

Communication *@* Work

Kelly

COMMUNICATION @ Work

Ethical, Effective,
and Expressive
Communication in
the Workplace



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COMMUNICATION @ Work

Preface

Communication @ Work: Ethical, Effective, and Expressive Communication in the Workplace is designed as a primary text for business and professional communication courses. With a reliable, effective, and even exciting body of material, it is intended to be a text that students and instructors will look forward to using.

Students' communication outcomes should be effective, expressive, and—foremost—ethical. Certainly not robotic, communicators' skills must be humanized and expressed with empathy or enthusiasm and tolerance or conviction. *Communication @ Work* aims to distinguish itself from other business and professional communication texts in several ways.

TO INSTRUCTORS

The material pertinent to a business and professional speaking text is both compelling and overwhelming. Rapidly evolving organizations place incredible demands on communication instructors to prepare students for jobs. Also, the reality is that instructors often teach several courses, and any course that schedules student presentations challenges classroom management. Therefore, an instructor needs a text to provide the tradi-

tional content of the course along with contemporary practices for discussion and reference. *Communication @ Work* includes material in a flexible format that allows the instructor to (1) rely on the text to teach particular skills and concepts, (2) use the text as a springboard or reference, (3) provide back-up for students who may miss a lecture and must be prepared for an exam or speaking assignment, and (4) lead the readers into other speech communication applications.

This text aims to provide security for the instructor in the quality of its content. We are teaching in a time in which many of the traditional rhetorical principles have surfaced in attractive new clothes, and we want to ask, "So, what's new?" But we are also teaching in a time of new paradigms with terminology that employers will expect our graduates to not only recognize, but also use. This text helps the instructor meet that teaching responsibility.

Instructors will appreciate these features:

- *Reality @ Work*, a special feature specifically designed to introduce theory and practice in realistic, new, and ever-changing workplaces.

- *Contemporary Voices*, which add the voices of three popular and prolific communicators who echo the truths of communication scholarship: Peter Senge, speaking on learning organizations; Daniel Goleman, on emotional intelligence; and Stephen Covey, on principled leadership with effective habits. The selection of these contemporary and popular authors recognizes that effective learning takes place when there is a balance of familiarity and novelty. Since the bulk of the text content introduces readers to many of the communication field's researchers and writers, these "contemporary voices" build a bridge to business and other professions, blending old and new seamlessly. Instructors may center discussions on these authors' books or may delegate their excerpts as optional reading.
- Compelling interpersonal and small group activities integrated into textual material
- Chapter-end activities focusing on *technology, teamwork, ethics, writing, and speaking*
- Extensive coverage of presenting in both formal and informal settings. ("Quick Start" chapters on informative and persuasive speaking get students on their feet and speaking; in-depth chapters follow to support instructors who wish to lead their students into more intensive coverage of informative and persuasive techniques.)
- Flexible structure to allow instructors to customize the sequence of core material. (For instance, the small group/team and presentational speaking sections are stand-alone sections. Chapters do not depend on prior chapters, with the exception of "advanced" informative and persuasive speaking chapters and the more detailed chapters on teams and leadership. Those who spend less course time in presentational speaking may

choose the "Quick Start" chapters for informative and persuasive speaking and the small group chapter as an overview of group process.)

- Familiar material supported with lively, updated examples
- Theory clearly explained in practical ways
- User-friendly material that is current and based on sound research in the communication and social science fields
- Practical skills and applications, engaging readers to imaginatively communicate in their future jobs
- A pedagogical approach respecting varied learning styles
- Predictability balanced with a lively pace for developing flexibility and breadth in skills

TO STUDENTS

Ultimately, this text is written to assist and support students. You as students have your own set of requirements and requests when it comes to a speech book.

