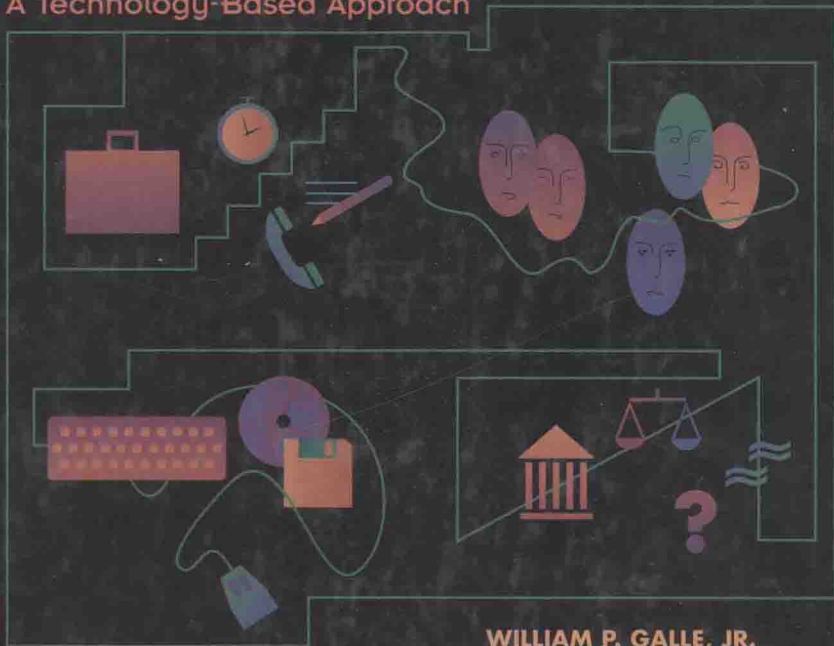


BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

A Technology-Based Approach



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To my family and my colleagues for being patient while I completed this project.

—W.P.G.

To my husband, Don, and my parents, Ray and Lena, for their love and support.

—B.H.N.

To my husband, Gary, my children, Tiffany and Brandon, and my parents, Ellie and Theresa, for their love, support, and patience.

—D.W.L.

To my wife, Lorraine, for all her love, help, and support.

—M.F.V.

A TEXTBOOK FOR A COMPUTER-LITERATE GENERATION

In the latest guidelines for accreditation by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), communication is recognized as a critical skill for the success of business school graduates. Yet, numerous surveys and journal articles repeatedly have called attention to the serious lack of communication skills business school graduates demonstrate. When we decided to write this textbook, we believed that an essential feature must be its applicability to real-world situations. To meet this test, a number of current challenges had to be addressed.

Technology. Of all the challenges, the greatest is the proper use of technology. The most often-cited source of change in our lives is technology. It affects us at home, at play, and, most importantly, at work. Regardless of the setting, if we are to function effectively, we must communicate effectively. And to communicate, we must be familiar and at ease with technology. Its reach is pervasive.

The growing importance of technology is demonstrated by the media attention. Constant discussion on radio and TV talk shows; countless infomercials; interminable professional meetings, seminars, workshops, and other programs about computer-based technology; and increased access to the information superhighway have made it abundantly clear that to be able to function in the 21st century, people will have to be more than simply computer literate.

Business Communication: A Technology-Based Approach contains the very latest information regarding the technology of communication. No other text is as extensive in its coverage of the subject. This book examines current communication methods such as electronic mail, voice mail, teleconferencing, computer networking, and multimedia technology. There are in-depth discussions on the uses and misuses of each. Barriers and solutions to common problems in electronic communication, such as how to avoid "junk mail," how to select the proper electronic medium for conveying a message, and how to use distribution lists and networks, are also discussed.

Two chapters up front address the use of technology for collecting, processing, and sharing information. Other chapters highlight various applications for specific communications. For example, in Chapter 8 we discuss the technology of collaborative writing. Chapters 15 and 16 contain the very latest in job search and interview technology. Appendix C, a special appendix devoted

ed solely to the Internet, describes its origins and how to use the most extensive computer network in the world.

Because we are all immersed in technology, we believe it is critical that any course, and therefore any textbook, about communication must immerse students so that they quickly become familiar with and master it. We also believe that such involvement must be made easy and user friendly. The many applications of technology cited in this book show readers exactly how it affects business communication and their role in it.

