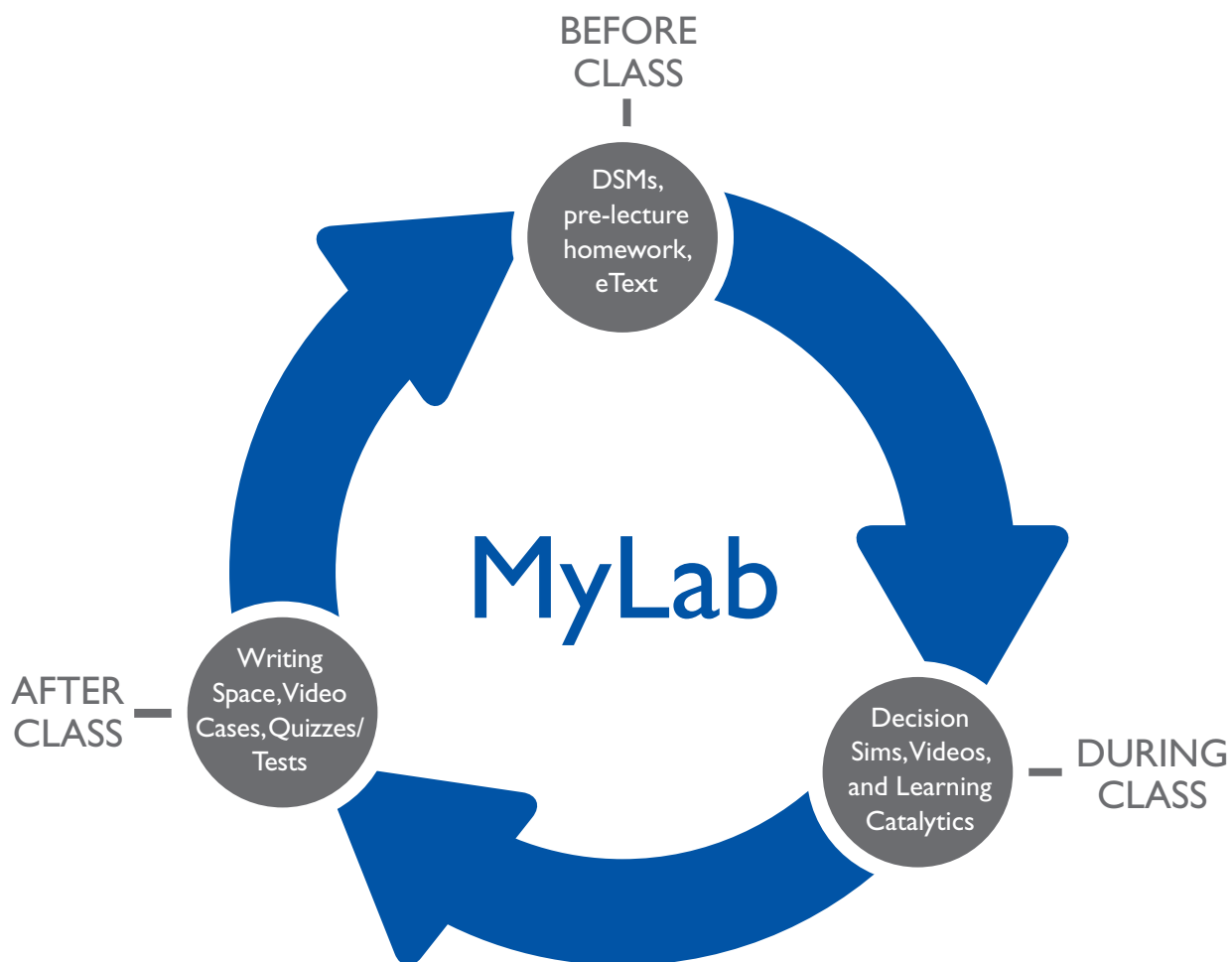# Excellence in
Business Communication

12e

**John V. Thill**
Courtland L. Bovée

Management, Business Communication, and Intro to Business

BEFORE
CLASS

DSMs,
pre-lecture
homework,
eText

MyLab

AFTER
CLASS

Writing
Space, Video
Cases, Quizzes/
Tests

Decision
Sims, Videos,
and Learning
Catalytics

DURING
CLASS

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MyBCommLab®: Improves Student Engagement Before, During, and After Class

Prep and Engagement
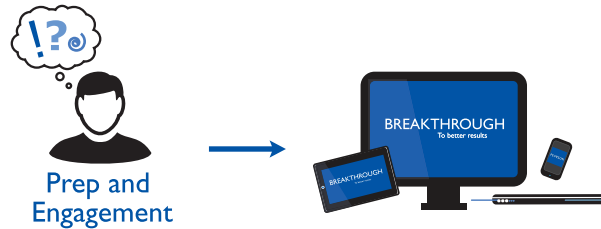
- **NEW! VIDEO LIBRARY –** Robust video library with over 100 new book-specific videos that include easy-to-assign assessments, the ability for instructors to add YouTube or other sources, the ability for students to upload video submissions, and the ability for polling and teamwork.

- **Decision-making simulations – NEW and improved feedback for students.** Place your students in the role of a key decision-maker! Simulations branch based on the decisions students make, providing a variation of scenario paths. Upon completion students receive a grade, as well as a detailed report of the choices and the associated consequences of those decisions.

- **Video exercises – UPDATED with new exercises.** Engaging videos that bring business concepts to life and explore business topics related to the theory students are learning in class. Quizzes then assess students' comprehension of the concepts covered in each video.

- **Learning Catalytics –** A "bring your own device" student engagement, assessment, and classroom intelligence system helps instructors analyze students' critical-thinking skills during lecture.

- **Dynamic Study Modules (DSMs) – UPDATED with additional questions.** Through adaptive learning, students get personalized guidance where and when they need it most, creating greater engagement, improving knowledge retention, and supporting subject-matter mastery. Also available on mobile devices.

Decision Making

WHICH WAY WILL YOU CHOOSE
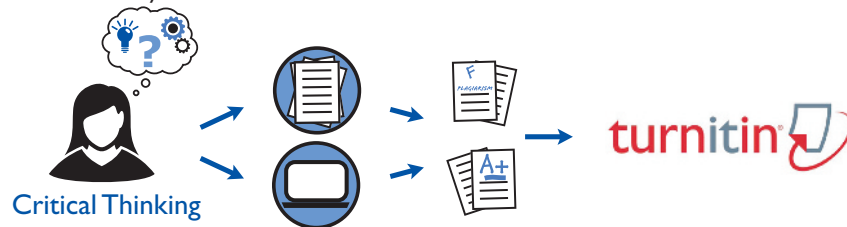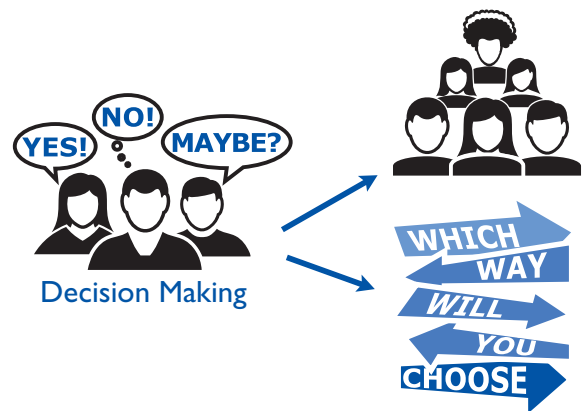
Critical Thinking

- **Writing Space – UPDATED with new commenting tabs, new prompts, and a new tool for students called Pearson Writer.** A single location to develop and assess concept mastery and critical thinking, the Writing Space offers automatic graded, assisted graded, and create your own writing assignments, allowing you to exchange personalized feedback with students quickly and easily.

  Writing Space can also check students' work for improper citation or plagiarism by comparing it against the world's most accurate text comparison database available from **Turnitin**.

- **Additional Features** – Included with the MyLab are a powerful homework and test manager, robust gradebook tracking, Reporting Dashboard, comprehensive online course content, and easily scalable and shareable content.

http://www.pearsonmylabandmastering.com

PEARSON

Today's students are holding the future of business communication in their hands

As another disruptive technology redefines business communication, Bovée and Thill are once again the first to respond with current, comprehensive, and fully integrated coverage.

Just as Bovée and Thill pioneered coverage of the social media revolution, they now lead the market with up-to-the-minute coverage of mobile business communication.

