MARY ELLEN GUFFEY & DANA LOEWY

Essentials of
Business
Communication 11e

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Essentials of
Business
Communication 11e

MARY ELLEN GUFFEY

Emerita Professor of Business
Los Angeles Pierce College
m.e.guffey@cox.net

DANA LOEWY

Emerita Lecturer, Business Communication
California State University, Fullerton
dloewy@fullerton.edu

CENGAGE

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Essentials of Business Communication 11e

Dear Business Communication Student:

Chances are that you are no longer holding a textbook in your hands but access the **Eleventh Edition** of *Essentials of Business Communication* via MindTap on your laptop, tablet, or your smartphone. MindTap is a multimedia learning experience that makes studying business communication and sharpening important career skills easier and more fun.

Our well-researched, market-leading e-text saves you money while helping you sharpen important job skills. Whether you access *Essentials of Business Communication*, 11e on mobile devices or own a print copy of this award-winning text, you are on your way to developing essential communication skills that will not only serve you well in college but will also stay with you in your chosen career.

Here are a few of the major features you can expect from the No. 1 business communication book in this country and abroad:

Mary Ellen Guffey and Dana Loewy

- **Workplace readiness.** The marketplace today is challenging. One way to outshine the competition is by offering superior communication skills to future employers. Your business communication course and this book are the ideal tools for making yourself job ready.

- **Communication technology and best practices.** Obviously, the workplace is relying on technology and digital media. It is social and mobile. You may be tech savvy, but are you familiar with workplace-appropriate best practices? Even if you know your way around mobile devices and social media, you still need to be able to write well and make a positive impression. This book not only covers the latest workplace technology but above all it stresses solid writing skills and good grammar.

- **Latest trends in job searching.** Chapter 13 presents the most current trends, technologies, and practices affecting the job search, résumés, and cover letters that will help you stand out. You will learn how to build a personal brand, how to network, and how to write customized résumés and create an effective LinkedIn profile.

- **Hottest trends in job interviewing.** Chapter 14 provides countless tips on how to interview in today's highly competitive job market, including one-way and two-way video interviewing.

The many contemporary examples and model documents, along with writing plans providing step-by-step instructions, will get you started quickly and help you stay focused on the writing process. We wish you well in your course!

Cordially,

Mary Ellen Guffey & Dana Loewy

Dr. Mary Ellen Guffey
Emerita Professor of Business
Los Angeles Pierce College
m.e.guffey@cox.net

Dr. Dana Loewy
Emerita Lecturer, Business Communication
California State University, Fullerton
dloewy@fullerton.edu

What Is MindTap?

MindTap is your personal, customized learning environment. It presents engaging course content along with videos, activities, apps, and other interesting features making learning fun and easy. With MindTap, you can create a unique learning path that will help you understand key concepts in depth and fast, so that you can produce your best work.

The following activities will help you shape and pace your own learning:

- **Aplia homework assignments.** Aplia™ is an online application that improves comprehension and performance by motivating you to stay interested and increase your effort. Aplia provides automatically graded assignments that contain detailed explanations on every question over multiple question sets. In short, you get results without needing your instructor's feedback. These assignments cover chapter content as well as grammar and mechanics.

- **YouSeeU activities.** Learning is easier with visuals. YouSeeU helps you stay on track with videos that draw you in and reinforce what you learn in and out of the classroom. The YouSeeU MindApp allows you to complete oral communication activities for various assignment types that include creating individual videos, responding to question and answer tasks, viewing visual aids, and making group presentations.

- **Write Experience activities.** Write Experience assignments help improve your writing skills. They evaluate the voice, style, format, content, and originality of what you write. Find out how you are doing without needing your instructor's feedback.

- **How-To Videos.** Understand fully how it's done before you write a business document. How-to videos show you expert writing techniques.

- **Writing Plan Reviews.** The writing plans in your textbook structure your writing assignments step by step. The writing plan reviews illustrate the popular *Essentials* writing plans with before-and-after treatments.

- **Writing Workshops.** Helping you learn without an instructor, Writing Workshops bring *Essentials* writing assignments to life with interactive quizzing and in-depth feedback.

- **Narrated PowerPoint slides.** To review important concepts and definitions, you can watch the narrated PowerPoint slides—perfect for traditional and distance learners.

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Unit 6 Employment Communication

Are You Job-Ready?

Employers today often complain that many new graduates are simply not job-ready. As a matter of fact, writing, communication, and other so-called soft skills consistently rank high on recruiters' wish lists. Most students realize this and chose this class to develop these necessary workplace skills as efficiently and effectively as possible. *Essentials of Business Communication* is the tool to make this happen.

This time-honored, tried-and-true text will guide you in developing the job-readiness you need for the twenty-first century. *Essentials* highlights best practices and strategies backed by leading-edge research to help you develop professionalism, expert writing techniques, workplace digital savvy, and the latest job-search and résumé-building skills.

Yes, you must be literate in all current communication technologies. The good news is that *Essentials* effectively addresses best practices for social media as well as for mobile technology. You will learn how to build credibility online as well as offline, and understand that writing is central to business success, regardless of the communication channel. It is a foundational skill. Employers want good writers and communicators. This is why *Essentials* continues to provide grammar exercises and documents for editing and grammar practice that our competitors have abandoned. You need a diversity of skills beyond tech savvy alone—now more than ever!

Guided by traditional rigor, *Essentials of Business Communication* addresses both contemporary student needs as well as those of instructors.

Perfecting Professionalism

The Eleventh Edition emphasizes positive workplace behavior and clearly demonstrates the importance of professionalism. Today's businesses desire workers who exhibit strong communication skills and project positive attitudes. Employers seek team members who can effectively work together to deliver positive results that ultimately boost profits and bolster the company's image. Graduates who possess these highly desirable soft skills excel in today's challenging job market. In this edition you will discover how to perfect those traits most valued in today's competitive, mobile, and social workplace.