Quality Consciousness. Perhaps there was a time when American firms could produce goods that were inexpensive and good, but not fast; inexpensive and fast, but not good; or fast and good, but not inexpensive. The “miracle of Japan” has made it abundantly clear that American firms must now produce goods and services that are fast *and* good *and* relatively inexpensive. To achieve this goal, a new quality orientation is absolutely essential. And a quality focus requires new ways of organizing and communicating. *Business Communication* provides extensive analysis of communication and total quality management, including a discussion of cycle time, project management, team building, and collaborative writing.

Collaboration. The challenges arising from the campaign for quality in America are accompanied by a variety of new requirements for working together. Extensive use of project management, new interdependencies, daily crises, and new forms of organization are all forcing people to work and communicate collaboratively. *Business Communication* devotes an entire chapter to this important issue.

Globalization and Diversity. U.S. business executives are reminded almost daily of the drastic shifts taking place in work-force demographics. For many new employees entering the work force, English is a second language. For others, balancing family and work is a major challenge. These shifts are creating barriers to multicultural communication: translation problems, confusion of nonverbal cues and figures of speech, inadequate formats for global business letters and other documents, and interpersonal conflicts resulting from growing ethnocentrism. *Business Communication* concentrates on understanding culture, barriers to multicultural oral and written communication, and ways of dealing with cultural barriers in general.

Legal and Ethical Issues. The United States is repeatedly characterized as a litigious society, and rightly so. We have more attorneys per capita than any other nation. Congress is drafting legislation to limit damages in liability cases. In an information-based economy, more individuals are required to communicate more often. And each time they do, they must be aware of increasingly complex legal and ethical issues. To ensure that business graduates are competent in this area, *Business Communication* includes discussion of key issues pertaining to business communication such as defamation, privacy rights, employment laws, and copyright laws. Ethical issues in key types of business correspondence—for example, advertisements, letters, reports, proposals, and contracts—are outlined and examined.

ORGANIZATION

The success of any company is contingent on communication effectiveness—both internal and external. Because our society is increasingly technological and global, the need for communication efficiency and effectiveness is even more crucial. To aid the reader in becoming a more technologically competent communicator, we have structured the content and organization of this text with great care and focused on incremental learning.

Business Communication is a comprehensive, contemporary approach to communication for all types of organizations, private and public, large and small. The content is presented in a format that gives equal attention to all types of communication: written, oral, and nonverbal. It is intended to expose students to the critical skills they will need to be successful in their careers and lives in general.

Part 1 of *Business Communication* expresses in commonsense terms the critical nature of business communication underlying the renewed emphasis by the AACSB. And to underscore the importance of increasingly sophisticated technology, two chapters in this section discuss technology and its impact on business communication.

Chapter 1 provides an excellent rationale for the study of business communication and demonstrates the many facets of communication in organizations. The chapter details basic guidelines for overcoming key interpersonal communication barriers, dealing with defensiveness, overcoming semantic problems, improving listening skills, and communicating effectively through downward and upward communication channels.

Chapters 2 and 3 emphasize the many opportunities to use technology to increase personal and organizational productivity. Current examples of technological tools are used throughout the chapters to show how the communication process can be enhanced. Tools used in planning, analyzing, organizing, and sharing information are discussed and demonstrated. Tools for writing, editing, and presenting documents also are discussed and demonstrated. Collaborative writing tools are also examined. Finally, the chapters illustrate and reinforce the idea that perceptions are based on impressions, which can be enhanced by using technology.

The thorough, step-by-step approach of covering the technological tools that are available for use throughout the communication process is a feature of these chapters. The coverage reinforces the notion that technology should be used to its fullest extent to aid a person in producing more effective messages and more impressive documents.

Part 2 focuses on written communication through letters and memoranda. In Chapter 4, students are led through the basic principles of business writing—from establishing the main idea through production of a professionally packaged business document. Chapter 5 explains and demonstrates the direct approach used in various positive writing situations. Chapter 6 focuses on the challenges of writing clear, honest, and sincere messages that convey unpopular, and sometimes difficult, news. Chapter 7 explains and illustrates the process of writing believable and compelling persuasive messages. Each chapter includes comprehensive coverage of writing the appropriate messages for positive, negative, and persuasive situations. Numerous examples of effective and ineffective communication are included so that students can assess their under-

standing of key concepts, identify areas for improvement, and prepare effective and efficient written messages.