> "Mobile is the most disruptive technology that I have seen in 48 years in Silicon Valley."[1]
>
> —Venture capitalist Joe Schoendorf

The mobile revolution: key facts and figures

Smart business leaders know they must adapt and respond to the rise of mobile usage by consumers and employees:[2]

- For millions of people, a mobile device is their primary way, if not their only way, to access the Internet.
- Globally, 80 percent of Internet users access the web at least some of the time with a mobile device.
- Mobile has become the primary communication tool for many business professionals, including a majority of executives under age 40.
- Email and web browsing rank first and second in terms of the most common nonvoice uses of smartphones.
- More email messages are now opened on mobile devices than on PCs.
- Roughly half of U.S. consumers use a mobile device exclusively for their online search needs.
- Many online activities that eventually migrate to a PC screen start out on a mobile screen.

Bovée and Thill's coverage of mobile business communication includes these important topics:

- *The Mobile Revolution*
- *The Rise of Mobile as a Communication Platform*
- *How Mobile Technologies Are Changing Business Communication*
- *Collaboration via Mobile Devices*
- *Business Etiquette Using Mobile Devices*
- *The Unique Challenges of Communication on Mobile Devices*
- *Writing Messages for Mobile Devices*
- *Designing Messages for Mobile Devices*
- *Optimizing Content for Mobile Devices*
- *Visual Media on Mobile Devices*
- *Creating Promotional Messages for Mobile Devices*
- *Integrating Mobile Devices in Presentations*
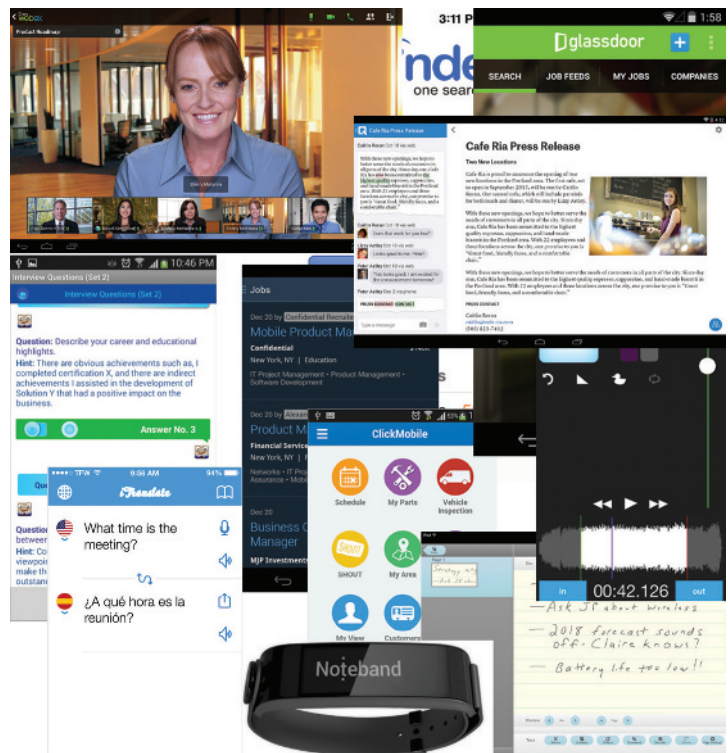
Integrated coverage and student activities

As with social media, the changes brought about by mobile run far deeper than the technology itself. Successful communication on mobile devices requires a new approach to planning, writing, and designing messages.
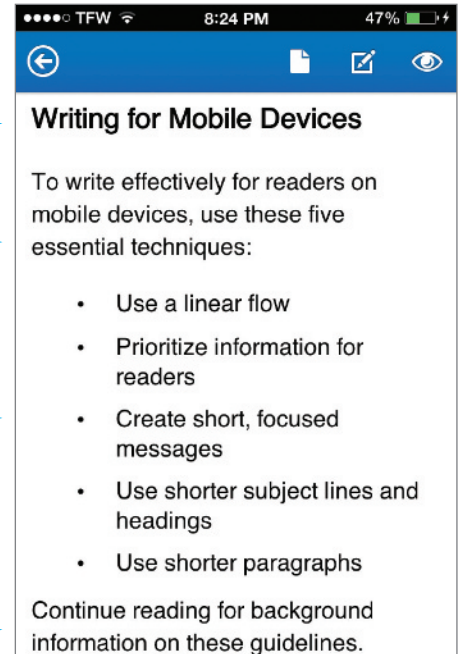
With in-depth, integrated coverage of the challenges and opportunities that mobile presents, *Excellence in Business Communication, 12th* Edition, helps students adapt their personal use of mobile devices to the unique demands of business communication. Through a variety of annotated model messages, questions, activities, and cases, students will gain valuable skills in the art of communicating via mobile devices.

Optimizing for mobile includes writing short headlines that get right to the point.

This introduction conveys only the information readers need in order to grasp the scope of the article.

All the key points of the documents appear here on the first screen.

Readers who want more detail can swipe down for background information on the five points.

●●●●○ TFW 📶   8:24 PM   47% 🔋 ⚡

Writing for Mobile Devices

To write effectively for readers on mobile devices, use these five essential techniques:

- Use a linear flow
- Prioritize information for readers
- Create short, focused messages
- Use shorter subject lines and headings
- Use shorter paragraphs

Continue reading for background information on these guidelines.

EMAIL SKILLS / MOBILE SKILLS

7.33. Media Skills: Email [LO-5] The size limitations of smartphone screens call for a different approach to writing (see page 148) and formatting (see page 173) documents.

Your task: On the website of any company that interests you, find a news release (also called a press release or media release) that announces a new product, a quarterly earnings report, or any other writing material in a way th

WEB WRITING SKILLS/MOBILE SKILLS/ PORTFOLIO BUILDER

12.29. Message Strategies: Online Content [LO-2] Adapting conventional web content to make it mobile friendly can require rethinking the site's information architecture to simplify navigation and revising the content.

Your task: Choose the website of a company that makes products you find interesting. (Make it a conventional website, not one already optimized for mobile.) Analyze the section of the

MOBILE APPS
Pocket Letter Pro includes templates for a variety of letter types to simplify writing business letters on your mobile device.

Ψ 🖼   👓 ⏰ 📶 📊🔋 10:46 PM
Interview Questions (Set 2)

Interview Questions (Set 2)

Question: Describe your career and educational highlights.
Hint: There are obvious achievements such as, I completed certification X, and there are indirect achievements I assisted in the development of Solution Y that had a positive impact on the business.

▶ ⏺   Answer No. 3

Question No. 4   ▶   Hint ▶

Question: How would you describe the difference between good work and outstanding work?
Hint: Consider the outcome from your employers viewpoint and customers viewpoint. What would make them feel that the outcome was outstanding?

⏺ Record Answer   Play All

With realistic examples, pointers to dozens of business communication apps, and a full range of questions and projects, Excellence in Business Communication highlights the best current practices in mobile business communication.
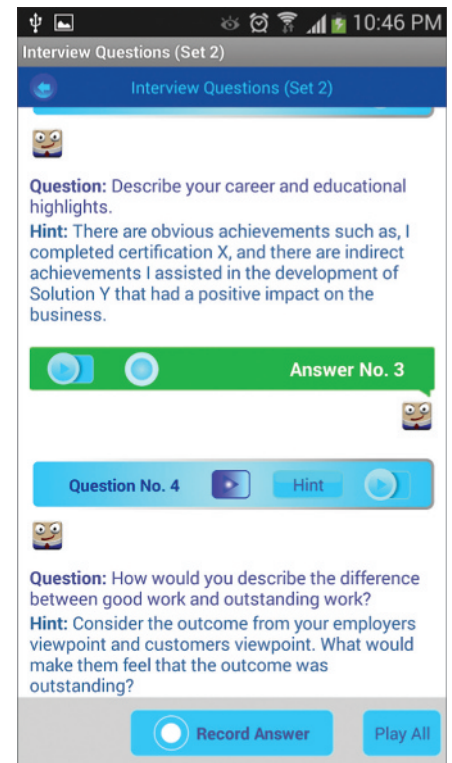
1. "The Mobile Revolution Is Just Beginning," press release, Word Economic Forum, 13 September 2013, www.weforum.org.

2. "More Than Nine in 10 Internet Users Will Go Online via Phone," eMarketer, 6 January 2014, www.emarketer.com; Christina "CK" Kerley, *The Mobile Revolution & B2B*, white paper, 2011, www.b2bmobilerevolution.com; Jordie can Rijn, "The Ultimate Mobile Email Statistics Overview," Emailmonday.com, accessed 9 February 2014, www.emailmonday.com; Jessica Lee, "46% of Searchers Now Use Mobile Exclusively to Research [Study]," Search Engine Watch, 1 May 2013, http://searchenginewatch.com.