> "I picked this text with its excellent resources for our new Business Communication class that was added as a core class in the College of Business. All instructors who teach that class use this text. This is the only course in the university that emphasizes professionalism."
>
> **Dr. Mary Kiker,** *Auburn University, Montgomery*

Unprofessional	Professional	
Uptalk, a singsong speech pattern, making sentences sound like questions; *like* used as a filler; *go* for *said*; slang; poor grammar and profanity.	Speech habits	Recognizing that your credibility can be seriously damaged by sounding uneducated, crude, or adolescent.
Sloppy messages with incomplete sentences, misspelled words, exclamation points, IM slang, and mindless chatter. E-mail addresses such as *partyanimal@gmail.com, snugglykitty@icloud.com,* or *hotmama@outlook.com.*	E-mail	Messages with subjects, verbs, and punctuation, free from IM abbreviations; messages that are concise and spelled correctly even when brief. E-mail addresses that include a name or a positive, businesslike expression.
Suggestive Twitter handles and user names that point to an immature, unhealthy lifestyle. Posts that reveal political, religious, and other personal leanings.	Internet, social media	Real name Twitter handles and user names that don't sound cute or like chatroom nicknames. Posts in good taste, fit for public consumption.
An outgoing message with strident background music, weird sounds, or a joke message.	Voice mail	An outgoing message that states your name or phone number and provides instructions for leaving a message.
Soap operas, thunderous music, or a TV football game playing noisily in the background when you answer the phone.	Telephone presence	A quiet background when you answer the telephone, especially if you are expecting a prospective employer's call.
Using electronics during business meetings for unrelated purposes or during conversations with fellow employees; raising your voice (cell yell); forcing others to overhear your calls.	Cell phones, tablets	Turning off phone and message notification, both audible and vibrate, during meetings; using your smart devices only for meeting-related purposes.
Sending and receiving text messages during meetings, allowing texting to interrupt face-to-face conversations, or texting when driving.	Texting	Sending appropriate business text messages only when necessary (perhaps when a cell phone call would disturb others).

Developing Expert Writing Techniques for a Digital Workplace

Abundant before-and-after documents with descriptive callouts create a clear road map to perfecting the writing process. These documents demonstrate how to apply expert writing techniques, as well as highlight the critical significance of the revision process.

Applying Strategic Writing Plans

Original business message writing plans, initially created by author Mary Ellen Guffey and expanded in this edition, provide efficient step-by-step instructions that enable you to overcome fear and start writing quickly and confidently. The Eleventh Edition now offers ten sets of writing plans that cover a variety of business situations. This signature feature of *Essentials* is especially important for novice writers who lack business experience and composition training.

Direct Claims

OPENING: Describe clearly the desired action.

BODY: Explain the claim, tell why it is justified, and provide details describing the desired action.

CLOSING: End pleasantly with a goodwill statement, and include an end date and action request, if appropriate.

WRITING PLAN

Emphasizing Grammar and Writing Fundamentals

Throughout the text, proven learning features help you review and rebuild vital basic grammar skills. In every chapter *Grammar/Mechanics Checkups* systematically review the fundamentals and are keyed to an authoritative and streamlined Grammar/Mechanics Handbook. *Editing Challenge* and *Radical Rewrite* exercises also provide innumerable opportunities for you to sharpen your grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and writing skills by editing typical business documents.

"I really love *Essentials of Business Communication* for my students. I'm always alarmed at how poor their grammar and writing skills are, and this is one of the few books that addresses those skills effectively."
Shawnna Patterson, *Chemeketa Community College, Salem Oregon*

Grammar/Mechanics Checkup 4

Adjectives and Adverbs

Review Sections 1.16 and 1.17 of the Grammar/Mechanics Handbook. Then select the correct form to complete each of the following statements. Record the appropriate G/M section and letter to illustrate the principle involved. When you finish, compare your responses with those provided at the bottom of the page. If your answers differ, study carefully the principles shown in parentheses.

b	(1.17e)	**EXAMPLE**	Surprisingly, most of the (a) *twenty year old*, (b) *twenty-year-old* equipment is still working.
b	(1.17e)	1.	The newly opened restaurant offered many (a) *tried and true*, (b) *tried-and-true* menu items.
b	(1.17c)	2.	Although purchased twenty years ago, the equipment still looked (a) *brightly*, (b) *bright*.
a	(1.17e)	3.	The committee sought a (a) *cost-effective*, (b) *cost effective* solution to the continuing problem.
b	(1.17d)	4.	How is the Shazam app able to process a song so (a) *quick*, (b) *quickly*?
a	(1.16)	5.	Of the two plans, which is (a) *more*, (b) *most* comprehensive?
a	(1.17e)	6.	Employees may submit only (a) *work-related*, (b) *work related* expenses to be reimbursed.
b	(1.17g)	7.	Amy and Marusia said that they're planning to open (a) *there*, (b) *their* own business next year.
b	(1.17e)	8.	Haven't you ever made a (a) *spur of the moment*, (b) *spur-of-the-moment* decision?
a	(1.17e)	9.	Not all decisions that are made on the (a) *spur of the moment*, (b) *spur-of-the-moment* turn out badly.
a	(1.17e)	10.	The committee offered a (a) *well-thought-out*, (b) *well thought out* plan to revamp online registration.
b	(1.17e)	11.	You must complete a (a) *change of address*, (b) *change-of-address* form when you move.
a	(1.16)	12.	Employment figures may get (a) *worse*, (b) *worst* before they get better.
b	(1.17b)	13.	I could be more efficient if my printer were (a) *more nearer*, (b) *nearer* my computer.
a	(1.17c)	14.	Naturally, our team members felt (a) *bad*, (b) *badly* when our project was canceled.
b	(1.17d)	15.	The truck's engine is certainly running (a) *smooth*, (b) *smoothly* after its tune-up.

1. b (1.17e) **2.** b (1.17c) **3.** a (1.17e) **4.** b (1.17d) **5.** a (1.16) **6.** a (1.17e) **7.** b (1.17g) **8.** b (1.17e) **9.** a (1.17e) **10.** a (1.17e) **11.** b (1.17e) **12.** a (1.16) **13.** b (1.17b) **14.** a (1.17c) **15.** b (1.17d)

Learning Workplace Best Practices

Most students arrive in the classroom with some work experience and technology skills, but many are not aware of what businesses expect of them when they use digital tools. The Eleventh Edition provides comprehensive guidance in the professional use of e-mail, texting, instant messaging, blogging, and social media. You will master best practices that clearly demonstrate how to avoid damaging your career or hurting your employers' reputation with careless online behavior.

Getting Started
- Don't write in another channel—such as IM, social media, or a phone call—might work better.
- Send only content you would want to be published.
- Write compelling subject lines, possibly with names and dates: *Jake: Can You Present at January 10 Staff Meeting?*

Replying
- Scan all e-mails, especially those from the same person. Answer within 24 hours or say when you will.
- Change the subject line if the topic changes. Check the threaded messages below yours.
- Practice down-editing; include only the parts from the incoming e-mail to which you are responding.
- Start with the main idea.
- Use headings and lists.

Observing Etiquette
- Obtain approval before forwarding.
- Soften the tone by including a friendly opening and closing.
- Resist humor and sarcasm. Absent facial expression and tone of voice, humor can be misunderstood.
- Avoid writing in all caps, which is like SHOUTING.

Closing Effectively
- End with due dates, next steps to be taken, or a friendly remark.
- Add your full contact information including social media addresses.
- Edit your text for readability. Proofread for typos or unwanted auto-corrections.
- Double-check before hitting Send.

