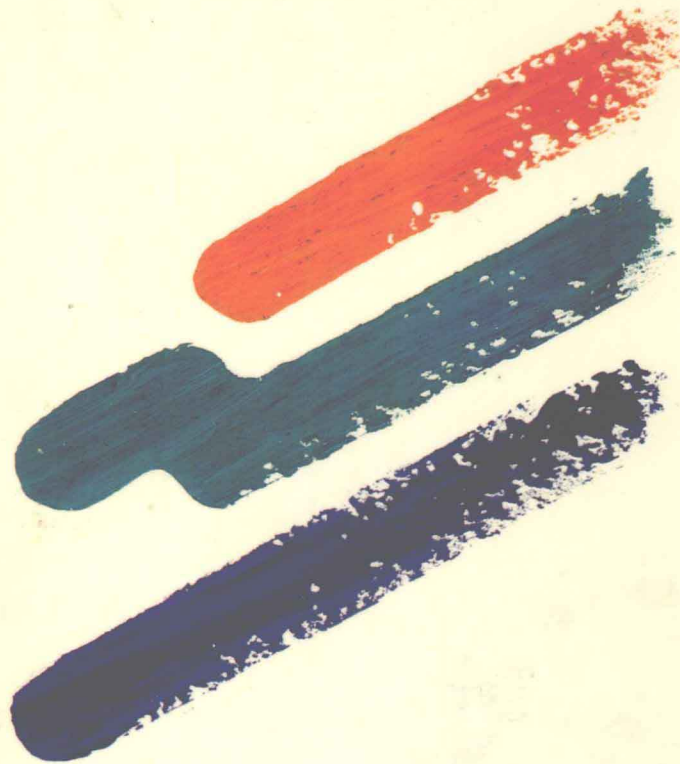


# **BUSINESS COMMUNICATION TODAY**

**THIRD EDITION**



**Courtland L. Bovée  
John V. Thill**



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# ***Business***

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# ***Communication***

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# ***Today***

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**Third Edition**

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## **Business Communication Today**

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***Business***

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# P R E F A C E

In the five years since the first edition of this book was published, more than 500,000 students have learned about business communication from *Business Communication Today*.

Teaching people the concepts and skills they need to communicate effectively in business is not easy. Business communication requires judgment and flexibility; because of the human element, it is more an art than a science. Yet most textbooks have taken a dry, academic approach to the subject.

When the first edition of *Business Communication Today* was published, we hoped to avoid that mistake by emphasizing real-life business situations and employing a lively, conversational writing style. Apparently we had the right idea: *Business Communication Today* is the most successful business communication textbook published in the past 40 years.

*Business Communication Today*, Third Edition, is another step forward in the evolution of business communication textbooks. Of course, this new edition covers all the basic principles and presents them in a traditional sequence. But it also provides expanded coverage of important issues and up-to-date discussions of the latest developments. Even more than before, an involving writing style and eye-opening graphics bring the subject to life. In addition, this third edition contains an increased number of examples and applications revolving around actual companies. All told, we believe *Business Communication Today*, Third Edition, captures the dynamics of business communication like no other textbook.

The textbook itself is the centerpiece of a comprehensive teaching and learning package that targets a single goal: to successfully demonstrate how business communication works in the real world, thus helping students to understand the concepts behind effective communication and to develop and refine their own skills.

## FEATURES THAT LINK CONCEPTS TO THE REAL WORLD

*Business Communication Today*, Third Edition, paints a vivid picture of the world of business communication.

It offers an overview of the wide range of communication skills used by businesspeople to present ideas clearly and persuasively. It gives a close-up look at communication techniques that have led to sound decision making and effective teamwork. Its insights into the way organizations operate help clarify students' career interests and identify the skills they need for a lifetime of career success.

Because it encourages students to view themselves as part of an actual organization when completing assignments, *Business Communication Today* is the next best thing to on-the-job training. It shows how standard approaches to routine assignments can help students complete work quickly and efficiently. But it also stresses that every situation is different and advises them to think for themselves.

