



sixth  
edition

# Managerial **Communication**

Strategies and Applications

Geraldine E. Hynes



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Sam Houston State University



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# **Managerial Communication**

*Sixth Edition*



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# Preface to the Sixth Edition

**T**he roots of this textbook extend back to 1984, when John Wiley and Sons published *Managerial Communication: A Strategic Approach*, by Larry Smeltzer and John Waltman. Their practical, results-oriented examination of managerial communication was groundbreaking at the time. In the Preface they stated the book's objective: "to develop managers who communicate in a creative manner by understanding and strategically applying appropriate concepts." That objective is still valid.

A second edition added Don Leonard as third author in 1991. I adopted the 1994 edition, authored by Larry Smeltzer and Don Leonard, by then titled *Managerial Communication: Strategies and Applications*. I had been looking for a graduate-level text that presented a balanced approach to workplace communication and that was written for managers and executives.

These strengths drew me to that early edition:

- A strategic approach
- A solid research base
- Comprehensive coverage of contemporary issues
- An even-handed examination of oral and written communication channels
- A focus on managerial rather than entry-level competencies

I came onboard as third author with Smeltzer and Leonard for the 2002 edition and obtained sole authorship starting with the 2008 edition. As I revise yet again, my goal is to ensure that the qualities that made the original book unique and successful are still present in this sixth edition. Truth is truth. It does not change with the times. Therefore, my task is to bring timeless communication principles into the contemporary workplace. To meet the needs of today's busy manager/student, I updated the chapters, describing current business practices, summarizing relevant research, and providing guidelines for strategic managerial communication.

The reality is that an effective contemporary manager must possess a wide range of skills. While being accountable to an executive team and a customer base, a manager must be able to motivate subordinates and cross functional work groups with diverse backgrounds, interpret complicated rules, foster process improvement, and meet sometimes-unclear organizational expectations. Furthermore, today's manager often must use new technology to accomplish these tasks. Since these advanced abilities do not necessarily

come from prior work experience, communication education is a vital component in managerial development.

Working on the sixth edition of this textbook has been both enjoyable and challenging. It has forced me to evaluate the content of the managerial communication course I teach in our MBA program at Sam Houston State University, to sort out what is important and what is no longer important for my students to know and be able to do. I hope that the results of these efforts satisfy other students' professional communication needs as well. After all, we know for sure that effective communication leads to managerial and organizational success. The value of the course is not controversial; the key is to keep the course content fresh.

# What's New in This Edition

**M**any adopters of the fifth edition of *Managerial Communication: Strategies and Applications* indicated that major strengths are its balanced approach to managerial writing and oral communication, the end-of-chapter cases and exercises that offer opportunities for practice and application of the principles, and the comprehensive instructor supplements. So I retained these strengths in the sixth edition. On the other hand, this edition shakes things up a bit. After hearing adopters' suggestions, I made changes to the content of the chapters as well as to their sequence; the new features are described below.

## BOOKWIDE CHANGES

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My rationale for restructuring the book's topics is that instructors said that they form student teams early in their course and that they work on oral communication skills first. Therefore, it made sense to move forward the chapters on team communication strategies and on presentations; these chapters now constitute Part II. Since instructors said that writing is another topic they typically address early, Part III now covers writing skills; Part IV addresses strategies for understanding messages, and Part V examines interpersonal communication strategies.

A second major improvement to the sixth edition is that new cases focusing on technology appear at the end of every chapter. Instructors said that brief cases with discussion questions are an important resource because they provide opportunities for students to apply the chapter material to realistic scenarios. Furthermore, cases centering on emerging technologies are the most useful. So I added new cases with a focus on technology to the best cases and end-of-chapter exercises from earlier editions. They reflect important trends such as globalization and workplace diversity as well as the technology trend, and they are appropriate for both individual and group assignments.

Another new addition will improve students' critical thinking skills. Called Stop and Think, this feature appears several times in every chapter and consists of questions that encourage readers to analyze the principles in the chapter, apply them to their own experiences, and promote synthesis. Although the Stop and Think inserts act as strategic pauses to solidify students' understanding, they also can be used for class discussions or debates.

A fourth change to the content of this edition is expanded coverage of ethics. I introduced ethics in the first chapter and added coverage in subsequent chapters. This integrated approach seems more appropriate than a separate chapter on ethics, since ethical considerations are important in every managerial communication situation.



The final general change worth noting here is the addition of more visual aids. Sample documents in textboxes, tables, figures, charts, and checklists are found in each chapter. Summary tables may be especially helpful for visual learners; they also help break up large blocks of text.