Developing Digital Skills

Regardless of the communication channel, writing proficiency is a must in a workplace dominated by mobile technology and social media. Technology and writing skills go hand in hand in today's professional environment of success. For this reason, *Essentials* provides how-to instructions and best practices for today's digital workplace while also emphasizing good writing and professionalism. This focus is rooted in the belief that today's communicators and their skills are on display 24/7. Credibility takes significant time to build but is easy to lose in an instant.

Timing
- Don't text when calling would be inappropriate or rude; for example, at a performance, a restaurant, in a meeting, or a movie theater.
- Don't text or answer your phone during a face-to-face conversation. If others use their cell phones while talking to you, you may excuse yourself until they stop.

Addressing
- Check that you are texting to the correct phone number to avoid embarrassment. If you receive a message by mistake, alert the sender. No need to respond to the message itself.
- Avoid sending confidential, private, or potentially embarrassing texts.

Responding
Don't expect an instant reply. As with e-mail, we don't know when the recipient will read the message.

Introducing
Identify yourself when texting a new contact who doesn't have your phone number: "Hi—it's Erica (Office World). Your desk has arrived. Please call 877-322-8989."

Expressing
Don't use text messages to notify others of sad news, sensitive business matters, or urgent meetings. unless you wish to set up a phone call about that subject.

Writing a Captivating Blog

Applying the Five Journalistic *Ws* to Blogs

Big Idea First
Who? What? When? Why? How?

Key Facts
Explanations
Evidence
Examples
Background
Details

- Fact check.
- Earn your readers' trust.
- Credit your sources.
- Apply the inverted pyramid.
- Edit, edit, edit.
- Proof, proof, proof.
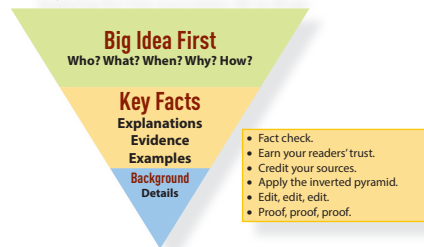
Using Digital Media Like a Pro: Dos and Don'ts

DON'TS — Avoid questionable content, personal documents, and file sharing

Don't spread rumors, gossip, and negative defamatory comments. Because all digital information is subject to discovery in court, avoid unprofessional content and conduct, including complaints about your employer, customers, and employees.

Don't download and share cartoons, video clips, photos, and art. Businesses are liable for any recorded digital content regardless of the medium used.

Don't open unfamiliar attachments. Attachments with executable files or video files may carry viruses, spyware, or other malware (malicious programs).

Don't download free software and utilities to company machines. Employees can unwittingly introduce viruses, phishing schemes, and other cyber bugs.

Don't store your music and photos on a company machine (or server) and don't watch streaming videos. Capturing precious company bandwidth for personal use is a sure way to be shown the door.

Don't share files, and avoid file-sharing services. Clarify whether you may use Google Docs and other services that offer optional file sharing. Stay away from distributors or pirated files such as LimeWare.

DOs — Know workplace policies and use media only for work-related purposes

Learn your company's rules. Some companies require workers to sign that they have read and understand Internet and digital media use policies. Being informed is your best protection.

Avoid sending personal e-mail, instant messages, or texts from work. Even if your company allows personal use during lunch or after hours, keep it to a minimum. Better yet, wait to use your own electronic devices away from work.

Separate work and personal data. Keep information that could embarrass you or expose you to legal liability on your personal storage devices, on hard drives, or in the cloud, never on your office computer.

Be careful when blogging, tweeting, or posting on social networking sites. Unhappy about not receiving a tip, a Beverly Hills waiter lost his job for tweeting disparaging remarks about an actress. Forgetting that his boss was his Facebook friend, a British employee was fired after posting, "OMG, I HATE MY JOB!" and calling his supervisor names.

Keep sensitive information private. Use privacy settings, but don't trust the "private" areas on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and other social networks.

Avoid pornography, sexually explicit jokes, or inappropriate screen savers. Anything that might poison the work environment is a harassment risk and, therefore, prohibited.

Are You Job-Ready?

Establish your credibility.
- Zero in on your objective and make your comment as concise as possible.
- Focus only on the facts and be able to support them.

Consider the reach and permanence of posts.
- Know that your review may be posted indefinitely, even if you change your mind and modify a post later.
- Be open; even anonymous comments can be tracked down. Privacy policies do not protect writers from subpoenas.

Check posting rules.
- Understand what's allowed by reading the terms and conditions on the site.
- Keep your complaint clean, polite, and to the point.

Accept offers to help.
- Reply if a business offers to help or discuss the problem; update your original post as necessary.

Provide balanced reviews.
- To be fair, offset criticism with positives to show that you are a legitimate consumer.
- Suggest improvements even in glowing reviews; all-out gushing is suspicious and not helpful.

Refuse payment for favorable critiques.
- Never accept payment to change your opinion or your account of the facts.
- Comply with requests for a review if you are a satisfied customer.

Writing Online Reviews and Complaints

Social media posts have a way of ending up in the wrong hands, making vicious complainers seem irrational. In this edition you learn to write well-considered private social media messages as well as professional responses that increase the credibility and reputation of employers.

Finding a Job in Today's Challenging Job Market

One of the most important chapters in the book, Chapter 13 updates you on the latest trends, technologies, and practices affecting today's job search, résumés, and cover letters. Thorough revisions will prepare you for a labor market that is more competitive, more social, more mobile, and more dependent on technology than ever before. You will learn how to network, employ current technologies, build your own brand, and prepare an effective LinkedIn profile. Many annotated résumé models will guide you in creating and sending customized résumés that appeal to both applicant tracking systems and human readers.

Essentials of Business Communication, 11E helps ensure that you will have the finely honed writing and communication skills and contemporary digital understanding for exceptional job success.

> "I was blown away by the exceptional personal service from the author. All of the Guffey supplementary materials are unbelievably helpful. This is one author who works hard to make me look good in my classes."
> **Staci Groeschell,** *South Puget Sound Community College, Olympia, Washington*

Mobile technologies are on the rise.
Candidates use apps to apply for jobs, and recruiters use mobile devices to post jobs, contact candidates, and forward résumés to colleagues.

Networking— it's whom you know.
Recruiters say their best job candidates come from referrals. Now, more than ever, you need to be proactive in making professional connections.

Communication and interpersonal skills are in high demand.
Sales and marketing careers are booming, and these careers demand writing, speaking, and team skills.

Social media presence is a must.
Those who haven't developed a social media presence may be left in the dust.

It's all digital.
Today candidates e-mail their résumés, post them to Internet job boards, or publish them on their own Web pages.