## Examples from Actual Companies

The opportunity to learn from other people's successes and failures is what sets this textbook apart from others. To understand our commitment to that concept, glance at the table of contents. You'll see that this textbook was written with the cooperation of many small and large businesses, among them such well-respected giants as Disney, PepsiCo, IBM, and General Mills.

Each chapter begins with an instructive Communication Close-Up featuring a communication expert who, in his or her own words, applies the chapter's concepts to common business situations. That expert reappears from time to time throughout the chapter to dramatize the connection between the chapter's contents and life on the job. This on-the-scene, internal company information was gathered through personal interviews with our business associates, friends, and contacts and is exclusive to *Business Communication Today*.

Chapter-ending projects called Communication Challenges conclude each chapter and are related to the situations described in the Communication Close-Ups. Each chapter has one *individual challenge* (to give students "on-the-job" practice applying principles they've just learned) and one *team challenge* (to give students an opportunity to experience collaborative writing, the team approach prevalent in business). This feature pro-

vides a dimension of reality unmatched by any other textbook in the field.

### 39 Special Features

Boxed and strategically placed within each chapter, Special Features are extensions of the chapter material. Ever since the first edition of *Business Communication Today* was published, we have been searching publications and interviewing respected authorities to provide you with insights into the business world that are not found in other textbooks.

The Special Features center on four well-integrated themes:



**Sharpen Your Skills** Practical pointers and confidence-building guidelines for improving writing and speaking skills.



**Business Communication Notebook** Contemporary issues of vital importance and practical solutions to common communication problems.



**Focus on Ethics and Law** An examination of critical ethical issues facing business communicators in today's workplace and instructions on how to identify areas of legal vulnerability, how to steer clear of legal perils, and when to seek legal advice.



**International Outlook** Tested techniques for communicating successfully in the global arena.

Each of the Special Features includes a discussion question and an application exercise.

### Example after Example of Letters, Memos, and Reports

Throughout *Business Communication Today*, Third Edition, you'll find numerous up-to-date sample documents, many collected in our consulting work. These superb business examples provide students with benchmarks for achievement.

The chapters on letters and memos contain outstanding examples from many types of organizations and from people working in a variety of functional areas. Many of these documents are fully formatted, and some are presented on the letterhead of such well-known companies as TWA, J. C. Penney, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Mattel Toys. Accompanying sentence-by-sentence analyses help students see precisely how to apply the principles discussed in the text. Poor

and improved examples illustrate common errors and effective techniques for correcting them.

The chapters on report writing give examples too. For instance, one chapter presents six case histories of reports (one a proposal), from inception through completion. And the last chapter of the unit illustrates the step-by-step development of a long report, which appears in its entirety to show how all the parts fit together.

### Photo Essays

Another distinctive feature of this book is the use of photographs accompanied by captions that describe how they relate to business communication. The photo essays cover a rich assortment of people, organizations, and events, and all of them give students an intimate glimpse of the real-life application of the topic being studied.

### Emphasis on Ethics throughout the Book

Business communication is more than speaking persuasively and writing clearly. It is also how you listen, respond, and interact with others. Everything you say, whether verbal or nonverbal, communicates something about your values and ethics. Therefore, students should be given the means to anticipate and analyze the ethical dilemmas they will face on the job. Moreover, the adherence to high ethical standards takes on new importance in this age of wavering business behavior. Ethical questions addressed in this book include

- How far should you go in emphasizing the positive in business messages?
- How should you handle negative information in recommendation letters?
- Where do you draw the line between persuasion and manipulation when writing sales letters?
- How do you construct visual aids in a form that will convey a company's point of view without misleading the audience?

### Excellent Coverage of Today's Most Important Topics

According to several surveys, recent graduates are not prepared to handle the full range of communication assignments that come across their desks. *Business Communication Today*, Third Edition, addresses that problem in two ways: (1) by emphasizing basic principles that can be applied to many situations and (2) by including coverage of such important topics as organizational communication, the writing process, ethics, listening, nonverbal communication, and intercultural business communication.