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TWELFTH
EDITION

Excellence in Business Communication

John V. Thill

CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
GLOBAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Courtland L. Bovée

PROFESSOR OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION
C. ALLEN PAUL DISTINGUISHED CHAIR
GROSSMONT COLLEGE

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to the many thousands of instructors and students who use Bovée and Thill texts to develop career-enhancing skills in business communication. We appreciate the opportunity to play a role in your education, and we wish you the very best with your careers.

John V. Thill
Courtland L. Bovée

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Brief Contents

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Preface

Major Changes and Improvements in This Edition

Here are the major changes in the 12th edition of *Excellence in Business Communication*:

- Groundbreaking coverage of mobile business communication; see the next page for more information
- New text sections:
  - Using All the Job-Search Tools at Your Disposal (Prologue)
  - The Mobile Revolution (Chapter 1)
    - The Rise of Mobile as a Communication Platform
    - How Mobile Technologies Are Changing Business Communication
  - Collaboration via Mobile Devices (Chapter 2)
  - Putting Meeting Results to Productive Use (Chapter 2)
  - Business Etiquette Using Mobile Devices (Chapter 2)
  - Selecting the Best Combination of Media and Channels (Chapter 4)
  - The Unique Challenges of Communication on Mobile Devices (Chapter 4)
  - Writing Messages for Mobile Devices (Chapter 5)
  - Designing Messages for Mobile Devices (Chapter 6)
  - Optimizing Content for Mobile Devices (Chapter 7)
  - Creating Promotional Messages for Mobile Devices (Chapter 10)
  - Visual Media on Mobile Devices (Chapter 12)
  - Organizing a Presentation (Chapter 14)
  - Integrating Mobile Devices in Presentations (Chapter 14)
  - Choosing a Design Strategy for Your Résumé (Chapter 15)
- Coverage of emerging issues that are reshaping business communication, including *digital information fluency* and the *bring your own device (BYOD)* phenomenon
- Coverage of *linear* and *nonlinear presentations*, discussing the relative strengths of slide-based presentations (linear) and Prezi-style presentations (nonlinear)
- Six new chapter-opening vignettes with accompanying end-of-chapter simulations, featuring JetBlue, GoPro, Hailo, Red Ants Pants, Warby Parker, and VMWare
- Revised treatment of media and channels to reflect the continuing evolution of digital formats; we now categorize media choices *oral, written,* and *visual,* each of which can be delivered through *digital* and *nondigital channels* to create six basic combinations
- A new highlight box theme, *Digital + Social + Mobile: Today's Communication Environment,* addressing such topics as gamification as way to engage audiences, the new careers available in social media community management, using mobile devices for business research, and using mobile devices in the job search process.
- More than 50 new business communication examples and figures—and the 12th edition includes nearly 30 mobile communication examples and more than two dozen social media examples
- New exercises and activities that focus on mobile communication
- A selection of communication cases that challenge students to craft messages for mobile devices

As Another Disruptive Technology Transforms Business Communication, Bovée and Thill Again Lead the Field with Innovative Coverage

The history of business communication over the past couple of decades has been one of almost constant change. The first major wave was the digital revolution, replacing much of the print communication of the past with email, instant messaging, web content, and other new forms. Then came social media, which fundamentally redefined the relationship between businesses and their stakeholders. And now comes the third wave, and it's proving to be every bit as disruptive—and full of exciting possibilities—as the first two.

Mobile communication, and mobile connectivity in the larger sense, is changing the way business communicators plan, create, and distribute messages. Mobile devices are overtaking PCs as the primary digital communication tool for millions of consumers, employees, and executives; businesses that don't get mobile-friendly in a hurry will fall behind.

For business communicators, the shift to mobile involves much more than the constraints of small screens and new input technologies. The ability to reach people anywhere at any time can be a huge advantage, but the mobile communication experience can also be a major challenge for senders and receivers alike. It requires new ways of thinking about information, message structures, and writing styles. With the notion of *radical connectivity* (see page 17), for example, many communication experiences are no longer about "batch processing" large, self-contained documents. Instead, communication is taking on the feel of an endless conversation, with recipients picking up smaller bits of information as needed, in real time, from multiple sources.

The fundamental skills of writing, listening, presenting, and so on will always be essential, of course, but those skills must be executed in a contemporary business context. That's why Bovée and Thill texts carefully blend technology awareness and skills with basic communication skills and practices. The new coverage of mobile communication is deeply integrated throughout the 12th edition, with major new sections in many chapters and important updates in other places, along with a variety of new questions, activities, and cases.

Welcome to the exciting new world of mobile business communication!

Why Business Communication Instructors Continue to Choose Bovée and Thill

- **Market-leading innovation.** The unique new coverage of mobile communication in this edition is just one example of how, for more than three decades, Bovée and Thill texts have pioneered coverage of emerging trends and their implications for business communication. Bovée and Thill were the first authors in the field to give in-depth coverage to digital media, then social media, and now mobile communication.
- **Up-to-date coverage that reflects today's business communication practices and employer expectations.** Technology, globalization, and other forces have dramatically changed the practice of business communication in recent years, even to the point of altering how people read and how messages should be constructed. To prepare students for today's workplace, the business communication course needs to address contemporary skills, issues, and concepts.
- **Practical advice informed by deep experience.** Beyond the research and presentation of new ideas and tools, Bovée and Thill are among the most active and widely followed users of social media in the entire field of business communication. They don't just write about new concepts; they have years of hands-on experience with social media, blogging, content curation, search technologies, and other important tools. They are active participants in more than 45 social media sites.

Bovée and Thill's extensive use of social media not only provides instructors and students with valuable content and resources—it has given the authors an unparalleled base of hands-on experience that is reflected in their coverage of contemporary media practices.

- **Engaging coverage of real companies and contemporary issues in business communication.** Bovée and Thill texts emphasize companies and issues students already know about or are likely to find intriguing. For example, cases in recent editions have addressed location-based social networking (the business communication implications of the FourSquare game app), employer restrictions on social media, and the use of Twitter in the job-search process.
- **Integrated learning.** In sharp contrast to texts that tack on coverage of social media and other new topics, Bovée and Thill continually revise their coverage to fully integrate the skills and issues that are important in today's workplace. This integration is carried through chapter-opening vignettes, chapter content, model documents, end-of-chapter questions, communication cases, and test banks to make sure students practice the skills they'll need, not just read about them in some anecdotal fashion.
- **Added value with unique, free resources for instructors and students.** From the groundbreaking Real-Time Updates to *Business Communication Headline News* to videos specially prepared for instructors, Bovée and Thill adopters can take advantage of an unmatched array of free resources to enhance the classroom experience and keep course content fresh. See page xxx for a complete list.

In-Depth Coverage of Digital, Social, and Mobile Media Topics in the 12th Edition

Excellence in Business Communication offers in-depth coverage of new and emerging media skills and concepts. These tables show where you can find major areas of coverage, figures, and communication cases that expose students to professional use of social media, mobile media, and other new technologies.

Major Coverage of Digital, Social, and Mobile Media

Topic	Page
Backchannel in presentations	465
Blogging and microblogging	204–210 (primary)
Collaboration technologies	42–44
Community Q&A websites	198
Compositional modes for digital media	188–189
Content curation	195, 198
Creating content for social media	189–191
Data visualization	380–381
Digital, social, and mobile media options	106–109 (primary)
Email	198-202
Infographics	383, 384
Instant messaging and text messaging	202–204
Interview media	520–521
Meeting technologies	48–49
Mobile devices in presentations	459–460
Mobile etiquette	58
Mobile media	15–18 (overview)
Online and social media résumés	499–500
Online etiquette	57–58
Podcasting	210–211
Social communication model	13–14
Social networking	191–194 (primary)
User-generated content	195
Web writing	342–344, 371–373
Wikis	371–373
Writing and designing messages for mobile devices	148–149, 173–174
Writing persuasive messages for mobile media	304
Writing persuasive messages for social media	302–303

Figures and Model Documents Highlighting Digital, Social, and Mobile Media (not including email, IM, or presentation slides)

Title	Figure	Page
Mobile Recruiting Apps	P1	xlvi
The Social Communication Model	1.7	14
Mobile Communication Tools	1.8	15
Wearable Technology	1.9	16
Mobile Communication: Opportunities and Challenges	1.10	17

(Continued)

**Communication Cases Involving Digital, Social,
or Mobile Media (not including email, IM, or presentations)**

Extending the Value of Your Textbook with Free Multimedia Content

Excellence in Business Communication's unique Real-Time Updates system automatically provides weekly content updates, including interactive websites, infographics, podcasts, PowerPoint presentations, online videos, PDF files, and articles. You can subscribe to updates chapter by chapter, so you get only the material that applies to your current chapter. Visit **http://real-timeupdates.com/ebc12** to subscribe.

1 Read messages from the authors and access over 175 media items avilable only to instructors. (Students have access to their own messages, assignments, and media items.)