Part 3 focuses on longer, more complex documents including short reports, long reports, and increasingly important formats such as proposals and project reports that are often prepared collaboratively. Chapter 8 briefly examines the quality movement in the United States and the resulting need for collaboration. Collaborative writing is discussed, and guidelines for producing collaborative documents are presented. Chapters 9, 10, and 11 present a multiphase approach that will help students better understand the steps in preparing a business report. And since the need for written proposals is increasing, thorough coverage of the preparation of different types of proposals is explained to prepare students to write effective proposals.

Because the reader ultimately decides whether a report fails or passes, emphasis on the reader is an important concept for students to understand. Most textbooks superficially cover the differences between a report's problem and purpose; therefore, instructors and students have a difficult time understanding how they differ. The thorough coverage of this topic provides a better understanding of these differences. The use of supportive examples in Chapters 9, 10, and 11 are designed to help students better understand and conceptualize the stages of report preparation.

Part 4 explains why it makes sense to consider listening and speaking at the same time and does so using current research findings and abundant examples. Chapter 12 looks closely at two of the most important communication skills an individual can possess. After barriers to effective listening and speaking are identified, principles of effectiveness are then demonstrated. In Chapter 13 various applications are presented, along with additional guidelines. An obvious and natural extension of listening and speaking is nonverbal communication, which is also covered in this section. Chapter 14 identifies the three major categories of nonverbal communication and demonstrates how an understanding of each can lead to more effective communication. Nonverbal communication occurs in the context of culture and must be understood as such. Cultural barriers and other limitations are discussed and illustrated to sharpen the reader's use of this important language.

Part 5 presents a detailed, 10-step guide to job hunting. Chapter 15 features the necessary preparation for a successful job hunt, considering all the necessary prerequisites for career planning and development. Chapter 16 examines indispensable communications for successful job hunting. A comprehensive job interview is provided, along with commentary on the success of the interviewee.

Part 6 deals with the increasingly important aspects of legal and ethical issues and the international arena. Chapters 17 and 18 are designed to provide students with the up-to-date information and skill-building opportunities they will need to be successful. Legal issues, ethical standards for communication, and international and cross-cultural communication receive extensive coverage.

Chapter 17 focuses on diversity and intercultural communication. Coverage includes topics on understanding culture and its importance to successful relationships, barriers to multicultural oral and written communication, and ways of dealing with cultural barriers in general. Issues discussed include translation problems, nonverbal issues, figures of speech, formats for global business letters, and ethnocentrism. No other text discusses global and cultural diversity communication issues as thoroughly.

Chapter 18, which focuses on legal and ethical issues in communication, first explores the question: What is business ethics? Ethics in key types of business correspondence, such as advertisements, letters, and reports, are examined. The chapter concludes by discussing key issues pertaining to business communication, including topics like defamation, privacy rights, employment laws, and copyright laws.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

Learning Objectives. Clearly written learning objectives are presented at the beginning of each chapter to help students focus on essential chapter elements. These objectives are then reiterated in the end-of-chapter summaries.

Opening Vignettes. Getting students' attention and interest is important at the very beginning of each chapter. This is cleverly accomplished with well-written anecdotes relating to the chapter material. Opening vignettes are often humorous and fun to read; others are serious and compelling. In all cases, they whet the appetite of the reader and reveal the nature of the chapter content.

Boxes. Boxes are used to highlight current trends in the corporate setting, changes in technology, ethical or legal constraints, and techniques for career advancement. Each of the chapters contains useful information and tips in one or more of four categories:

- Diversity Forum
- Technology Link
- Legal/Ethics Advisor
- Career Booster

Margin Notes. Extensive margin notes are included to emphasize key points and make it easier for readers to follow the theme and flow of each chapter.

Examples. Numerous examples are presented to emphasize the concepts presented in each chapter. Examples include:

- logical, step-by-step development of a business message
- positive and negative messages
- persuasive messages
- direct and indirect reports
- short and long reports
- visual aids
- simultaneous coverage of listening and speaking
- in-depth coverage of interviewing and meetings
- nonverbal communication, including cultural limitations
- a ten-step job hunting procedure
- a complete sample job interview with commentary

Exhibits. Thought-provoking exhibits are incorporated throughout all chapters.