The boundaries of business communication are always expanding. So in addition to covering all the traditional subjects, *Business Communication Today*, Third Edition, examines many new topics. For example, because technology is so advanced and so important in today's business world, we have carefully updated the chapter on office technology. The book also contains an unparalleled discussion of employment-related topics, including indispensable techniques for getting a job in our service-oriented economy. In addition, the text covers these current issues:

- How the softening economy has necessitated organizational interest in upward information flow for input on ways to cut waste and boost productivity (Chapter 1)
- How the *Valdez* oil spill taught companies the value of planning for crisis communication (Chapter 1)
- How the disappearing Iron Curtain has widened the audience for conveying good news, thus strengthening the need for accurate and well-planned press releases such as those used for the opening of McDonald's in Moscow (Chapter 7)
- How the economic downturn has forced companies to cut back on campus recruiting and hiring programs (Chapter 11)
- How investigators of the savings and loan crisis scoured corporate files, researching business documents to piece together a record of events that would explain what went wrong (Chapter 13)
- How the European Community agreement of 1992 is forcing U.S. businesses to reevaluate their intercultural business communication skills (Chapter 19)

## TOOLS THAT HELP DEVELOP SKILLS AND ENHANCE COMPREHENSION

Having an accurate picture of how businesspeople communicate is important, but students need more if they are to develop usable skills. That's why, in *Business Communication Today*, Third Edition, we've included a number of helpful learning tools.

### Checklists

To help students organize their thinking when they begin a communication project, make decisions as they write, and check their own work, we've included numerous checklists throughout the book. The checklists appear as close as possible to the related discussions. The checklists are reminders, however – not “recipes.” They provide useful guidelines for writing, without limiting creativity. Students will find them handy when

they're on the job and need to refresh their memory about effective communication techniques.

### Documents for Analysis

Students can critique and revise 30 documents in 11 chapters. Documents include letters and memos, a letter of application and a resume, and visual aids. This hands-on experience in analyzing and improving documents will help students revise their own.

### Exercises and Cases

A wealth of new exercises and cases, many of them memo-writing tasks, provide assignments like those that students will most often face at work. The exercises and cases deal with all types and sizes of organizations, domestic and international, and we have written them for a variety of majors. With such an array to choose from, students will have ample opportunities to test their problem-solving skills.

*Business Communication Today*, was the first business communication textbook to include numerous cases featuring real companies, and we continue this tradition. Examples include

- Elephant fans take note: Form letter announcing Yamaha's decision to stop using ivory for piano keys
- Learn while you earn: Memo announcing Burger King's educational benefits
- Satisfaction guaranteed: Letter from L. L. Bean granting a claim
- On second thought—don't express it: Memo requesting cooperation in cutting the cost of overnight mail delivery at Turner Broadcasting System
- Trouble in the soup kitchen: Memo announcing plant closings at Campbell Soup Company

These cases are yet another tool for demonstrating the role of communication in the real business world.

### Component Chapters

For maximum flexibility in designing a course tailored to students' needs, this textbook contains three Component Chapters. Placed near the end of the book, they are (A) Fundamentals of Grammar and Usage, (B) Format and Layout of Business Documents, and (C) Documentation of Report Sources. Even when not assigned, students will find these chapters useful for reference.

### Lively, Conversational Writing Style

Read a few pages of this textbook and then read a few pages of another textbook. We think you'll immediately notice the difference.



The lucid writing style in *Business Communication Today*, Third Edition, makes the material pleasing to read and easy to comprehend. It stimulates interest, promotes learning, and exemplifies the principles presented in this book.

We have also carefully monitored the reading level of *Business Communication Today* to make sure it's neither too simple nor too difficult.

### Learning Objectives

Each chapter begins with a concise list of goals that students are expected to achieve by reading the chapter and completing the exercises and cases. These objectives are meant to guide the learning process, motivate students to master the material, and aid them in measuring their success.