- You want credible, dependable information to prepare you for work environs and communication in them.
- You want a readable, useful, informative, and engaging text—one that will help with assignments and won't put you to sleep! You don't want "cute," but you do want "interesting."
- When you truly *use* a text (as opposed to *read* a text), you *search* for specific information and depend on the text to *guide* you through unfamiliar territory. You want adequate content without being overwhelmed.
- To make this experience work, you must be able to see yourself as a classroom speaker and later as a communicator in the workplace.

- Careful consideration is given to how you learn, and the text utilizes methods leading to understanding and retention.

ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES

The writing of this text was guided by how students best develop into successful, principled communicators, whether in the classroom or the workplace. Each chapter builds awareness, knowledge, and skills incrementally. The developmental metaphor for the major divisions of the text centers on “building.”

Building Foundations (Part I)

First, of course, are the foundations for communication concepts and skills. The first chapter, “Communication Elements, Principles, and Ethics,” lays the groundwork in communication theory and the ethical use of communication. In this chapter students meet three popular authors who espouse sound communication theory in business and professional arenas. The roles of perception and self-concept are covered in Chapter 2, as students also consider how we perceive and are perceived by others and by organizations.

Building Personal Power (Part II)

The personal effectiveness section, with self-concept as a linchpin, prepares students to understand and build personal effectiveness by managing communication apprehension (Chapter 3), through listening (Chapter 4), through discovering the power of nonverbal communication (Chapter 5), and through adequate research (Chapter 6). The organizing principle of this section centers on communicators building from the inside out by managing their communication apprehension and by practicing active verbal and nonverbal listening. As sequenced, this section satisfies the need to teach attending skills from a personal power perspective early in the course and to alleviate some apprehension about speech presentations before progressing too far into

speech preparation. Secured in the knowledge that comes from focused research, students anticipate building communication experiences. The activities in these chapters quickly involve students with content and prompt interaction with other class members.

Building Experience (Part III)

The third section, “Building Experience” teaches presentational speaking skills. Human resources, health careers, and other business and professional areas are expecting their applicants and requiring their employees to develop presentational speaking skills. In response to instructors’ and students’ complaints that many texts devote too few pages to this preparation, we devote a significant portion to presentational speaking. Chapter 7, “Quick Start for Informative Speaking,” takes a *developmental approach as students prepare their first speeches*. (Some instructors will choose to use Chapter 7 early in the semester.) To avoid students overloading with textbook reading assignments before engaging in speech preparation, they are guided step by step to prepare and deliver informative presentations—read a little, apply it to their topic, read a little more, organize ideas, and so forth. The student needs to learn enough to speak, but the richer learning will follow because he or she has had a related, ingrained experience for reference.

Instructors may choose to add Chapter 8 for in-depth reading with their academically stronger classes. Chapter 8 gives more choices, examples, workplace applications, and analyses of informative processes. The visual and other media content of Chapter 9 is placed between the two informative chapters and the two persuasive chapters. The placement is in response to the lecture/discussion sequence used by most instructors surveyed. Chapters 10 and 11 on persuasive speaking echo the informative chapters, with a “quick start” followed by a more advanced chapter on persuasive design.

Building Connections (Part IV)

The fourth and final section looks at “Building Connections” as it amalgamates material on interpersonal and small group communication. The chapters discuss teams (Chapter 12), leadership (Chapter 13), interpersonal conversation (Chapter 14), conflict (Chapter 15), and interviews. Instructors can confidently use their own discretion in placing this section—or individual chapters—on their syllabi. The material may come early in the course in a contextual sequence of interpersonal, small group, and finally presentational speaking or be pared and distributed as time allows.

THE COMPLETE PACKAGE FOR STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR

Ultimately, learning is a positive outcome of instructor–student communication supported by meaningful interaction between student and textbook author. Toward those ends, an ancillary package supports the use of this text:

- Instructor’s Manual
- Test Bank
- Computerized Test Bank
- PowerPoint Presentation Package
(available as a download)
- Companion Website
(www.ablongman.com/kelly1e)

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