Résumés must please scanners and skimmers.
Overwhelmed with candidates, recruiters hurriedly skim résumés preselected by scanning devices.

Conducting a Successful Job Search

Analyze Yourself
- Identify your interests and goals.
- Assess your qualifications.
- Explore career opportunities.

Develop a Job-Search Strategy
- Search the open job market.
- Pursue the hidden job market.
- Cultivate your online presence.
- Build your personal brand.
- Network, network, network!

Create a Customized Résumé
- Choose a résumé style.
- Organize your info concisely.
- Tailor your résumé to each position.
- Optimize for digital technology.

Know the Hiring Process
- Submit a résumé, application, or e-portfolio.
- Undergo screening and hiring interviews.
- Accept an offer or reevaluate your progress.

Developing Your Own Brand

4 Ways for Grads to Stand Out
Branding You

Create your own tagline.
Briefly describe what distinguishes you, such as *Talented at the Internet; Working harder, smarter; Super student, super worker; Love everything digital; Ready for a challenge; Enthusiasm plus fresh skills.*

Distribute a business card.
Include your name, tagline, and an easy-to-remember e-mail address. If you feel comfortable, include a professional headshot photo. Distribute it at all opportunities.

Prepare an elevator speech.
In 60 seconds, you need to be able to describe who you are and what problems your skills can solve. Tweak your speech for your audience, and practice until it feels natural.

Build a powerful online presence.
Prepare a strong LinkedIn profile dictating what comes up when people Google your name. Consider adding Facebook and Twitter profile pages. Be sure all sites promote your brand positively.

John Smith Design/Shutterstock.com

Using LinkedIn to Land a Job

Monkey Business Images/Shutterstock.com; Courtesy of LinkedIn

Making a Career E-Portfolio

Why create a career e-portfolio?
- Demonstrate your technology skills.
- Support and extend your résumé.
- Present yourself in a lively format.
- Make data instantly accessible.
- Target a specific job.

What goes in it?
- Relevant course work
- Updated résumé, cover message
- Real work examples
- Recommendations
- Images, links, or whatever showcases your skills

How to make and publish it?
- Use a portfolio or blog template.
- Design your own website.
- Host at a university or private site.
- Publish its URL in your résumé and elsewhere.

Why Are Instructors Such Great Fans of *Essentials of Business Communication*?

In Their Words. . .

"As an experienced instructor teaching business communication for the first time, I want to praise the layout and clear instructions provided for *Essentials of Business Communication*. Getting to know a textbook usually takes a lot of time, but I read the Instructor's Manual, and it helped me prepare quickly for my class and get me up to speed—without having to spend valuable time learning how to present the material. The 'how-to' instructions for *Essentials of Business Communication* gave me a comfort level that would otherwise have taken several semesters."
Danielle Shaker, *Naugatuck Valley Community College and Post University, Waterbury, CT*

"One year I decided to try a business communication textbook from another publisher, but I immediately returned to the Guffey text this year. The quality of the content and support resources for *Essentials of Business Communication* just can't be matched."
Laurie Johnson, *Manhattan Area Technical College, Manhattan, Kansas*

"I am astounded at the resources for the instructor. Last quarter, I had to create the examples and documents for revision and business scenarios for document creation. Thanks for allowing me to spend time on planning and instruction rather than on creating quizzes, tests, worksheets, and PowerPoint presentations."
Beverly Miller, *Miller-Motte Technical College, Lynchburg, VA*

Appreciation for Support

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Southeast Technical Institute