2 Click on any chapter to see the updates and media items for that chapter.

3 Scan headlines and click on any item of interest to read the article or download the media item.
Every item is personally selected by the authors to complement the text and support in-class activities.

4 Media items are categorized by type so you can quickly find podcasts, videos, infographics, PowerPoints, and more.

5 Subscribe via RSS to individual chapters to get updates automatically for the chapter you're currently teaching.

For Instructors: Features and Resources to Enhance the Course Experience

TARGET AUDIENCE

Everyone who teaches business communication is motivated to help students master the fundamentals of professional communication while also preparing them for the broader expectations they'll encounter in today's workplace. As the field of business communication continues to expand and get more complex, however, balancing those two objectives continues to get more difficult. Basing your course on a textbook that hasn't kept up with contemporary business media and professional practices puts both you and your students at a distinct disadvantage, and yet you obviously can't ignore basic writing skills.

The 12th edition of *Excellence in Business Communication* is optimized to provide that balance. Even in the context of social media, mobile, and other media innovations, every chapter gives students the opportunity to hone their foundational skills and improve their awareness of grammar, mechanics, and proper usage. The time-tested three-step writing process is integrated throughout the text, showing students how to adapt the skills they've acquired to every new challenge they encounter. Moreover, students also get a solid grounding in ethics, etiquette, listening, teamwork, and nonverbal communication.

Building on that platform of essential skills, *Excellence in Business Communication* introduces students to the tools they'll be expected to use when they enter the workforce over the next few years. We continuously monitor developments in electronic media and communication practices to choose the optimum time to introduce new topics.

With its comprehensive coverage of business communication concepts and up-to-the-minute treatment of contemporary practices and technologies, *Excellence in Business Communication* is ideal for business communication courses in any curriculum. While covering the full range of contemporary business media, *Excellence in Business Communication* maintains a strong emphasis on written communication and so is ideal for courses that feature report writing and similar activities. For business communication coverage in the broadest sense, you may find the authors' *Business Communication Today* to be the most effective text. Conversely, if you want a shorter text with strong emphasis on fundamental skills, consider *Essentials of Business Communication*.

Colleges and universities vary in the prerequisites established for the business communication course, but we advise at least one course in English composition. Some coursework in business studies will also give students a better perspective on communication challenges in the workplace. However, we have taken special care not to assume students have any in-depth business experience, so *Excellence in Business Communication* works quite well for those with limited work experience or business coursework.

A TOTAL TEACHING AND LEARNING SOLUTION

Excellence in Business Communication has helped more than 2 million students master essential skills for succeeding in the workplace. This 12th edition continues that tradition by offering an unmatched set of tools that simplify teaching, promote active learning, and stimulate critical thinking. These components work together at four levels to provide seamless coverage of vital knowledge and skills: previewing, developing, enhancing, and reinforcing.

PREVIEWING

Each chapter provides clear learning objectives that prepare students for the material to come and provide a framework for the chapter content. Each learning objective aligns with a major heading in the chapter, and this structure is carried on through to the end-of-chapter and online activities, making it easier for instructors and students to gauge learning progress.

After the learning objectives, a compelling On the Job vignette featuring a successful professional role model or company shows students how the material they will encounter in the chapter is put to use in actual business situations.

DEVELOPING

Chapter content develops, explains, and elaborates on concepts with a carefully organized presentation of textual and visual material. The three-step process of planning, writing, and completing is clearly explained and reinforced throughout the course. Some texts introduce a writing process model and then rarely, if ever, discuss it again, giving students few opportunities to practice it and leaving them to wonder just how important the process really is. *Excellence in Business Communication* adapts the three-step process to every category of messages in every medium, from traditional letters and reports to email, blogs, IM, podcasts, wikis, and online videos.

ENHANCING

Contemporary examples show students the specific elements that contribute to—or detract from—successful messages. *Excellence in Business Communication* has an unmatched portfolio of realistic examples for students to emulate, including 95 model documents and nearly 70 exhibits that feature communication efforts from real companies. In addition, the Real-Time Updates "Learn More" inserts connect students with dozens of carefully selected online media elements that provide examples and insights from successful professionals.

   Excellence in Business Communication also extends students' awareness beyond the functional aspects of communication, with thorough and well-integrated coverage of business etiquette and ethics—vital issues that some texts raise briefly and then quickly forget. In light of employer concerns about the etiquette shortcomings of today's new-hires and the continuing struggles with business ethics, we integrate ethics and etiquette throughout the book and give students numerous opportunities to ponder ethical dilemmas and practice communication etiquette.

REINFORCING

Hundreds of realistic exercises and activities help students practice vital skills and put newfound knowledge to immediate use. Unique features include downloadable Word documents, podcasts, and PowerPoint presentations for students to analyze, and the innovative Bovée and Thill wiki simulator. Interactive Document Makeovers, pioneered by Bovée and Thill, let students experience firsthand the elements that make a document successful, giving them the insights they need in order to analyze and improve their own business messages. Nearly 130 communication cases, featuring dozens of real companies, encourage students to think about contemporary business issues as they put their skills to use in a variety of media, including blogging, social networking, and podcasting.

   At every stage of the learning experience, *Excellence in Business Communication* provides the tools instructors and students need in order to succeed.

Features that Help Students Build Essential Knowledge and Skills	Previewing	Developing	Enhancing	Reinforcing
Learning objectives (beginning of chapter)	●			
On the Job communication vignette (beginning of chapter)	●			
Concise presentations of fundamentals (within chapter)		●		
Managerial and strategic perspectives on key topics (within chapter)		●		
Three-step writing process discussion and diagrams (within chapter)		●		
Real-life examples (within chapter)			●	
Annotated model documents (within chapter)			●	
Highlight boxes (within chapter)			●	
Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage (end of book)			●	
Learn More media resources (online)			●	
MyBCommLab (online)			●	●
Real-Time Updates (online)			●	●

(Continued)

Features that Help Students Build Essential Knowledge and Skills	Previewing	Developing	Enhancing	Reinforcing
Marginal notes for quick review (within chapter)				●
Checklists (within chapter)				●
On the Job: Solving Communication Dilemmas (end of chapter)				●
Quick Learning Guide (end of chapter)				●
Apply Your Knowledge questions (end of chapter)				●
Practice Your Skills activities and exercises (end of chapter)				●
Expand Your Skills web activities (end of chapter/online)				●
Bovée and Thill wiki simulator (online)				●
Cases (following Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16)				●
Document Makeovers (online)				●

FULL SUPPORT FOR AACSB LEARNING STANDARDS

The American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) is a not-for-profit corporation of educational institutions, corporations, and other organizations devoted to the promotion and improvement of higher education in business administration and accounting. A collegiate institution offering degrees in business administration or accounting may volunteer for AACSB accreditation review. The AACSB makes initial accreditation decisions and conducts periodic reviews to promote continuous quality improvement in management education. Pearson Education is a proud member of the AACSB and is pleased to provide advice to help you apply AACSB Learning Standards.

Curriculum quality is one of the most important criteria for AACSB accreditation. Although no specific courses are required, the AACSB expects a curriculum to include learning experiences in the following areas:

- Written and oral communication
- Ethical understanding and reasoning
- Analytical thinking
- Information technology
- Interpersonal relations and teamwork
- Diverse and multicultural work environments
- Reflective thinking
- Application of knowledge

Throughout *Excellence in Business Communication*, you'll find student exercises and activities that support the achievement of these important goals, and the questions in the accompanying test bank are tagged with the appropriate AACSB category.

UNMATCHED COVERAGE OF ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

The Bovée and Thill series continues to lead the field with unmatched coverage of communication technologies, reflecting the expectations and opportunities in today's workplace:

- Applicant tracking systems
- Assistive technologies
- Automated reputation analysis
- Backchannel
- Blogs
- Cloud computing
- Community Q&A websites
- Computer animation
- Content curation
- Crowdsourcing
- Data visualization
- Digital documents (PDFs)
- Digital whiteboards
- Email
- Emoticons
- Enterprise instant messaging
- E-portfolios
- Extranets
- Gamification
- Geographic information systems
- Graphics software
- Groupware and shared online workspaces
- Infographics
- Information architecture
- Instant messaging
- Intellectual property rights

- Interactivity
- Internet telephony (Skype)
- Interview simulators
- Intranets
- Knowledge management systems
- Linked and embedded documents
- Location-based social networking
- Microblogs
- Mobile business apps
- Multimedia presentations
- Newsfeeds
- Online brainstorming systems
- Online research techniques
- Online survey tools
- Online video
- Podcasts
- PowerPoint animation
- Really Simple Syndication (RSS)
- Screencasts
- Search and metasearch engines
- Search engine optimization (SEO)
- Security and privacy concerns in electronic media
- Sentiment analysis
- Social bookmarking
- Social commerce
- Social media
- Social media résumés
- Social networking
- Tagging
- Teleconferencing and telepresence
- Text messaging
- Translation software
- User-generated content
- Video interviews
- Video résumés
- Videoconferencing
- Virtual communities
- Virtual meetings
- Virtual whiteboards
- Web content management systems
- Web directories
- Webcasts
- Website accessibility
- Wikis

COURSE PLANNING GUIDE

Although *Excellence in Business Communication* follows a conventional sequence of topics, it is structured so that you can address topics in whatever order best suits your needs. For instance, if you want to begin by reviewing grammar, sentence structure, and other writing fundamentals, you can ask students to read Chapter 5, "Writing Business Messages" and then the "Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage." Conversely, if you want to begin with employment-related communication, you can start with the Prologue, "Building a Career with Your Communication Skills," followed by Chapters 15 and 16.

