Himstreet and Baty

# BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

Seventh Edition

# BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

## Principles and Methods Seventh Edition

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# PREFACE

When we began work on the first edition of *Business Communications,* we did so because we thought we could write a better textbook than was then available. In the intervening 25 years, we've tried to make each edition better than the previous one. Whatever improvements have occurred from edition to edition have resulted from three ongoing experiences: (1) Our own learning from teaching and involvement in business communication, (2) the constant changes in business communication subject matter and course design—as revealed by the market research of publishers and by the academic research reported in professional journals, and (3) the thoughtful and helpful reviews of each edition by many instructors. Although the changes from edition to edition have seemed subtle to us, we realize that the cumulative effect has been dramatic when we compare this seventh edition with earlier ones.

## Changes from Previous Editions

In some respects, this edition may contain more significant changes than did any of the previous ones. In addition to the usual updating of content and revising of end-of-chapter materials, we've incorporated material that, although perhaps not revolutionary, does reflect the impact of recent developments and research in business communication.

The business and government environment has been profoundly affected by the personal computer/word-processing explosion of recent years. A casual glance at the advertising in almost any metropolitan newspaper provides considerable evidence that technological developments are bringing the computer age within the monetary reach of all businesses and of most middle-income families. Although we cannot really anticipate the eventual impact of this development—frequently called *the communication revolution*—we have attempted to describe some of it and to look into the "crystal ball" just a little in Part I.

We do know that the computer and its microprocessor chip are not very intelligent things until humans tell them what to do and how to do it. And human input can be effective only to the extent that people understand communication principles and have the ability to write and speak successfully. Therefore, the focus of the book is on the development of those personal communication skills and knowledges needed by competent, upward-bound people.

Because of the widespread use of word processing in business, most management personnel will be faced with the task of dictating letters and memorandum via recording equipment for later transcription. In Chapter 6, we've added a detailed section on how to dictate, whether in a face-to-face situation with a secretary or in the word-processing mode. We believe this addition to the chapter coverage of message planning provides the foundation for a variety of approaches to the study of specific letter and memorandum problems.

Additionally, we have been influenced by an increasing interest expressed at professional meetings in the broad area of international communication. But there are constraints on how much classroom time can be devoted to this subject in the basic business communication course. At any rate, we've attempted to introduce in Part I some of the obvious problems of communicating with others whose cultures, value systems, and language are unlike our own.

This opening portion of the book combines our traditional chapter on communication theory and behavioral foundations with chapters on technology and international communication to provide a broad basis for the study of letters and reports in an increasingly complex environment.

Another development affecting the content of this edition is the role of the memorandum as the written message form most frequently prepared by most people in business. There is, as well, a growing emphasis on oral reporting. Rather than present these areas as minor parts of broader chapters on reports, we've devoted an entire chapter to memorandums, including case study problems that provide student opportunities to prepare memorandums while assuming a variety of roles in each case. Placement of this chapter presented a most difficult problem simply because memorandums are hybrids. They have characteristics of both letters and reports; but they are a primary means of communicating within organizations, and the memorandum format is often used for report preparation. We believe the placement of memorandums following the chapters on research methods and graphics permits considerable flexibility in the study of reports. The logic of problem solving and the use of graphics are valuable aids in memorandum preparation as well as in report preparation. With the memorandum chapter preceding chapters on short reports and formal reports, the study of report writing can be concluded at any of three points—memorandums, short reports, or formal reports.

To add more depth to the study and practice of speaking and oral reporting, Chapter 19 includes material on planning and making oral presentations, including the use of visual aids.

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## Features Retained from Previous Editions

Through successive editions of *Business Communications,* several "old standbys" have proven highly successful, so we've tried to improve on them as distinctive features of this edition:

1. The sentence-by-sentence analysis of letters provides the rationale for particular idea sequences and word choices.
2. The page-by-page critique of formal reports has been well accepted as an approach to giving the student an understanding of total report preparation and writing style.
3. The integration of listening practices, interviewing styles and methods, and interviewing for jobs as part of the employment application section (initiated in the sixth edition) has, from student comments, provided a valuable learning experience.
4. The coverage of letter writing is built on the three basic message plans rather than on separate chapters on specific letter types or subjects. This approach has been accepted as a valid way to develop genuine understanding of communicating through letters. We'd prefer our students to use some creativity within the limits of the basic plans rather than become users of lock-step check lists.
5. The final two chapters on organizational communication and management practices attempt to extend communication learnings into the organizational environment in which they will be put to practical use.
6. As in earlier editions, this seventh has been prepared with our conscious attention to the logical, simple-to-complex progression of content to assist the learning process. Additionally, we have attempted to practice what we preach by retaining a comfortable reading level.