### Margin Notes

Short summary statements that highlight key points and reinforce learning appear in the margins of *Business Communication Today*, Third Edition. They are no substitute for reading the chapters but are useful for quickly getting the gist of a section, rapidly reviewing a chapter, and locating areas of greatest concern.

### Chapter Summaries

Each chapter ends with a concise overview. We have included the summaries to help students understand and remember the relationships among key concepts.

### End-of-Chapter Discussion Questions

The Questions for Discussion are designed to get students thinking about the concepts introduced in each chapter. They may also prompt students to stretch their learning beyond the chapter content. Not only will students find them useful when studying for examinations, but the instructor may also draw on them to promote classroom discussion of issues that have no easy answers.

### Appendix

For help in proofreading, revising assignments, and interpreting an instructor's corrections, students can consult the Appendix, "Correction Symbols." These symbols and marks also make it easier for instructors to grade assignments.

### Indexes

To assist students and instructors in locating information as conveniently as possible, two types of indexes are included in the book: an Organization Index (which

lists specific companies and organizations mentioned in the book), and a Subject/Person Index.

### Color Art and Strong Visual Program

This text has been attractively printed and the dramatic use of full color throughout the book gives it exceptional visual appeal. In addition, students will learn from carefully crafted illustrations of important concepts in each chapter: graphs, charts, tables, and photographs.

### Book Design

The state-of-the-art design, based on extensive research, invites students to delve into the content. It also makes reading easier, reinforces learning, and increases comprehension. The Special Features do not interfere with the flow of textual material, a vital factor in maintaining attention and concentration. The design of this book, like much communication, has the simple objective of gaining interest and making a point.

## REVISION WITH A PURPOSE

When preparing the third edition of *Business Communication Today*, we dedicated ourselves to a thorough revision. Virtually every sentence has been critically evaluated. We have made literally hundreds of refinements. Members of the academic and business communities have carefully reviewed it, and we have tested it in the classroom. Instructors, businesspeople, and students have all praised its competent coverage of subject matter, its up-to-date examples, its flexible organization, and its authentic portrayal of business. Here is an overview of the major content changes in the third edition:

**Chapter 1: Communicating Successfully in an Organization** Now covers the importance of business communication, as well as communication climate, management, and ethics, and does so with a style and organization that is less bulky, more logical, and generally more manageable.

**Chapter 2: Understanding Business Communication** Integrates a more comparative discussion of verbal communication, contrasting oral and written channels as well as reception versus transmission; incorporates more specific examples from actual companies; and combines material on communication barriers with material on the process of communication so that problems and process are covered in the same location.



**Chapter 3: Planning Business Messages** Clarifies media choices in both the oral and written channels, including the choice between such oral media as face-to-face conversations or telephone conference calls and between such written media as typed, printed, faxed, or computerized messages.

**Chapter 4: Organizing and Composing Business Messages** Incorporates business ethics into discussions of writing bad-news messages, using the “you” attitude, emphasizing the positive, and establishing credibility.

**Chapter 5: Revising Business Messages** Now covers material on the use of computerized grammar and spelling checkers, with an emphasis on the human factor.

**Chapter 6: Writing Direct Requests** Incorporates material on handling more than one request, fine tunes examples so that they are all business-oriented rather than consumer-oriented, and incorporates business ethics into text discussions of filing claims for adjustment or refund and requesting recommendations.

**Chapter 7: Writing Routine, Good-News, and Goodwill Messages** Now clarifies the importance of writing directives and instructions, and incorporates business ethics into the discussions of recommendation letters and goodwill messages.

**Chapter 8: Writing Bad-News Messages** Sharpens and strengthens learning objectives, and more fully discusses the ethics both of using buffers and of emphasizing the positive in bad-news messages.

**Chapter 9: Writing Persuasive Messages** More clearly defines the business meaning of persuasion while delineating the difference between ethical and unethical persuasion, strengthens text by including business-oriented rather than consumer-oriented examples, and incorporates business ethics into discussions of sales letters and the laws that affect them.