The following table suggests a sequence and a schedule for covering the chapters in the textbook, with time allocations based on the total number of class hours available.

	Chapter/Section	Hours Devoted to Each Chapter/Section		
		30-Hour Course	45-Hour Course	60-Hour Course
	Prologue: Building a Career with Your Communication Skills	0.5	1	1
1	Professional Communication in a Digital, Social, Mobile World	1	1	1
2	Collaboration, Interpersonal Communication, and Business Etiquette	1	1	2
3	Communication Challenges in a Diverse, Global Marketplace	1	2	3
4	Planning Business Messages	2	3	4
5	Writing Business Messages	2	3	4
6	Completing Business Messages	2	3	4
	Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage	1	2	2
A	Format and Layout of Business Documents	1	1	1
7	Crafting Messages for Digital Channels	2	2	4
8	Writing Routine and Positive Messages	2	2	3
9	Writing Negative Messages	2	2	3
10	Writing Persuasive Messages	2	2	3
11	Planning Reports and Proposals	2	3	4
12	Writing Reports and Proposals	2	3	4
13	Completing Reports and Proposals	2	3	3
B	Documentation of Report Sources	1	1	2
14	Designing and Delivering Business Presentations	1	4	4
15	Building Careers and Writing Résumés	1.5	3	4
16	Applying and Interviewing for Employment	1	3	4

INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES AND SUPPORT OPTIONS

Excellence in Business Communication is backed by an unmatched selection of resources for instructors and students, many of which were pioneered by the authors and remain unique in the field.

Online Communities and Media Resources

Instructors are welcome to take advantage of the many free online resources provided by Bovée and Thill:

- Sponsorship of Teaching Business Communication instructors' communities (open to all) and Bovée and Thill's Inner Circle for Business Communication (for adopters only) on LinkedIn and Facebook
- Instructor tips and techniques in Bovée and Thill's Business Communication Blog and Twitter feed
- The Bovée and Thill channel on YouTube, with videos that offer advice on teaching the new elements of business communication
- The unique Real-Time Updates content-updating service (see page xxv)
- The popular Business Communication Headline News service (see below)
- A variety of videos and PowerPoint presentations on SlideShare
- More than 500 infographics, videos, articles, podcasts, and PowerPoints on Business Communication Pictorial Gallery on Pinterest
- The Ultimate Guide to Resources for Teaching Business Communication

We also invite you to peruse Bovée and Thill's Online Magazines for Business Communication on Scoop.it:

- Business Communication 2.0: Social Media and Electronic Communication
- Teaching a Modern Business Communication Course
- How the Mobile Revolution Is Changing Business Communication
- Teaching Business Communication and Workplace Issues
- Teaching Business Communication and Interpersonal Communication
- Teaching Oral Communication in a Business Communication Course
- Teaching Business Communication and Employment
- Teaching Visual Communication
- Exclusive Teaching Resources for Business Communication Instructors

Links to all these services and resources can be found at **http://blog.business communicationnetwork.com/resources**

Business Communication Headline News

Stay on top of hot topics, important trends, and new technologies with Business Communication Headline News (**http://bchn.businesscommunicationnetwork.com**), the most comprehensive business communication site on the Internet. Every weekday during the school year, we offer fresh lecture content and provide a wide range of research and teaching tools on the website, including a custom web search function that we created expressly for business communication research.

Take advantage of the newsfeeds to get late-breaking news in headlines with concise summaries. You can scan incoming items in a matter of seconds and simply click through to read the full articles that interest you. All articles and accompanying multimedia resources are categorized by topic and chapter for easy retrieval at any time.

This free service for adopters offers numerous ways to enhance lectures and student activities:

- Keep current with the latest information and trends in the field.
- Easily update your lecture notes with fresh material.

- Create visuals for your classroom presentations.
- Supplement your lectures with cutting-edge handouts.
- Gather podcasts, online video, and other new media examples to use in the classroom.
- Enhance your research projects with the newest data.
- Compare best practices from other instructors.
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of your teaching by reading about new teaching tips and techniques.

At the website, you also get free access to these powerful instructional resources:

- **Business Communication Web Search**, featuring a revolutionary approach to searching developed by the authors that lets you quickly access more than 325 search engines. The tool uses a simple and intuitive interface engineered to help business communication instructors find precisely what they want, whether it's PowerPoint files, PDF files, Microsoft Word documents, Excel files, videos, or podcasts.
- **Real-Time Updates** are newsfeeds and content updates tied directly to specific points throughout the text. Each content update is classified by the type of media featured: interactive website, infographic, article, video, podcast, PowerPoint, or PDF. Additional sections on the site include Instructor Messages and Instructor Media (both password protected), Student Messages, and Student Assignments.

You can subscribe to Business Communication Headline News and get delivery by email, RSS newsreader, mobile phone, instant messenger, MP3, Twitter, Facebook, and a host of other options.

Bovée and Thill Business Communication Blog

The Bovée and Thill Business Communication Blog (**http://blog.businesscommunicationnetwork.com/**) offers original articles that help instructors focus their teaching to help students learn more efficiently and effectively. Articles discuss a wide variety of subjects, including new topics instructors should be teaching their students, resources instructors can use in their classes, solutions to common teaching challenges, and great examples and activities instructors can use in class.

Authors' Email Hotline for Faculty

Integrity, excellence, and responsiveness are our hallmarks. That means providing you with textbooks that are academically sound, creative, timely, and sensitive to instructor and student needs. As an adopter of *Excellence in Business Communication*, you are invited to use our Email Hotline (hotline@businesscommunicationblog.com) if you ever have a question or concern related to the text or its supplements.

Instructor's Resource Center

At the Instructor Resource Center, **www.pearsonhighered.com/irc**, instructors can easily register to gain access to a variety of instructor resources available with this text in downloadable format. If assistance is needed, our dedicated technical support team is ready to help with the media supplements that accompany this text. Visit **http://247pearsoned.custhelp.com/** for answers to frequently asked questions and toll-free user-support phone numbers.

The following supplements are available with this text

- Instructor's Resource Manual
- Test Bank
- TestGen® Computerized Test Bank (and various conversions)
- PowerPoint Presentation

For Students: How This Course Will Help You

No matter what profession you want to pursue, the ability to communicate will be an essential skill—and a skill that employers expect you to have when you enter the workforce. This course introduces you to the fundamental principles of business communication and gives you the opportunity to develop your communication skills. You'll discover how business communication differs from personal and social communication, and you'll see how today's companies are using blogs, social networks, podcasts, virtual worlds, wikis, and other technologies. You'll learn a simple three-step writing process that works for all types of writing and speaking projects, both in college and on the job. Along the way, you'll gain valuable insights into ethics, etiquette, listening, teamwork, and nonverbal communication. Plus, you'll learn effective strategies for the many types of communication challenges you'll face on the job, from routine messages about transactions to complex reports and websites.

Few courses can offer the three-for-the-price-of-one value you get from a business communication class. Check out these benefits:

- **In your other classes.** The communication skills you learn in this class can help you in every other course you take in college. From simple homework assignments to complicated team projects to class presentations, you'll be able to communicate more effectively with less time and effort.
- **During your job search.** You can reduce the stress of searching for a job and stand out from the competition. Every activity in the job-search process relies on communication. The better you can communicate, the more successful you'll be at landing interesting and rewarding work.
- **On the job.** After you get that great job, the time and energy you have invested in this course will continue to yield benefits year after year. As you tackle each project and every new challenge, influential company leaders—the people who decide how quickly you'll get promoted and how much you'll earn—will be paying close attention to how well you communicate. They will observe your interactions with colleagues, customers, and business partners. They'll take note of how well you can collect data, find the essential ideas buried under mountains of information, and convey those points to other people. They'll observe your ability to adapt to different audiences and circumstances. They'll be watching when you encounter tough situations that require careful attention to ethics and etiquette. The good news: Every insight you gain and every skill you develop in this course will help you shine in your career.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE

Although this course explores a wide range of message types and appears to cover quite a lot of territory, the underlying structure of the course is actually rather simple. You'll learn a few basic concepts, identify some key skills to use and procedures to follow—and then practice, practice, practice. Whether you're writing a blog posting in response to one of the real-company cases or drafting your own résumé, you'll be practicing the same skills again and again. With feedback and reinforcement from your instructor and your classmates, your confidence will grow and the work will become easier and more enjoyable.