Sandie Idziak
University of Texas, Arlington

Karin Jacobson
University of Montana

Bonnie Jeffers
Mt. San Antonio College

Edna Jellesed
Lane Community College

Jane Johansen
University of Southern Indiana

Pamela R. Johnson
California State University, Chico

Edwina Jordan
Illinois Central College

Sheryl E. C. Joshua
University of North Carolina, Greensboro

Diana K. Kanoy
Central Florida Community College

Ron Kapper
College of DuPage

Jan Kehm
Spartanburg Community College

Karen Kendrick
Nashville State Community College

Lydia Keuser
San Jose City College

Linda Kissler
Westmoreland County Community College

Deborah Kitchin
City College of San Francisco

Frances Kranz
Oakland University

Keith Kroll
Kalamazoo Valley Community College

Rose Marie Kuceyeski
Owens Community College

Richard B. Larsen
Francis Marion University

Mary E. Leslie
Grossmont College

Ruth E. Levy
Westchester Community College

Gary R. Lewis
Southwest Florida College

Maryann Egan Longhi
Dutchess Community College

Nedra Lowe
Marshall University

Elaine Lux
Nyack College

Elizabeth MacDonald
Arizona State University

Margarita Maestas-Flores
Evergreen Valley College

Jane Mangrum
Miami-Dade Community College

Maria Manninen
Delta College

Tim March
Kaskaskia College

Paula Marchese
State University of New York, Brockport

Tish Matuszek
Troy University Montgomery

Kenneth R. Mayer
Cleveland State University

Victoria McCrady
University of Texas at Dallas

Karen McFarland
Salt Lake Community College

Pat McGee
Southeast Technical Institute

Bonnie Miller
Los Medanos College

Mary C. Miller
Ashland University

Willie Minor
Phoenix College

Nancy Moody
Sinclair Community College

Suman Mudunuri
Long Beach City College

Nancy Mulder
Grand Rapids Junior College

Paul W. Murphey
Southwest Wisconsin Technical College

Nan Nelson
University of Arkansas Phillips Community College

Lisa Nieman
Indiana Wesleyan University

Jackie Ohlson
University of Alaska, Anchorage

Richard D. Parker
Western Kentucky University

Martha Payne
Grayson County College

Catherine Peck
Chippewa Valley Technical College

Carol Pemberton
Normandale Community College

Carl Perrin
Casco Bay College

Jan Peterson
Anoka-Hennepin Technical College

Susan Peterson
Scottsdale Community College

Kay D. Powell
Abraham Baldwin College

Jeanette Purdy
Mercer County College

Carolyn A. Quantrille
Spokane Falls Community College

Susan Randles
Vatterott College

Diana Reep
University of Akron

Ruth D. Richardson
University of North Alabama

Carlita Robertson
Northern Oklahoma College

Vilera Rood
Concordia College

Rich Rudolph
Drexel University

Rachel Rutledge
Carteret Community College

Joanne Salas
Olympic College

Rose Ann Scala
Data Institute School of Business

Joseph Schaffner
SUNY College of Technology, Alfred

James Calvert Scott
Utah State University

Laurie Shapero
Miami-Dade Community College

Lance Shaw
Blake Business School

Cinda Skelton
Central Texas College

Estelle Slootmaker
Aquinas College

Margaret Smallwood
The University of Texas at Dallas

Clara Smith
North Seattle Community College

Nicholas Spina
Central Connecticut State University

Marilyn St. Clair
Weatherford College

Judy Sunayama
Los Medanos College

Dana H. Swensen
Utah State University

James A. Swindling
Eastfield College

David A. Tajerstein
SYRIT College

Marilyn Theissman
Rochester Community College

Zorica Wacker
Bellevue College

Lois A. Wagner
Southwest Wisconsin Technical College

Linda Weavil
Elan College

William Wells
Lima Technical College

Gerard Weykamp
Grand Rapids Community College

Beverly Wickersham
Central Texas College

Leopold Wilkins
Anson Community College

Anna Williams
College of Central Florida, Ocala

Charlotte Williams
Jones County Junior College

Donald Williams
Feather River College

Janice Willis
College of San Mateo

Almeda Wilmarth
State University of New York, Delhi

Barbara Young
Skyline College

Appreciation for Support

About the Authors

Dr. Mary Ellen Guffey

A dedicated professional, Mary Ellen Guffey has taught business communication and business English topics for over thirty-five years. She received a bachelor's degree, *summa cum laude*, from Bowling Green State University; a master's degree from the University of Illinois, and a doctorate in business and economic education from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). She has taught at the University of Illinois, Santa Monica College, and Los Angeles Pierce College.

Now recognized as the world's leading business communication textbook author, Dr. Guffey corresponds with instructors around the globe who are using her books. She is the founding author of the award-winning *Business Communication: Process and Product*, the leading business communication textbook in this country. She also wrote *Business English*, which serves more students than any other book in its field; *Essentials of College English*; and *Essentials of Business Communication*, the leading text/workbook in its market. Dr. Guffey is active professionally, serving on the review boards of the *Business and Professional Communication Quarterly* and the *Journal of Business Communication*, publications of the Association for Business Communication. She participates in national meetings, sponsors business communication awards, and is committed to promoting excellence in business communication pedagogy and the development of student writing skills.

Dr. Dana Loewy

Dana Loewy taught business communication at California State University, Fullerton for nineteen years. Previously, she also worked as a composition instructor at various Los Angeles area community colleges, thus reaching a solid quarter century of combined experience teaching writing. Dr. Loewy has also lectured abroad, for example, at Fachhochschule Nürtingen, Germany. Having earned a PhD from the University of Southern California in English with a focus on translation, she is a well-published freelance translator, interpreter, and textbook author. Dr. Loewy has collaborated with Dr. Guffey on recent editions of *Business Communication: Process & Product* as well as on *Essentials of Business Communication*.

Fluent in several languages, among them German and Czech, her two native languages, Dr. Loewy has authored critical articles in many areas of interest—literary criticism, translation, business communication, and business ethics. Active in the Association for Business Communication, Dr. Loewy is now focusing on her consulting practice. Most recently she has advised a German bank and a California-based nonprofit organization on communication strategy and effective writing techniques. Dana is also a business etiquette consultant certified by The Protocol School of Washington.

Business Communication in the Digital Age

1

Chapter 1
Succeeding in the Social and Mobile Workplace

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Succeeding in the Social and Mobile Workplace

1

Learning Outcomes

After studying this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

1 Describe how strong communication skills will improve your career outlook, strengthen your credibility, and help you succeed in today's competitive digital age marketplace.

2 Confront barriers to effective listening, and start building your listening skills.

3 Explain the features of nonverbal communication, and recognize the importance of improving your nonverbal communication skills.

4 Name five common dimensions of culture, and understand how culture influences communication and the use of social media and communication technology.

5 Discuss strategies that help communicators overcome negative cultural attitudes and prevent miscommunication in today's diverse, mobile, social-media-driven workplace.

Robert Churchill/Getty Images

1-1 Mastering the Tools for Success in the Twenty-First-Century Workplace

What kind of workplace will you enter when you graduate, and which skills will you need to be successful in it? Expect a fast-paced, competitive, and highly connected digital environment. Communication technology provides unmatched mobility and connects individuals anytime and anywhere in the world. Today's communicators interact using multiple mobile electronic devices and access information stored in remote locations, in the cloud. This mobility and instant access explain why

increasing numbers of workers must be available practically around the clock and must respond quickly. Your communication skills will always be on display and will determine your credibility.

This first chapter presents an overview of communication in business today. It addresses the contemporary workplace, listening skills, nonverbal communication, the cultural dimensions of communication, and intercultural job skills. The remainder of the book is devoted to developing specific writing and speaking skills.

1-1a Strong Communication Skills: Your Key to Success

Effective writing skills can be a stepping-stone to great job opportunities; poorly developed writing skills, on the other hand, will derail a career. When competition is fierce, superior communication skills will give you an edge over other job applicants. In survey after survey, recruiters place communication high on their wish lists.[1] In one recent study, employers ranked writing and oral communication among the five top attributes in job seekers, after teamwork and problem-solving skills.[2] Your ability to communicate is a powerful "career sifter."[3] Strong communication skills will make you marketable even in a challenging economic climate.

Perhaps you are already working or will soon apply for your first job. How do your skills measure up? The good news is that you can learn effective communication. This textbook and this course can immediately improve your communication skills. Because the skills you are learning will make a huge difference in your ability to find a job and to be promoted, this will be one of the most important courses you will ever take.

1-1b The Digital Revolution: Why Communication Skills Matter More Than Ever

Since information technology, mobile devices, and social media have transformed the workplace, people in today's workforce communicate more, not less. Thanks to technology, messages travel instantly to distant locations, reaching potentially huge audiences. Work team members can collaborate across vast distances. Moreover, social media are playing an increasingly prominent role in business. In such a hyper-connected world, writing matters more than ever. Digital media require "much more than the traditional literacy of yesterday," and workers' skills are always on display.[5]

As a result, employers seek employees with a broader range of skills and higher levels of knowledge in their field than in the past; hiring standards are increasing.[6] Educators are discussing "essential fluencies"—twenty-first-century skills that include analytical thinking, teamwork, and multimedia-savvy communication.[7] Pew Research found that 90 percent of the Americans polled consider communication the No. 1 skill for a successful life.[8] Billionaire entrepreneur Richard Branson concurs, calling communication "the most important skill any leader can possess."[9] Furthermore, jobs relying heavily on people skills such as communication are less likely to be killed by automation and will offer the most opportunities in the future.[10]