**Chapter 10: Writing Resumes and Application Letters** Strengthens the discussion of what students have to offer employers and what they want from employers; adds material on how to establish some short-term career goals; more clearly defines the necessary tasks for writing an effective resume; and reduces the previous editions’ emphasis on the “career objective” section of resumes, making it optional and combining it with the “summary of qualifications” section.

**Chapter 11: Interviewing for Employment and Following Up** More clearly focuses the need for students to adjust their job search to particular company styles; reorganizes and defines more clearly the sequence and types of interviews; now covers the tendency away from qualification testing and toward testing for candidates who may be dishonest or who may be substance abusers.

**Chapter 12: Using Reports and Proposals as Business Tools** Condenses material on accuracy and good judgment in report content (removing this material from the text and incorporating it into a special feature on communication ethics); adds more examples from actual businesses; strengthens the material on how companies use reports and proposals, thus more clearly defining the report types and uses.

**Chapter 13: Gathering and Interpreting Information** Clarifies why a writer might need one outline for conducting the study and another for actually writing the report; reorganizes and more clearly defines material on the rules of division, reshaping the presentation into a more practical “how to” focus.

**Chapter 14: Developing Visual Aids** Recombines text in a more logical fashion (combining the discussion of honesty with the discussion of how scale impacts the slope of a line, for example); amplifies the previous editions’ “how-to” emphasis; vastly expands the number and type of visual aid examples.

**Chapter 15: Writing Reports and Proposals** Narrows the number of organizational approaches based on logical argument, thus clarifying and focusing the remaining material; finetunes the discussion of formality in reports; strengthens the material on structural clues.

**Chapter 16: Completing Formal Reports and Proposals** Expands discussion of report introductions, summaries, conclusions, and recommendations; incorporates more examples from actual business; strengthens the concept of process in planning and writing reports and proposals.

**Chapter 17: Listening, Interviewing, and Conducting Meetings** Incorporates more specific business examples; clarifies discussion of speaking styles; clarifies the discussion of listening styles (combining empathic and active, which are quite similar); more clearly defines *hidden agenda*.

**Chapter 18: Giving Speeches and Oral Presentations** Incorporates more real-world business examples, eliminates the last edition's prescriptive style and didactic tone, strengthens the importance of enthusiastic delivery, and adds discussion of audiovisual communication in business.

**Chapter 19: Communicating Interculturally and Internationally** Now a regular chapter rather than a component chapter, incorporates more business examples; strengthens international view by eliminating the "we versus they" language; adds material on dealing with language barriers; and generally strengthens the organization and logical progression of the chapter.

**Chapter 20: Communicating through Business Technology** Now appears as a regular chapter rather than as a component chapter, updates current developments, and adds material about the effects of technology on business.

**Component Chapter A: Fundamentals of Grammar and Usage** Strengthens the description and discussion of grammatical rules and usage problems.

**Component Chapter B: Format and Layout of Business Documents** Amplifies the importance of format and layout, while retaining the convenience of presenting all formatting material in one well-organized component chapter.

**Component Chapter C: Documentation of Report Sources** Focuses on the clearest ways for documenting sources, and strengthens the material on bibliographies.

**Appendix: Correction Symbols** Clarifies the use of correction symbols and abbreviations so that students can easily understand teacher evaluations and can readily use proofreading marks when evaluating their own work.

## A TEACHING AND LEARNING PACKAGE THAT MEETS REAL NEEDS

The instructional package for this textbook is specially designed to simplify the task of teaching and learning. The instructor may choose to use the following supplements.

### **Instructor's Resource Manual**

This comprehensive paperback book is an instructor's tool kit. Among the many things it provides are a

wealth of supplementary tidbits of information for enriching lectures, a section about collaborative writing, suggested solutions to exercises, suggested solutions and fully formatted letters for *every* case in the letter-writing chapters, and a grammar pretest and posttest.

An audiovisual guide is also included in the manual. It lists hundreds of videotapes, films, and audiocassettes that can be used to supplement the course. Each entry is fully described and keyed to the textbook.

The *Instructor's Resource Manual* also has an answer key to selected exercises in the *Study Guide*.