The following sections offer advice on approaching each assignment, using your textbook, and taking advantage of some other helpful resources.

Approaching Each Assignment

In the spirit of practice and improvement, you will have a number of writing (and possibly speaking) assignments throughout this course. These suggestions will help you produce better results with less effort:

- **First, don't panic!** If the thought of writing a report or giving a speech sends a chill up your spine, you're not alone. Everybody feels that way when first learning business

communication skills, and even experienced professionals can feel nervous about major projects. Keeping three points in mind will help. First, every project can be broken down into a series of small, manageable tasks. Don't let a big project overwhelm you; it's nothing more than a bunch of smaller tasks. Second, remind yourself that you have the skills you need in order to accomplish each task. As you move through the course, the assignments are carefully designed to match the skills you've developed up to that point. Third, if you feel panic creeping up on you, take a break and regain your perspective.

- **Focus on one task at a time.** A common mistake writers make is trying to organize and express their ideas while simultaneously worrying about audience reactions, grammar, spelling, formatting, page design, and a dozen other factors. Fight the temptation to do everything at once; otherwise, your frustration will soar and your productivity will plummet. In particular, don't worry about grammar, spelling, and word choices during your first draft. Concentrate on the organization of your ideas first, then the way you express those ideas, and then the presentation and production of your messages. Following the three-step writing process is an ideal way to focus on one task at a time in a logical sequence.
- **Give yourself plenty of time.** As with every other school project, putting things off to the last minute creates unnecessary stress. Writing and speaking projects in particular are much easier if you tackle them in small stages with breaks in between, rather than trying to get everything done in one frantic blast. Moreover, there will be instances when you simply get stuck on a project, and the best thing to do is walk away and give your mind a break. If you allow room for breaks in your schedule, you'll minimize the frustration and spend less time overall on your homework, too.
- **Step back and assess each project before you start.** The writing and speaking projects you'll have in this course cover a wide range of communication scenarios, and it's essential that you adapt your approach to each new challenge. Resist the urge to dive in and start writing without a plan. Ponder the assignment for a while, consider the various approaches you might take, and think carefully about your objectives before you start writing. Nothing is more frustrating than getting stuck halfway through because you're not sure what you're trying to say or you've wandered off track. Spend a little time planning, and you'll spend a lot less time writing.
- **Use the three-step writing process.** Those essential planning tasks are the first step in the three-step writing process, which you'll learn about in Chapter 3 and use throughout the course. This process has been developed and refined by professional writers with decades of experience and thousands of projects ranging from short blog posts to 500-page textbooks. It works, so take advantage of it.
- **Learn from the examples and model documents.** This textbook offers dozens of realistic examples of business messages, many with notes along the sides that explain strong and weak points. Study these documents and any other examples that your instructor provides. Learn what works and what doesn't, then apply these lessons to your own writing.
- **Learn from experience.** Finally, learn from the feedback you get from your instructor and from other students. Don't take the criticism personally; your instructor and your classmates are commenting about the work, not about you. View every bit of feedback as an opportunity to improve.

Using This Textbook Package

This book and its accompanying online resources introduce you to the key concepts in business communication while helping you develop essential skills. As you read each chapter, start by studying the learning objectives. They will help you identify the most important concepts in the chapter and give you a feel for what you'll be learning. Following the learning objectives, the "On the Job" vignette features a successful professional role model who uses the same skills you will be learning in the chapter.

As you work your way through the chapter, compare the advice given with the various examples, both the brief in-text examples and the stand-alone model documents. Also, keep an eye out for the Real-Time Updates elements in each chapter. The authors have selected these videos, podcasts, presentations, and other online media to provide informative and entertaining enhancements to the text material.

At the end of each chapter, you'll revisit the "On the Job" story from the beginning of the chapter and imagine yourself in the role of a business professional solving four realistic communication dilemmas. Next, the "Learning Objectives Checkup" gives you the chance to quickly verify your grasp of important concepts. Each chapter includes a variety of questions and activities that help you gauge how well you've learned the material and are able to apply it to realistic business scenarios. Several chapters have activities with downloadable media such as presentations and podcasts or the use of the Bovée-Thill wiki simulator. If your instructor assigns these activities, follow the instructions in the text to locate the correct online files. And if you'd like some help getting started with Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn, we have created screencasts with helpful advice on these topics.

In addition to the 16 chapters of the text itself, here are some special features that will help you succeed in the course and on the job:

- **Prologue: Building a Career with Your Communication Skills.** This section (immediately following this Preface) helps you understand today's dynamic workplace, the steps you can take to adapt to the job market, and the importance of creating an employment portfolio and building your personal brand.
- **Handbook.** The Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage (see page 571) is a convenient reference of essential business English.
- **Real-Time Updates.** You can use this unique newsfeed service to make sure you're always kept up to date on important topics. Plus, at strategic points in every chapter, you will be directed to the Real-Time Updates website to get the latest information about specific subjects. To sign up, visit **http://real-timeupdates.com/ebc12**.
- **Business Communication Web Search.** This unique web search tool formats more than 325 types of searches to help you find precisely what you want, whether it's PowerPoint files, PDF files, Microsoft Word documents, Excel files, videos, podcasts, videos, or social bookmarks. Check it out at **http://websearch.businesscommunicationnetwork.com**.

About the Authors

Courtland L. Bovée and John V. Thill have been leading textbook authors for more than two decades, introducing millions of students to the fields of business and business communication. Their award-winning texts are distinguished by proven pedagogical features, extensive selections of contemporary case studies, hundreds of real-life examples, engaging writing, thorough research, and the unique integration of print and electronic resources. Each new edition reflects the authors' commitment to continuous refinement and improvement, particularly in terms of modeling the latest practices in business and the use of technology.

Professor Bovée has 22 years of teaching experience at Grossmont College in San Diego, where he has received teaching honors and was accorded that institution's C. Allen Paul Distinguished Chair. Mr. Thill is a prominent communications consultant who has worked with organizations ranging from Fortune 500 multinationals to entrepreneurial start-ups. He formerly held positions with Pacific Bell and Texaco.

Both were recently awarded proclamations from the Governor of Massachusetts for their lifelong contributions to education and for their commitment to the summer youth baseball program that is sponsored by the Boston Red Sox.

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<div align="right">

John V. Thill
Courtland L. Bovée

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Real-Time Updates—Learn More

Real-Time Updates—Learn More is a unique feature you will see strategically located throughout the text, connecting you with dozens of carefully selected online media items. These elements—categorized by the icons shown here representing interactive websites, online videos, infographics, PowerPoint presentations, podcasts, PDF files, and articles—complement the text's coverage by providing contemporary examples and valuable insights from successful professionals.

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Prologue

BUILDING A CAREER WITH YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Using This Course to Help Launch Your Career

This course will help you develop vital communication skills that you'll use throughout your career—and those skills can help you launch an interesting and rewarding career, too. This brief prologue sets the stage by helping you understand today's dynamic workplace, the steps you can take to adapt to the job market, and the importance of creating an employment portfolio and building your personal brand. Take a few minutes to read it while you think about the career you hope to create for yourself.

UNDERSTANDING THE CHANGING WORLD OF WORK

Even as the U.S. economy recovers from the Great Recession and employment levels improve, you're likely to encounter some challenges as you start or continue with your business career. As companies around the world try to gain competitive advantages and cost efficiencies, employment patterns will vary from industry to industry and region to region.

The ups and downs of the economic cycle are not the only dynamic elements that will affect your career, however. The nature of employment itself is changing, with a growing number of independent workers and loosely structured *virtual organizations* that engage these workers for individual projects or short-term contracts, rather than hiring employees. In fact, one recent study predicted that independent workers will outnumber conventional employees in the United States by 2020.[1]

Are you comfortable working on your own? Independent workers have become an important part of the global workforce.

