hear, it is tempting to think that the message **is** communication. But communication involves an interaction among sender, message, and receiver; it is a process, not a product. This point is important to remember when you are trying to improve communication or understand why it broke down.

At work, we often have little choice about messages that must be conveyed—your cheque is in the mail, you got the job, your car is ready—but we **are** able to control whether or not those messages are communicated effectively to our audience.

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