Photos and Cartoons. Photos and cartoons are included throughout the text to help students understand and apply text concepts to the world of business.

Communication Tips. At the end of each chapter is a list of communication tips, which quickly reviews the major chapter concepts. Students can use these tips to review their comprehension after reading the chapter or to refer to key communication goals in their careers.

Summaries. Each chapter closes with a summary of the major points of the chapter listed under each of the chapter objectives. Students can clearly see from this section how the major points address the specific objectives.

Key Terms and Glossary. Key terms in each chapter are set in boldface type within the chapter text and also listed in a special section at the end of the chapter with page number references. An end-of-book glossary is also included for quick reference.

Discussion Questions, Exercises, and Cases. Each chapter contains well-developed review questions, exercises, and illuminating cases to facilitate comprehension of important material. Chapters include an extensive selection of discussion questions to allow the instructor and students to review all major points. Development of communication skills obviously requires a great deal of experiential work. So, each chapter also includes a number of excellent exercises designed to test the student's understanding of the skill-building guidelines presented. In several chapters, students are required to demonstrate their analytical skills. To accomplish this objective, many of the chapters include classroom-tested cases.

Appendixes. There are three appendixes to give students in-depth, focused coverage of three technical topics critical to success in using the material presented throughout the textbook. The first presents a review of important guidelines for proper grammar. The second provides current information and guidelines on formatting and documentation of business documents. The third provides a close look at the Internet and helps students actually work through a step-by-step procedure for locating information on the Net.

ANCILLARY MATERIALS

Instructor's Manual and Transparency Masters. The *Instructor's Manual*, written by Myles A. Hassell of the University of New Orleans, was prepared with the busy instructor in mind. Each section is designed to make the job of teaching as easy and time efficient as possible. Chapter summaries include supplementary information for enriching lectures. Solutions are provided, along with tips for getting the most out of the exercises and cases. Additional exercises and cases supplement those in the text. A special section on collaborative writing is featured in the manual. A grammar pretest and posttest are included for instructors who find it essential to assess their students' grammar competencies.

PowerPoint Presentation. An extensive outline of each chapter is provided. The outlines were prepared using *PowerPoint* and allow the instructor to make

an impressive presentation without the need for chalkboards. The ease of use and completeness of the outlines provide the instructor with an outstanding basis for lectures. The computer-based program features clear, colorful slides based on the outline, figures, and exhibits from the chapter material. Myles A. Hassell prepared the media product.

Integrated Video Series. This series of videos makes teaching and learning unbelievably easy. Each video is approximately 15 minutes long, and topical coverage is to the point. Negative and positive examples demonstrate in colorful, sometimes humorous, fashion the use of guidelines for effective communication. The videos are accompanied by a detailed manual to explain the content and to help handle questions.

Irwin Office Reference Manual. This outstanding publication is a ready reference for all those little things students have a difficult time memorizing but need to know. The reference is divided into twelve sections with easy selection tabs. Guidelines are easy to locate and follow.

Test Bank and Computerized Test Bank. The fully computerized *Test Bank* includes true/false, multiple-choice, and fill-in-the-blank items for each chapter. There are approximately 25 true/false, 75 multiple-choice, and 25 fill-in-the-blank items per chapter. Each item is rated according to difficulty, and the page number of the text is listed for clear and easy reference. Nita Sue Currey of Mesa State College prepared the *Test Bank*.

Student's Study Guide. The *Study Guide*, written by Corinne Livesay of Belhaven College, is designed to give students maximum learning power and review information. The guide includes study tips, summaries, and additional assignments. Summary study notes give students the main ideas of each chapter. The computerized self-study asks additional questions similar to those in the *Test Bank* so that students can further enhance their learning. It grades the student's answers and refers the student back to the book with correct answers.

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reality. The amount of coordination and talent required to get through the reviews and to extract the maximum value from them is enormous, and Corinne was there all the time. We appreciate her motivational mastery and drive to get the work out. And Corinne also wrote the *Study Guide*, so we thank her for that contribution to the ancillary package.

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