Peter Bernik/Shutterstock

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This new model of work offers some compelling advantages for workers and companies alike. Companies can lower their fixed costs, adapt more easily to economic fluctuations and competitive moves, and get access to specialized talent for specific project needs.[2] Workers can benefit from the freedom to choose the clients and projects that interest them the most, the flexibility to work as much or as little as they want, and (thanks to advances in communication technology) access to compelling work even if they live far from major employment centers such as New York City or California's Silicon Valley.[3]

On the other hand, this new approach also presents some significant challenges for all parties. These flexibilities and freedoms can create more complexity for workers and managers, diminished loyalties on both sides, uncertainty about the future, issues with skill development and training, and problems with accountability and liability.[4] Many of these challenges involve communication, making solid communication skills more important than ever.

These changes could affect you even if you pursue traditional employment throughout your career. Within organizations, you're likely to work with a combination of "inside" employees and "outside" contractors, which can affect the dynamics of the workplace. And the availability of more independent workers in the talent marketplace gives employers more options and more leverage, so full-time employees may find themselves competing against freelancers, at least indirectly.

As you navigate this uncertain future, keep two vital points in mind. First, don't wait for your career to just happen: Take charge of your career and stay in charge of it. Explore all your options and have a plan, but be prepared to change course as opportunities and threats appear on the horizon. Second, don't count on employers to take care of you. The era of lifetime employment, in which an employee committed to one company for life with the understanding it would return the loyalty, is long gone. From finding opportunities to developing the skills you need to succeed, it's up to you to manage your career and look out for your own best interests.

How Employers View Today's Job Market

From an employer's perspective, the employment process is always a question of balance. Maintaining a stable workforce can improve practically every aspect of business performance, yet many employers want the flexibility to shrink and expand payrolls as business conditions change. Employers obviously want to attract the best talent, but the best talent is more expensive and more vulnerable to offers from competitors, so there are always financial trade-offs to consider.

Employers also struggle with the ups and downs of the economy. When unemployment is low, the balance of power shifts to employees, and employers have to compete in order to attract and keep top talent. When unemployment is high, the power shifts back to employers, who can afford to be more selective and less accommodating. In other words, pay attention to the economy; at times you can be more aggressive in your demands, but at other times you need to be more accommodating.

Companies view employment as a complex business decision with lots of variables to consider. To make the most of your potential, regardless of the career path you pursue, you need to view employment in the same way.

What Employers Look for in Job Applicants

Given the complex forces in the contemporary workplace and the unrelenting pressure of global competition, what are employers looking for in the candidates they hire? The short answer: a lot. Like all "buyers," companies want to get as much as they can for the money they spend. The closer you can present yourself as the ideal candidate, the better your chances of getting a crack at the most exciting opportunities.

Communication skills will benefit your career, no matter what path or profession you pursue.

Specific expectations vary by profession and position, of course, but virtually all employers look for the following general skills and attributes:[5]

- **Communication skills.** The reason this item is listed first isn't that you're reading a business communication textbook. Communication is listed first because it is far and away the most commonly mentioned skill set when employers are asked about what they look for in employees. Improving your communication skills will help in every aspect of your professional life.
- **Interpersonal and team skills.** You will have many individual responsibilities on the job, but chances are you won't work alone very often. Learn to work with others and help them succeed as you succeed.
- **Intercultural and international awareness and sensitivity.** Successful employers tend to be responsive to diverse workforces, markets, and communities, and they look for employees with the same outlook.
- **Data collection, analysis, and decision-making skills.** Employers want people who know how to identify information needs, find the necessary data, convert the data into useful knowledge, and make sound decisions.
- **Digital, social, and mobile media skills.** Today's workers need to know how to use common office software and to communicate using a wide range of digital media and systems.
- **Time and resource management.** If you've had to juggle multiple priorities during college, consider that great training for the business world. Your ability to plan projects and manage the time and resources available to you will make a big difference on the job.
- **Flexibility and adaptability.** Stuff happens, as they say. Employees who can roll with the punches and adapt to changing business priorities and circumstances will go further (and be happier) than employees who resist change.
- **Professionalism.** Professionalism is the quality of performing at the highest possible level and conducting oneself with confidence, purpose, and pride. True professionals strive to excel, continue to hone their skills and build their knowledge, are dependable and accountable, demonstrate a sense of business etiquette, make ethical decisions, show loyalty and commitment, don't give up when things get tough, and maintain a positive outlook.

Adapting to Today's Job Market

Adapting to the workplace is a lifelong process of seeking the best fit between what you want to do and what employers (or clients, if you work independently) are willing to pay you to do. It's important to think about what you want to do during the many thousands of hours you will spend working, what you have to offer, and how to make yourself more attractive to employers.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

Economic necessities and the vagaries of the marketplace will influence much of what happens in your career, of course, and you may not always have the opportunity to do the kind of work you would really like to do. Even if you can't get the job you want right now, though, start your job search by examining your values and interests. Doing so will give you a better idea of where you want to be eventually, and you can use those insights to learn and grow your way toward that ideal situation. Consider these questions:

- **What would you like to do every day?** Research occupations that interest you. Find out what people really do every day. Ask friends, relatives, alumni from your school, and contacts in your social networks. Read interviews with people in various professions to get a sense of what their careers are like.
- **How would you like to work?** Consider how much independence you want on the job, how much variety you like, and whether you prefer to work with products, machines, people, ideas, figures, or some combination thereof.
- **How do your financial goals fit with your other priorities?** For instance, many high-paying jobs involve a lot of stress, sacrifices of time with family and friends, and frequent travel or relocation. If location, lifestyle, intriguing work, or other factors are more important to you, you may well have to sacrifice some level of pay to achieve them.
- **Have you established some general career goals?** For example, do you want to pursue a career specialty such as finance or manufacturing, or do you want to gain experience in multiple areas with an eye toward upper management?
- **What sort of corporate culture are you most comfortable with?** Would you be happy in a formal hierarchy with clear reporting relationships? Or do you prefer less structure? Teamwork or individualism? Do you like a competitive environment?

You might need some time in the workforce to figure out what you really want to do or to work your way into the job you really want, but it's never too early to start thinking about where you want to be. Filling out the assessment in Table 1 might help you get a clearer picture of the nature of work you would like to pursue in your career.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO OFFER?

Knowing what you want to do is one thing. Knowing what a company is willing to pay you to do is another thing entirely. You may already have a good idea of what you can offer employers. If not, some brainstorming can help you identify your skills, interests, and characteristics. Start by jotting down achievements you're proud of and experiences that were satisfying, and think carefully about what specific skills these achievements demanded of you. For example, leadership skills, speaking ability, and artistic talent may have helped you coordinate a successful class project. As you analyze your achievements, you may well begin to recognize a pattern of skills. Which of them might be valuable to potential employers?

Next, look at your educational preparation, work experience, and extracurricular activities. What do your knowledge and experience qualify you to do? What have you learned from volunteer work or class projects that could benefit you on the job? Have you held any offices, won any awards or scholarships, mastered a second language? What skills have you developed in nonbusiness situations that could transfer to a business position?

TABLE 1   Career Self-Assessment

Activity or Situation	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	No Preference
1. I want to work independently.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. I want variety in my work.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. I want to work with people.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. I want to work with technology.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. I want physical work.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. I want mental work.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. I want to work for a large organization.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. I want to work for a nonprofit organization.	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. I want to work for a small business.	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. I want to work for a service business.	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. I want to start or buy a business someday.	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. I want regular, predictable work hours.	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. I want to work in a city location.	_____	_____	_____	_____
14. I want to work in a small town or suburb.	_____	_____	_____	_____
15. I want to work in another country.	_____	_____	_____	_____
16. I want to work outdoors.	_____	_____	_____	_____
17. I want to work in a structured environment.	_____	_____	_____	_____
18. I want to avoid risk as much as possible.	_____	_____	_____	_____
19. I want to enjoy my work, even if that means making less money.	_____	_____	_____	_____
20. I want to become a high-level corporate manager.	_____	_____	_____	_____

Take stock of your personal characteristics. Are you aggressive, a born leader? Or would you rather follow? Are you outgoing, articulate, great with people? Or do you prefer working alone? Make a list of what you believe are your four or five most important qualities. Ask a relative or friend to rate your traits as well.

If you're having difficulty figuring out your interests, characteristics, or capabilities, consult your college career center. Many campuses administer a variety of tests that can help you identify interests, aptitudes, and personality traits. These tests won't reveal your "perfect" job, but they'll help you focus on the types of work best suited to your personality.

HOW CAN YOU MAKE YOURSELF MORE VALUABLE?

While you're figuring out what you want from a job and what you can offer an employer, you can take positive steps toward building your career. First, look for volunteer projects, temporary jobs, freelance work, or internships that will help expand your experience base and skill set.[6] You can look for freelance projects on Craigslist and numerous other websites; some of these jobs have only nominal pay, but they do provide an opportunity for you to display your skills. Also consider applying your talents to *crowdsourcing* projects, in which companies and nonprofit organizations invite the public to contribute solutions to various challenges.