Skills Gap. Unfortunately, a great number of workers can't deliver. More than half of the respondents in an employer survey criticized applicants for their lack of communication, interpersonal, and writing skills. Staffing company Adecco reported that 44 percent of its respondents cited a similar skills gap.[11] Recruiters agree that regardless of the workplace media used, "the ability to communicate an idea, with force and clarity" and with a unique voice is sorely needed.[12] In a PayScale study, 44 percent of bosses felt new graduates lacked writing skills as well as critical-thinking and problem-solving skills (60 percent).[13]

Communication and Employability. Not surprisingly, many job listings require excellent oral and written communication skills. An analysis of 2.3 million LinkedIn profiles revealed that oral and written communication skills were by a large margin the top skill set sought, followed by organization, teamwork, and punctuality.[14] In

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"Communicating clearly and effectively has NEVER been more important than it is today. Whether it's fair or not, life-changing critical judgments about you are being made based solely on your writing ability."[4]

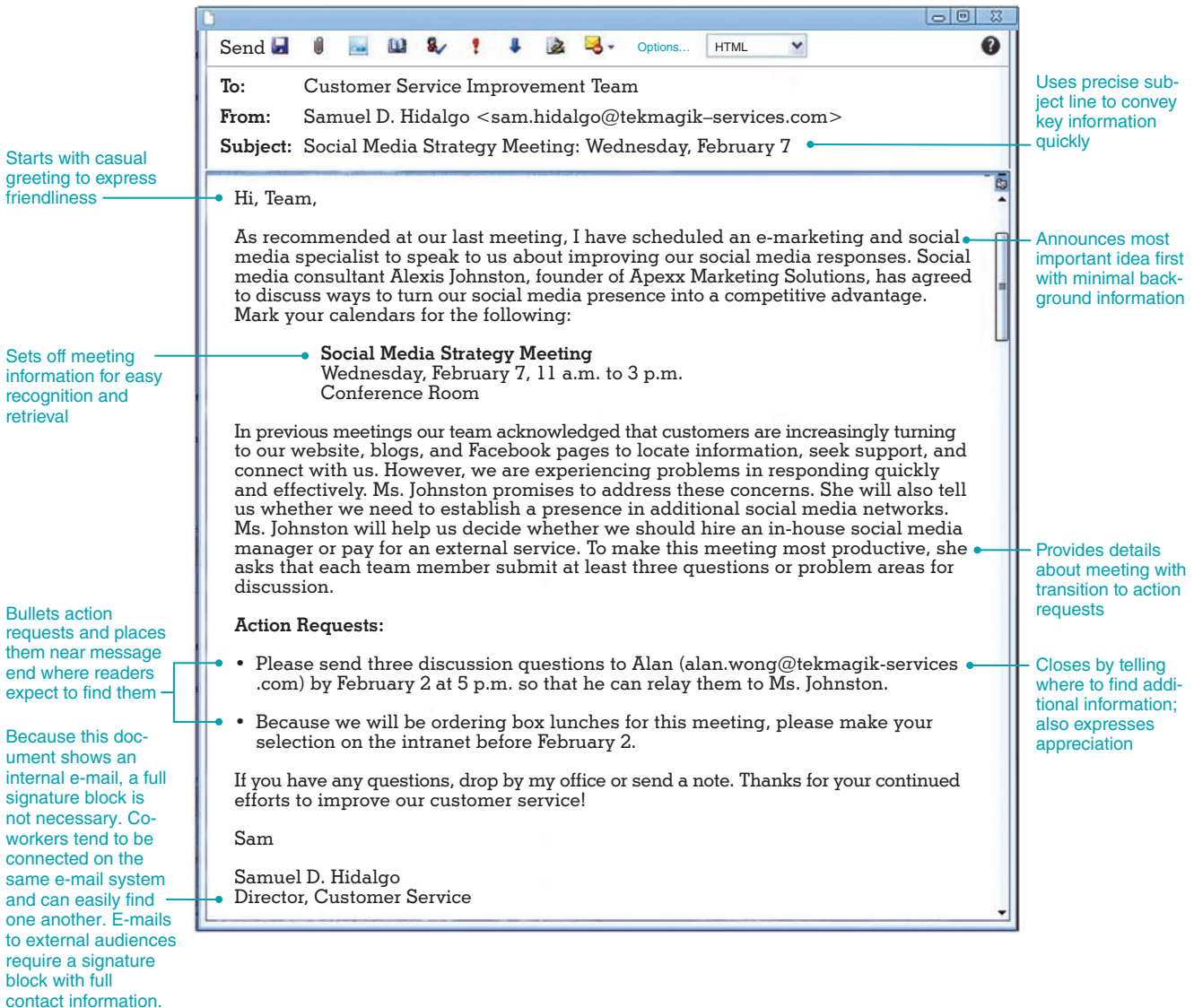**Victor Urbach,**
management consultant

Note: Small superscript numbers in the text announce information sources. Full citations are near the end of the book. This edition uses a modified American Psychological Association (APA) reference format.

addition, as you will learn in later chapters, recruiters will closely examine your online persona to learn about your communication skills and professionalism. Naturally, they will not hire candidates who write poorly or post inappropriate content.[15] Your reputation and personal credibility are vital assets you must guard.

Techies Write Too. Even in technical fields such as accounting and information technology, you will need strong communication skills. A researcher suggests that "The days of being able to plug away in isolation on a quantitative problem and be paid well for it are increasingly over."[16] In an economy relying on innovation, generating ideas isn't enough; they must be communicated clearly, often in writing.[17] A recruiter in the high-tech industry explains, "Communication is KEY. You can have all the financial tools, but if you can't communicate your point clearly, none of it will matter."[18] A poll of nearly 600 employers showed that they are looking for "communicators with a capital C," people who offer superb speaking, writing, listening, presentation, persuasion, and negotiation skills.[19]

Writing Is in Your Future. Regardless of career choice, you will probably be sending many digital messages, such as the e-mail shown in Figure 1.1. Because electronic mail and other digital media have become important channels of communication

Figure 1.1 Businesslike, Professional E-Mail Message

Send | Options... | HTML

To: Customer Service Improvement Team
From: Samuel D. Hidalgo <sam.hidalgo@tekmagik–services.com>
Subject: Social Media Strategy Meeting: Wednesday, February 7

Uses precise subject line to convey key information quickly

Starts with casual greeting to express friendliness

Hi, Team,

As recommended at our last meeting, I have scheduled an e-marketing and social media specialist to speak to us about improving our social media responses. Social media consultant Alexis Johnston, founder of Apexx Marketing Solutions, has agreed to discuss ways to turn our social media presence into a competitive advantage. Mark your calendars for the following:

Announces most important idea first with minimal background information

Sets off meeting information for easy recognition and retrieval

Social Media Strategy Meeting
Wednesday, February 7, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Conference Room

In previous meetings our team acknowledged that customers are increasingly turning to our website, blogs, and Facebook pages to locate information, seek support, and connect with us. However, we are experiencing problems in responding quickly and effectively. Ms. Johnston promises to address these concerns. She will also tell us whether we need to establish a presence in additional social media networks. Ms. Johnston will help us decide whether we should hire an in-house social media manager or pay for an external service. To make this meeting most productive, she asks that each team member submit at least three questions or problem areas for discussion.

