

*Second Edition*

# BUSINESS WRITING TODAY

*A Practical Guide*



*Natalie Canavor*

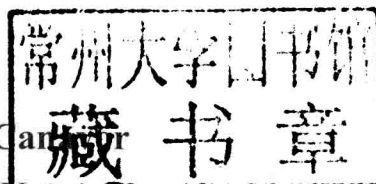


# BUSINESS WRITING TODAY

*A PRACTICAL GUIDE*

**Second Edition**

Natalie Carr  
*New York University*



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# BUSINESS WRITING TODAY

*A Practical Guide*

**Second Edition**

*This book is dedicated to  
Greg, my personal gold standard.*

# PREFACE

This book is for you if

- ✓ you're preparing to begin your career in business, communications or a profession;
- ✓ you're already engaged in a career but want a competitive advantage to help you advance;
- ✓ you're a technology, science or other specialist and want to brush up your contemporary writing skills; or
- ✓ you're an entrepreneur who writes proposals, websites, marketing materials and blogs and wants to make them better.

Today, everybody writes. From everyday e-mails to customer communications, reports to tweets, business writing is a make-or-break skill for just about every career path. Digital technology keeps expanding the possible: It enables us to reach people anywhere in the world and find opportunities. It levels the playing field so small and new businesses can compete with giants. It empowers us to communicate what we can do and who we are to huge audiences and draw selected people to us.

The price of admission is writing—*good* writing, to be more specific.

This book's goal is to show you how to stand out, whatever your endeavor and aspirations. It may differ from other books on writing you've worked with. Rather than focusing on theory or grammar, *Business Writing Today* is based on the author's practical experience as a magazine editor, corporate communicator, journalist and public relations consultant.

It's also based on a history of helping professional communicators and businesspeople write better and more recently, teaching advanced writing seminars for M.S. students in NYU's Public Relations and Corporate Communications program.

*Business Writing Today* equips you to dramatically improve your writing in two ways.

First, it shows you how to strategize everything you write to achieve your goals, both immediate and long-range. You'll emerge with a structured process for thinking through the content, style and tone of everything you write with confidence.

Second, it gives you professional tips and practical techniques to identify your own writing problems and fix them. The ideas are all demonstrated with examples that relate to the messages and documents you'll need to write e-mails, memos, letters, executive summaries, reports, proposals, profiles, networking messages, websites, blogs, presentations, news releases and more.

Complete with assignments, discussion ideas and projects, the book is designed for the classroom. It is also written as a friendly and accessible self-help tool for independent use. Readers will find many ways to make their writing more immediately successful plus tools to sustain their own progress.

If you're familiar with the predecessor edition—*Business Writing in the Digital Age*—you'll find a substantial reorganization, new material and examples, more resources and activities, and many updates. A new chapter provides a toolbox of journalism and PR techniques—how to write news releases, talking points and headlines, and tips for research and interviewing. An expanded chapter on writing for the job hunt brings together guidelines for successful résumés, cover letters and networking. Internal memo writing is covered in its own right, and an expanded presentation skills chapter shows you how to tell your own story and plan presentations.

New View from the Field sidebars, contributed by specialists, offer additional ways to think about effective messages and documents. And more Success Tip features show you how to use communication skills to achieve your personal goals.

This new edition draws on thoughtful input from teachers who use the book and reviewers who generously offered guidance on how to make *Business Writing Today* more useful and valuable.

I'm happy to hear *your* ideas, comments, and questions about the book or any aspect of business writing. Find me at [natalie@canavorcommunications.com](mailto:natalie@canavorcommunications.com).

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Appreciation also goes to my agent, Stacey Czarnowski of Studio B, always responsive and helpful. And I am more than grateful to all my colleagues who generously shared their professional insights and techniques in the three dozen-plus View from the Field features that amplify my own experience. I feel privileged to know every one of you.

And special thanks to the reviewers who provided thoughtful critiques, ideas and suggestions to make *Business Writing Today* a yet-more effective tool for teaching and learning: Allen Mogol, New York University; Antoinette Larkin, University of Cincinnati; Brenda Nevidjon, Duke University; Tim Green, University of Michigan; Steve Thompson, New York University; and Kimberly Laux, University of Michigan-Flint.



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