These opportunities help you gain valuable experience and relevant contacts, provide you with important references and work samples for your *employment portfolio*, and help you establish your *personal brand* (see the following sections).

Second, learn more about the industry or industries in which you want to work and stay on top of new developments. Join networks of professional colleagues and friends who can help you keep up with trends and events. Many professional societies have student chapters or offer students discounted memberships. Take courses and pursue other educational or life experiences that would be difficult while working full time.

BUILDING AN EMPLOYMENT PORTFOLIO

Employers want proof that you have the skills to succeed on the job, but even if you don't have much relevant work experience, you can use your college classes to assemble that proof. Simply create and maintain an *employment portfolio*, which is a collection of projects that demonstrate your skills and knowledge. You can create a *print portfolio* and an *e-portfolio*; both can help with your career effort. A print portfolio gives you something tangible to bring to interviews, and it lets you collect project results that might not be easy to show online, such as a handsomely bound report. An e-portfolio is a multimedia presentation of your skills and experiences.[7] Think of it as a website that contains your résumé, work samples, letters of recommendation, relevant videos or podcasts you have recorded, any blog posts or articles you have written, and other information about you and your skills. If you have set up a *lifestream* (a real-time aggregation of your content creation, online interests, and social media interactions) that is professionally focused, consider adding that to your e-portfolio. The portfolio can be burned on a CD or DVD for physical distribution or, more commonly, it can be posted online—whether on a personal website, your college's site (if student pages are available), or a specialized portfolio hosting site such as Behance. To see a selection of student e-portfolios from colleges around the United States, go to **http://real-timeupdates.com/ebc12**, click on Student Assignments, and locate the link to student e-portfolios.

Throughout this course, pay close attention to the assignments marked "Portfolio Builder" (they start in Chapter 7). These items will make particularly good samples of not only your communication skills but also your ability to understand and solve business-related challenges. By combining these projects with samples from your other courses, you can create a compelling portfolio when you're ready to start interviewing. Your portfolio is also a great resource for writing your résumé because it reminds you of all the great work you've done over the years. Moreover, you can continue to refine and expand your portfolio throughout your career; many professionals use e-portfolios to advertise their services.

As you assemble your portfolio, collect anything that shows your ability to perform, whether it's in school, on the job, or in other venues. However, you *must* check with employers before including any items that you created while you were an employee, and check with clients before including any *work products* (anything you wrote, designed, programmed, and so on) they purchased from you. Many business documents contain confidential information that companies don't want distributed to outside audiences.

For each item you add to your portfolio, write a brief description that helps other people understand the meaning and significance of the project. Include such items as these:

- **Background.** Why did you undertake this project? Was it a school project, a work assignment, or something you did on your own initiative?
- **Project objectives.** Explain the project's goals, if relevant.
- **Collaborators.** If you worked with others, be sure to mention that and discuss team dynamics if appropriate. For instance, if you led the team or worked with others long distance as a virtual team, point that out.
- **Constraints.** Sometimes the most impressive thing about a project is the time or budget constraints under which it was created. If such constraints apply to a project, consider mentioning them in a way that doesn't sound like an excuse for poor quality. If you had only one week to create a website, for example, you might say that "One of the intriguing challenges of this project was the deadline; I had only one week to design, compose, test, and publish this material."

- **Outcomes.** If the project's goals were measurable, what was the result? For example, if you wrote a letter soliciting donations for a charitable cause, how much money did you raise?
- **Learning experience.** If appropriate, describe what you learned during the course of the project.

Keep in mind that the portfolio itself is a communication project, so be sure to apply everything you'll learn in this course about effective communication and good design. Assume that potential employers will find your e-portfolio site (even if you don't tell them about it), so don't include anything that could come back to haunt you. Also, if you have anything embarrassing on Facebook, Twitter, or any other social networking site, remove it immediately.

To get started, first check with the career center at your college; many schools offer e-portfolio systems for their students. (Some schools now require e-portfolios, so you may already be building one.) You can also find plenty of advice online; search for "e-portfolio," "student portfolio," or "professional portfolio."

BUILDING YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

Products and companies have brands that represent collections of certain attributes, such as the safety emphasis of Volvo cars, the performance emphasis of BMW, or the luxury emphasis of Cadillac. Similarly, when people who know you think about you, they have a particular set of qualities in mind based on your professionalism, your priorities, and the various skills and attributes you have developed over the years. Perhaps without even being conscious of it, you have created a **personal brand** for yourself.

As you plan the next stage of your career, start managing your personal brand deliberately. Branding specialist Mohammed Al-Taee defines personal branding succinctly as "a way of clarifying and communicating what makes you different and special."[8]

You can learn more about personal branding from the sources listed in Table 2, and you will have multiple opportunities to plan and refine your personal brand during this course. For example, Chapter 7 offers tips on business applications of social media, which are key to personal branding, and Chapters 15 and 16 guide you through the process of creating a résumé, building your network, and presenting yourself in interviews. To get you started, here are the basics of a successful personal branding strategy:[9]

- **Figure out the "story of you."** Simply put, where have you been in life, and where are you going? Every good story has dramatic tension that pulls readers in and makes them wonder what will happen next. Where is your story going next? Chapter 15 offers more on this personal brand-building approach.
- **Clarify your professional theme.** Volvos, BMWs, and Cadillacs can all get you from Point A to Point B in safety, comfort, and style, but each brand emphasizes some attributes more than others to create a specific image in the minds of potential buyers. Similarly, you want to be seen as something more than just an accountant, a supervisor, a salesperson. What will your theme be? Brilliant strategist? Hard-nosed, get-it-done tactician? Technical guru? Problem solver? Creative genius? Inspirational leader?

TABLE 2   Personal Branding Resources

Resource	URL
Personal Branding Blog	**www.personalbrandingblog.com**
Cube Rules	**http://cuberules.com**
Jibber Jobber	**www.jibberjobber.com/blog**
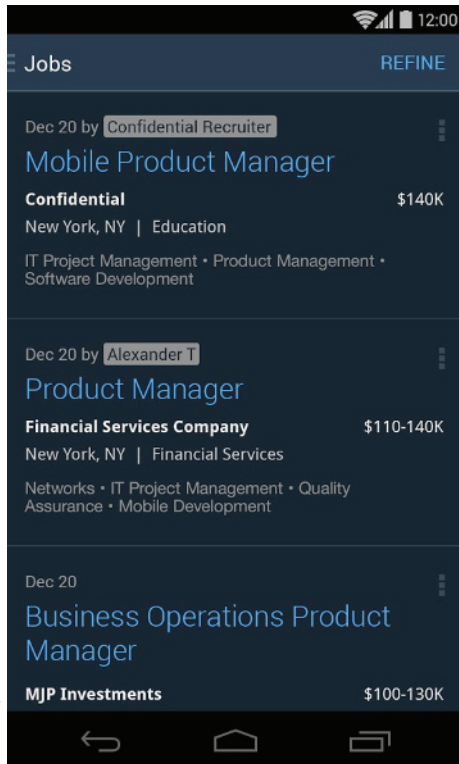
Courtesy of TheLadders.com.

Figure P1 **Mobile Recruiting Apps**
Make sure to explore the wide variety of mobile apps and online resources to help you during your career planning and job search.

- **Reach out and connect.** Major corporations spread the word about their brands with multimillion-dollar advertising campaigns. You can promote your brand for free or close to it. The secret is networking, which you'll learn more about in Chapter 15. You build your brand by connecting with like-minded people, sharing information, demonstrating skills and knowledge, and helping others succeed.
- **Deliver on your brand's promise—every time, all the time.** When you promote a brand, you make a promise—a promise that whoever buys that brand will get the benefits you are promoting. All of this planning and communication is of no value if you fail to deliver on the promises your branding efforts make. Conversely, when you deliver quality results time after time, your talents and professionalism will speak for you.

USING ALL THE JOB-SEARCH TOOLS AT YOUR DISPOSAL

As a final note, be sure to use all the job search tools and resources available to you. For example, many companies now offer mobile apps that give you a feel for what it's like to work there and let you search for job openings. A variety of apps and websites can help you find jobs, practice interviewing, and build your professional network (see Figure P1).

We wish you great success in this course and in your career!

ENDNOTES

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No other skill can help your career in as many ways as communication. Discover what business communication is all about, why communication skills are essential to your career, how social and mobile technologies are revolutionizing business communication, and how to adapt your communication experiences in life and college to the business world. Improve your skills in such vital areas as team interaction, etiquette, listening, and nonverbal communication. Explore the advantages and the challenges of a diverse workforce, and develop the skills that every communicator needs to succeed in today's global, multicultural business environment.

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