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## CHAPTER-SPECIFIC CHANGES

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Chapter-specific improvements in the sixth edition include the following:

- Chapter 1 (“Communication in Contemporary Organizations”) has an expanded consideration of ethics and an expanded discussion of leadership orientations and managerial goals. I updated all the statistics and replaced obsolete descriptions and references.
- Chapter 2 (“The Managerial Communication Process”) includes a clearer discussion of the strategic communication model, four Stop and Think inserts, five new summary tables, a new case focusing on technology, and refreshed, updated citations.
- Chapter 3 (“Communicating with Technology”) is updated to include dos and don’ts for texting, blogging, and instant messaging. Emphasis is on the principles and best practices that apply to both emerging technologies and better-established technologies, such as e-mail and videoconferencing. A new section on surveillance warns students to expect that their employers will monitor their technology use.
- Chapter 4 (“Managing Meetings and Teams”) is the chapter that reviewers ranked as the most important one in the text. It includes a considerably expanded, up-to-date discussion of electronic meetings, a section on team projects, and strategies for managing virtual teams.
- Chapter 5 (“Making Presentations”) has a new section on team presentations, a new section on impromptu speaking and informal briefings, and an expanded discussion of ethical persuasion.
- Chapter 6 (“Contemporary Managerial Writing”) introduces the plain language movement and provides examples of conversational style in business and government documents. I updated the references, added an end-of-chapter case, and inserted four Stop and Think pauses.
- Chapter 7 (“Writing Routine Messages”) offers guidelines for formatting and designing e-mail, letters, and memos. The chapter presents two basic organizational patterns and explains when each is appropriate. The discussion of negative messages includes the impact of apologies. I added more examples and expanded the discussion of positive, negative, and persuasive messages.

- Chapter 8 (“Writing Management Reports and Proposals”) takes an in-depth look at special business reports, including proposals and analytical reports. I included a description of PowerPoint decks as reports, additional examples of memo and letter reports, and more information about graphics. The parts of a formal business report are now more clearly labeled, explained, and exemplified.
- Chapter 9 (“Managerial Listening”) has a new section on networking skills and an expanded section on specific techniques for interactive listening. I inserted five Stop and Think pauses, a new case focused on technology, and a nifty group exercise at the end of the chapter. You will also see several new examples, updated references, and more.
- Chapter 10 (“Nonverbal Communication”) now includes an interesting section about recent research on nonverbal behavior in the workplace that uses electronic sensors. The discussion is expanded considerably, several citations are new or updated, and it has a new end-of-chapter case. I inserted five Stop and Think pauses and added three new tables, too.
- Chapter 11 (“Intercultural Managerial Communication”) explores cultural differences in the meanings of colors, paralanguage, and time, with cases and examples of the concepts drawn from today’s global marketplace. It emphasizes the relational meanings that multicultural workers see in their communication. The chapter includes a stronger focus on multinational corporations and on global business, such as translation software. I also updated the statistics, added a new end-of-chapter case on technology, and included a new class exercise for small groups.
- Chapter 12 (“Conflict Management”) has new material on the benefits of conflict, the importance of shared perception, and the impact of power on conflict.
- Chapter 13 (“Managerial Negotiation”) includes a major new section that describes how networking can increase influence at work.
- Chapter 14 (“Conducting Interviews”) presents guidelines for networking as an employment search tool. It also has a new section explaining legal issues for performance reviews.

# Acknowledgments

**M**ost importantly, I wish to acknowledge John Waltman, Larry Smeltzer, and Don Leonard, who pioneered this textbook. They explicated the centrality of communication for managerial success, which I now know is an enormous undertaking. I deeply respect their wisdom and vision.

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I am forever grateful to my family—Jim, Maureen and Erasmus, Kellie and Bob, and my incandescent grandchildren, Ben, Aaron, Trixie, Samuel, and Clara—for their unreserved love and support.

Finally, I salute my students because they are dedicated to improving their managerial communication skills and strategies, and because they believe that I can help them do it. This book is for you.

—Geraldine E. Hynes

# About the Author

Geraldine E. Hynes, PhD, is a professor in the College of Business Administration, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas, USA, where she has taught business and managerial communication at the undergraduate and graduate levels since 2001. She is also a communication consultant, executive coach, and contract trainer for business, government, and not-for-profit organizations. Her award-winning research has been published in scholarly journals and books in several countries and languages. She provides leadership to her discipline through the Association for Business Communication and was elected ABC president in 2010.

*To Jim, who has been my center for more than forty-five years.*

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