THIRD EDITION

LELAND BROWN



COMMUNICATING FACTS and IDEAS in BUSINESS

Leland Brown

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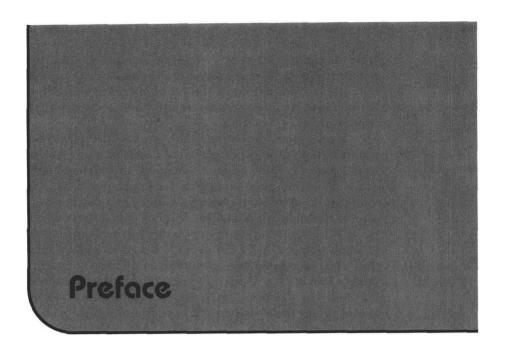
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To my son and daughter,

Marshall Jonathan and Cindra Lee



Like the previous editions, Communicating Facts and Ideas in Business, third edition, seeks to present a broad, general foundation on which to build and develop the ability to apply the principles of communication to any situation, and to explore the relationship of creative, logical, and critical thinking to the problem-solving nature of business communication. It also seeks to keep pace with the changes that have taken place in the business school curriculum and in the role of communication in business, government, and industry.

Part I provides the theoretical and conceptual framework necessary for a foundation to understanding the communication processes and for developing the ability to communicate effectively. Part II seeks to help the reader improve his or her written skills; Part III offers suggestions for improving interpersonal and oral communication skills; and the Epilogue looks into the future, exploring job opportunities and the effects of technological innovations on communication. Although the three-part division provides a logical development of subject matter, it allows for different sequencing as the instructor adapts it to his or her course. For instance, Part II could be presented first or last; Part III could be first or second; Part I could be last.

Questions and problems have been included at the end of each chapter for developing skills in thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making as well as skills in communication. They are varied and in sufficient number to allow the instructor a great deal of flexibility in

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their selection and use. In fact, one could use the text for five years without repeating problem assignments, and he or she can add or delete bits of information in the problems as desired. Reading lists at the end of each part should stimulate additional exploration in studying communication.

Increasingly business, industry, and the professions are demanding that people be proficient in all areas of communication. The American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business advocates that the body of common knowledge include interpersonal, organizational, and oral as well as written communication, and maintains that the building of communicative skills and abilities is just as essential as developing skills in math or any other areas for business. The American Business Communication Association and the American Management Association also recognize the importance of these areas of communication study. The ABCA Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in 1979 advocated that the basic business communication course be placed on a sound theoretical base and treat oral and interpersonal as well as written communication. This book seeks to meet these needs and suggestions.

The student involved in the give and take of classroom discussion, in criticizing and evaluating his or her own work, in exchanging facts and ideas about problems and issues, is indeed in a learning environment. The student who has to think through the situation in a communication problem, use information, and create ideas and new ways for presenting and handling messages is being challenged to develop the ability to think, to write, and to speak effectively.

To the students and instructors using Communicating Facts and Ideas, I wish much success. Communication can be fun, for we are exchanging facts, ideas, attitudes, and courses of action with others.

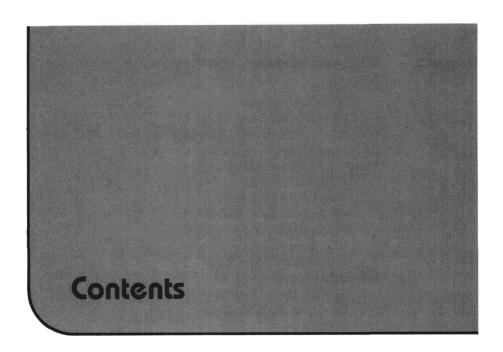
No author can write in a vacuum, and I am certainly no exception. It is through working with students and others that I am able to write. I am grateful to all the students I have taught during my career at the University of Illinois, Tulane University, and Eastern Michigan University. I have learned much from them, and I like to think I have helped some along the way. It is also through association with others that we keep abreast of what is going on in the colleges and universities and in business practice. I am grateful for my long association with members of the American Business Communication Association and with other authors and publishers of communication texts.

For secretarial assistance in preparing the manuscript, I thank Joni Hollingsworth, Nancy Newcomb, Virginia Svoboda, Evelyn Bradford-Nutt, Linda Raymond Grady, and Cindy Brown. I am also appreciative of my wife's help in editing and proofreading and for just putting up with me during troublesome periods.

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Many former students, fellow faculty members (Nancy Barkley, Nicholas Beltsos, Jim Conley, Gus DesHarnais, Jack Nightingale, and Mary Vielhaber), business people and companies, authors, and educators have contributed illustrative materials, problem materials, and comments. Although they are too many to list, special credit has been given in the footnotes. I am thankful for all this cooperation and help.

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Understanding Communication Processes

Yes, you have been communicating all your life, and you will continue to exchange facts, ideas, feelings, and experiences as you interact with others. You have already picked up many communicative skills from the time you were born until now. In fact, you probably consider yourself somewhat a master of the art of influencing others to satisfy your needs and wants, and to reach your objectives and goals.

But are you aware that a body of knowledge and theory called *communication* exists? Do you have an understanding of the nature and scope of communication, how it affects your life and will help you in your professional career? Do you have the theoretical framework from which you can move to communicate effectively, to make appropriate decisions, and to create alternative solutions to communication and business problems that may confront you?

Part I of this book is devoted to giving you an understanding of processes, theory, knowledge, and perspectives that you can use all your life. It should stimulate your thinking and also help you increase your understanding of human relations and communications.