Provides details about meeting with transition to action requests

Action Requests:

Bullets action requests and places them near message end where readers expect to find them

- Please send three discussion questions to Alan (alan.wong@tekmagik-services .com) by February 2 at 5 p.m. so that he can relay them to Ms. Johnston.

- Because we will be ordering box lunches for this meeting, please make your selection on the intranet before February 2.

Closes by telling where to find additional information; also expresses appreciation

If you have any questions, drop by my office or send a note. Thanks for your continued efforts to improve our customer service!

Sam

Samuel D. Hidalgo
Director, Customer Service

Because this document shows an internal e-mail, a full signature block is not necessary. Coworkers tend to be connected on the same e-mail system and can easily find one another. E-mails to external audiences require a signature block with full contact information.

Chapter 1: Succeeding in the Social and Mobile Workplace

in today's workplace, all digital business messages must be clear, concise, and professional. Notice that the message in Figure 1.1 is more businesslike and more professional than the quick text or e-mail you might send socially. Learning to write professional digital messages will be an important part of this course.

1-1c What Employers Want: Professionalism

Your future employer will expect you to show professionalism and possess what are often referred to as soft skills in addition to your technical knowledge. Soft skills are essential career attributes that include the ability to communicate clearly, get along with coworkers, solve problems, and take initiative.[20] A PayScale study found that employers considered writing proficiency an indispensable *hard* skill.[21] In a *Wall Street Journal* survey of nearly 900 executives, 92 percent said that soft skills are equally important or more important than technical skills. As a tech sector recruiter put it, "Communications, teamwork, and interpersonal skills are critical—everything we do involves working with other people."[22]

Not every job seeker is aware of the employer's expectations. Some new-hires have no idea that excessive absenteeism or tardiness is grounds for termination. Others are surprised to learn that they are expected to devote their full attention to their duties when on the job. One frustrated Washington, D.C., restaurateur advertised for workers with "common sense." She said "I can teach somebody how to cook soup. But it's hard to teach someone normal manners, or what you consider work ethic."[23]

Projecting and maintaining a professional image can make a real difference in helping you obtain the job of your dreams. Once you get that job, you are more likely to be taken seriously and promoted if you look and sound professional. Don't send the wrong message and risk losing your credibility with unwitting and unprofessional behavior. Figure 1.2 reviews areas you will want to check to be sure you are projecting professionalism. You will learn more about soft skills and professionalism in Chapter 11. The Communication Workshop at the end of this chapter will help you explore your future career and the need for soft skills.

1-1d How Your Education May Determine Your Income

As college tuition rises steeply and student debt mounts, you may wonder whether going to college is worthwhile. Yet the effort and money you invest in earning your college degree will most likely pay off. College graduates earn more, suffer less unemployment, and can choose from a wider variety of career options than workers without a college education. Moreover, college graduates have access to the highest-paying and fastest-growing careers, many of which require a degree.[25] As Figure 1.3 shows, graduates with bachelor's degrees earn nearly three times as much as high school dropouts and are almost four times less likely to be unemployed.[26]

Writing is one aspect of education that is particularly well rewarded. One corporate president explained that many people climbing the corporate ladder are good. When he faced a hard choice between candidates, he used writing ability as the deciding factor. He said that sometimes writing is the only skill that separates a candidate from the competition. A survey of employers confirms that soft skills such as communication ability can tip the scales in favor of one job applicant over another.[27] Your ticket to winning in a competitive job market and launching a successful career is good communication skills.

1-1e Confronting the Challenges of the Information Age Workplace

The workplace is changing profoundly and rapidly. As a businessperson and as a business communicator, you will be affected by many trends, including communication technologies such as social media, expectations of around-the-clock availability, and team projects. Other trends include flattened management hierarchies, global

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"In a survey conducted by PwC, CEOs cited 'curiosity' and 'open-mindedness' as traits that are becoming increasingly critical. Today's star employees need the full package: hard or technical skills backed up with soft skills and emotional intelligence. It isn't enough to say you're good with people, a resume catch-phrase that's become empty jargon."[24]

Dennis Yang, *chief executive officer of Udemy*

Figure 1.2 Projecting Professionalism When You Communicate

Unprofessional		Professional
Uptalk, a singsong speech pattern, making sentences sound like questions; *like* used as a filler; *go* for *said*; slang; poor grammar and profanity.	**Speech habits**	Recognizing that your credibility can be seriously damaged by sounding uneducated, crude, or adolescent.
Sloppy messages with incomplete sentences, misspelled words, exclamation points, IM slang, and mindless chatter. E-mail addresses such as *partyanimal@gmail.com, snugglykitty@icloud.com,* or *hotmama@outlook.com.*	**E-mail**	Messages with subjects, verbs, and punctuation, free from IM abbreviations; messages that are concise and spelled correctly even when brief. E-mail addresses that include a name or a positive, businesslike expression.
Suggestive Twitter handles and user names that point to an immature, unhealthy lifestyle. Posts that reveal political, religious, and other personal leanings.	**Internet, social media**	Real name Twitter handles and user names that don't sound cute or like chatroom nicknames. Posts in good taste, fit for public consumption.
An outgoing message with strident background music, weird sounds, or a joke message.	**Voice mail**	An outgoing message that states your name or phone number and provides instructions for leaving a message.
Soap operas, thunderous music, or a TV football game playing noisily in the background when you answer the phone.	**Telephone presence**	A quiet background when you answer the telephone, especially if you are expecting a prospective employer's call.
Using electronics during business meetings for unrelated purposes or during conversations with fellow employees; raising your voice (cell yell); forcing others to overhear your calls.	**Cell phones, tablets**	Turning off phone and message notification, both audible and vibrate, during meetings; using your smart devices only for meeting-related purposes.
Sending and receiving text messages during meetings, allowing texting to interrupt face-to-face conversations, or texting when driving.	**Texting**	Sending appropriate business text messages only when necessary (perhaps when a cell phone call would disturb others).

competition, and a renewed emphasis on ethics. The following overview reveals how communication skills are closely tied to your success in a constantly evolving networked workplace.