## A Total Teaching-Learning Package

A new package of teaching-learning materials complements the textbook and provides both teacher and student with a great variety of materials and activities.

1. The Instructor's manual and the Supplemental Teaching Aids of the sixth edition have been combined in a single Instructor's Manual to provide extensive teaching suggestions, testing materials, textbook problem solutions, and supplementary transparency masters for several textbook problems.
2. A package of fifty actual transparencies to use in lecture and discussion sessions and to reinforce textbook concepts is provided with all textbook adoptions.
3. A separate item, the *Study Guide,* takes students through a series of

exercises coordinated with the textbook. For each chapter, the *Study Guide* includes these sections:

- a. Check Your Knowledge, a set of short-answer items to assist in mastery of the textbook concepts.
- b. Communication Glossary, a matching problem designed to reinforce an understanding of terms used in communication theory and practice.
- c. Check Your Business English, a series of short exercises covering grammar and usage as an expansion of material in the textbook appendix.
- d. Check Your Spelling, a list of commonly used words in which the student corrects any misspellings.
- e. Case Problems, a series of short letter and memorandum writing problems.

The guide also includes a set of learning objectives for each chapter and an objective test for each of the six parts of the textbook. Answers to all but the case problems and the tests are provided in the study guide so the student may have immediate reinforcement of learning.

These additional materials were developed to simplify and to strengthen the study of business communication. We believe their use can provide more effective use of both in-class and out-of-class time. We hope their use will reduce the massive amount of paper reading and correcting that teachers face. The additional materials also provide more constructive and immediate feedback to students than assignments submitted to the teacher.

## Course Design

A major objective of any course using this text should be to have students acquire the ability to write well enough to bring credit to themselves rather than to "just squeak by" in their careers. The text material is flexible so that emphasis can be placed on writing, and additional topics can be included to meet the goals of any basic course in business communication.

Several factors influence course design. How much prior applicable learning or experience do students bring with them? How much classroom time is available? What should be a desirable proportion of course time allocated to basic writing and usage skills, to oral skills, to letter writing, to memorandum preparation, to research methods, to written reports, to management principles, and to communication theory?

Ideally, at least a sixty-hour classroom meeting course provides time to cover most of the material. Certainly if everything in the book is to be covered in a 30- or 45-hour course, much of the coverage would be perfunctory. For a two-term course, Parts 1, 2, and 3 can be used for the letter-writing term and Parts 4, 5, and 6 for the report-writing term. We do think, however, that a heavier outside-of-class reading load and less in-class time can be used to cover Parts 1 and 6, with most in-class time being devoted to intensive coverage of the other parts. Further suggestions for course design are included in the instructor's manual.

## To Students

To this point we've written primarily to instructors about the content and use of this book, and this probably hasn't been too exciting. But the book was really written for you—because we think this may be the most valuable subject you'll study. The primary causes for dismissal from jobs held by college graduates are weak communication skills and lack of ability in interpersonal relations. In other words, people are generally capable in their areas of technical expertise; but they frequently fail because of their inability to speak and write effectively and because of their failure to get along well with others.

From our own corporate experience, we know that good writing and speaking are often the only things that bring a young person's ability to the attention of superiors. Leonard Read, president of the Foundation for Economic Education, said:

> Thinking things through—finding answers to knotty problems—is perhaps best done in writing. Refinement demands that we visualize what is in the mind. Whatever cannot be made clear in writing probably is not clear in the mind. Clarity is a product of attentive practice and reflection.

And Daniel Webster philosophized:

> If all my possessions were taken away from me with one exception, I would choose to keep the power of speech, for with it I would soon regain all the rest.

These quotations typify what this book is about. We hope it will help you.

## Our Thanks

First, we express our grateful appreciation to our wives—Maxine and Maxine—to whom we dedicated the first edition and who have somehow survived and helped us survive our 25 years with *Business Communications.* Second, we are indebted to our teaching colleagues and our students at Arizona State University and the University of Southern California for their insights, criticisms, and support. Finally, we offer sincere thanks to the following professionals who provided insightful comments, valuable suggestions, and helpful information for this edition:

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# COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT AND FOUNDATIONS

# PART
# 1

**OBJECTIVES**

1. To develop an understanding of the communication process.
2. To recognize how some concepts of human behavior affect communication.
3. To recognize how the rapid changes in technology are changing many communication methods.
4. To develop some insight into the problems of communication in an international business environment.

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