### **Video Exercises**

Now you can add an exciting new dimension to your course with seven professionally produced videos, one for each part of the text. Developed by the authors specifically for this book, these business communication video exercises are easy to use and are closely integrated with the content of the text to help students successfully apply important concepts and principles. These videos are available free to adopters.

For the instructor, *Video Exercise Teaching Notes* include teaching objectives, a list of the concepts covered in the video, discussion questions, and suggested answers to the discussion questions and video exercises.

### **Test Bank**

This manual is organized by text chapters and includes a mix of multiple-choice, true-false, and fill-in questions for each chapter, approximately 1,500 objective items in all, carefully written and reviewed to provide a fair, structured program of evaluation.

You can also get the complete test bank on computer disk, or you can get even more flexibility with McGraw-Hill's phone-in customized test service.

### **Testing Services**

Two major programs are available:

**Computerized Test Bank for Business Communication Today** A powerful microcomputer program allows the instructor to create customized tests using the questions from the test bank, self-prepared items, or a combination. This versatile program incorporates a broad range of test-making capabilities, including editing and scrambling of questions to create alternative versions of a test. This program is available for both Macintosh and IBM computers.

**Customized Test Service** Through its Customized Test Service, McGraw-Hill will supply adopters of *Business Communication Today* with custom-made tests consisting of items selected from the test bank. The test

questions can be renumbered in any order. Instructors will receive an original test, ready for reproduction, and a separate answer key. Tests can be ordered by mail or by phone, using a toll-free number.

### **Acetate Transparency Program**

A set of 100 large-type transparency acetates, available to instructors on request, helps bring concepts alive in the classroom and provides a starting point for discussion of communication techniques. All are keyed to the *Instructor's Resource Manual*. Many contrast poor and improved solutions to featured cases from the textbook.

### **Film/Video Library**

McGraw-Hill will arrange for rentals of numerous films and videos from the University of Illinois Media Library. To guide you in selecting these materials, an extensive list keyed to the parts of the book is included in the *Instructor's Resource Manual* along with details about how to order them.

### **Report Card: Classroom Management Software**

This software makes compiling students' grades accurate and easy and is available for both IBM PC/PC-XT and Apple II.

### **Business Communication Update Newsletter**

Issued four times a year and filled with stimulating ideas, this newsletter is written exclusively for instructors of business communication. The newsletter provides interesting materials that can be used in class, and it offers practical ideas about teaching methods.

### **Study Guide**

This paperback book contains a wealth of material reinforcing the information presented in the textbook. Students who are interested in maximizing their learning will appreciate its fill-in-the-blank chapter outlines, self-scoring quizzes on chapter contents, skill-building exercises, supplementary readings, and vocabulary and spelling exercises. In addition, to help students brush up on their English skills, the study guide includes an extensive review of grammar, punctuation, and mechanics interspersed with reinforcement exercises.

### **Computer Software for Students**

The instructor may also choose to use our interactive software, *Activities in Business Communication*. Three modules — dealing with job-search strategies, vocabulary development, and writing style — contain innovative learning activities specifically designed to accom-

pany the textbook. All the modules are interactive learning tools, so students are continually reinforced by word and sound.

Also available is the McGraw-Hill College Version of WordPerfect for the IBM PC and compatibles. It assists composition on a word processor and permits inserting, deleting, or moving text; correcting; automatic formatting; and storing material. For additional information on software, videos, and other ancillary materials, please contact your McGraw-Hill sales representative.

## **PERSONAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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*Courtland L. Bovée  
John V. Thill*

**NOTE TO STUDENTS**

A study guide for this textbook can be obtained from college bookstores under the title *Study Guide, Business Communication Today*, Third Edition, by Courtland L. Bovée and John V. Thill.

You can use the *Study Guide* throughout the course for reviewing the content of this textbook, for developing communication skills, and for increasing your knowledge of business communication. It is also an ideal aid when preparing for tests.

If the *Study Guide* is not in stock, ask the bookstore manager to order a copy from the publisher.

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