- **Social media and changing communication technologies.** New communication technology is dramatically affecting the way workers interact. In our always-connected world, businesses exchange information by e-mail, instant messaging, text messaging, voice mail, powerful laptop computers, netbooks, and smartphones as well as other mobile devices. Satellite communications, wireless networking, teleconferencing, and videoconferencing help workers conduct meetings with associates around the world. Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube as well as blogs, wikis, forums, and peer-to-peer tools help businesspeople collect information, serve customers,

Figure 1.3 The Education Bonus: Higher Income, Lower Unemployment

Education	Median Weekly Earnings	Unemployment Rate
High school dropout	$ 493	8.0%
High school diploma	678	5.4%
Some college, no degree	738	5.0%
Associate's degree	798	3.8%
Bachelor's degree or higher (average)	1,458	2.1%

and sell products and services. Figure 1.4 illustrates many technologies you will encounter in today's workplace.

- **Anytime, anywhere availability and nonterritorial offices.** High-speed and wireless Internet access has freed millions of workers from nine-to-five jobs in brick-and-mortar offices. Flexible working arrangements allow them to work at home or on the road. Meet the work shifter, a telecommuter or teleworker who largely remains outside the territorial office. The anytime, anywhere office the work shifter needs requires only a smart mobile device and a wireless connection.[28] If the self-employed are factored in, teleworkers now represent almost 30 percent of the U.S. working adult population.[29] To save on office real estate, some industries provide "nonterritorial" workspaces, or "hot desks." The first to arrive gets the best desk and the corner window.[30] At the same time, 24/7 availability has blurred the line between work and leisure, so that some workers are always on duty.

- **Self-directed work groups and virtual teams. Teamwork has become a reality in business.** Many companies have created cross-functional teams to empower employees and boost their involvement in decision making. You can expect to collaborate with a team in gathering information, finding and sharing solutions, implementing decisions, and managing conflict. You may even become part of a virtual team whose members are in remote locations. Increasingly, organizations are also forming ad hoc teams to solve particular problems. Such project-based teams disband once they have accomplished their objectives.[31] Moreover, parts of our future economy may rely on "free agents" who will be hired on a project basis in what has been dubbed the *gig economy*, a far cry from today's full-time and relatively steady jobs.

- **Flattened management hierarchies.** To better compete and to reduce expenses, businesses have for years been trimming layers of management. This means that as a frontline employee, you will have fewer managers. You will be making decisions and communicating them to customers, to fellow employees, and to executives.

- **Heightened global competition.** Because many American companies continue to move beyond domestic markets, you may be interacting with people from many cultures. To be a successful business communicator, you will need to learn about other cultures. You will also need to develop intercultural skills including sensitivity, flexibility, patience, and tolerance.

- **Renewed emphasis on ethics.** Ethics is once again a hot topic in business. The Great Recession of 2007–2009 was caused largely, some say, by greed and ethical lapses. With the passage of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, the U.S. government

Figure 1.4 Communication and Collaborative Technologies

alphaspirit/Shutterstock.com

Communication Technologies

Communication Technologies at Work

Cloud Computing, Web 2.0, and Beyond

Increasingly, applications and data are stored in remote locations online, in the cloud. This ability to store and access data on remote servers is called *cloud computing*. Cloud computing means that businesses and individuals no longer need to maintain costly hardware and software in-house; instead, they can centralize data on their own remote servers or pay for digital storage space and software applications offered by providers online. Photo- and video-sharing sites such as Instagram, Flickr, and YouTube keep users' media in the cloud. Similarly, Dropbox, a popular file-synchronization service, and online backup provider Carbonite allow customers to edit and sync files online independent of the device used to access them. Websites and Web applications have shifted from one-way, read-only communication to multidirectional, social, read-write communication. This profound change, dubbed Web 2.0, has allowed workers to participate, collaborate, and network in unprecedented ways. More changes on the horizon include the Internet of things, the storing and making sense of big data, artificial intelligence, and self-driving cars. Continuous automation will make many current jobs obsolete.

Telephony: VoIP

Paul Bradbury/Getty Images

Savvy businesses are switching from traditional phone service to voice over Internet protocol (VoIP). This technology allows callers to communicate using a broadband Internet connection, thus eliminating long-distance and local telephone charges. Higher-end VoIP systems now support unified voice mail, e-mail, click-to-call capabilities, and softphones (Web applications or mobile apps, such as Google Voice, for calling and messaging). Free or low-cost Internet telephony sites, such as the popular Skype and FaceTime, are also increasingly used by businesses, although their sound and image quality is often uneven.

Open Offices

Exactostock / SuperStock
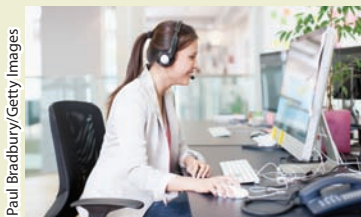
The widespread use of laptop computers, tablets, and other smart devices, wireless technology, and VoIP have led to more fluid, flexible, and open workspaces. Smaller computers and flat-screen monitors enable designers to save space with boomerang-shaped workstations and cockpit-style work surfaces rather than space-hogging corner work areas. Smaller breakout areas for impromptu meetings are taking over some cubicle space, and digital databases are replacing file cabinets. Mobile technology allows workers to be fully connected and productive on the go.

Becoming familiar with modern communication technology can help you succeed on the job. Today's digital workplace is shaped by mobile devices, mobile apps, social media networks, superfast broadband and wireless access, and other technologies that allow workers to share information, work from remote locations, and be more productive in or away from the office. With today's tools you can exchange ideas, solve problems, develop products, forecast performance, and complete team projects any time of the day or night anywhere in the world.

iStock.com/ichaka
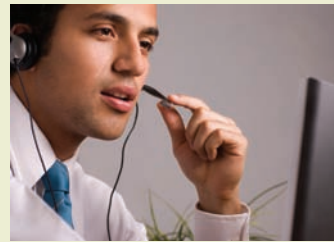
Speech Recognition

Computers equipped with speech-recognition software enable users to dictate up to 160 words a minute with accurate transcription. Speech recognition is particularly helpful to disabled workers and to professionals with heavy dictation loads, such as physicians and attorneys. Users can create documents, enter data, compose and send e-mails, browse the Web, and control their notebooks, laptops, and desktops—all by voice. Smart devices can also execute tasks with voice command apps—for example, to dial a call, find a route, or transcribe voice mail.

Denys Prykhodov/Shutterstock.com

Wearable Devices

The most recent trend in mobile computing is wearable devices. Fitbit, Google Glass, Apple Watch, and similar accessories do more than track fitness activities. They are powerful mobile devices in their own right that can sync with other smart electronics.

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Smart Mobile Devices and Digital Convergence

Lightweight, ever-smaller devices provide phone, e-mail, Web browsing, and calendar options anywhere there is a cellular or Wi-Fi network. Tablets and smartphones such as Android devices and the iPhone and iPad allow workers to tap into corporate databases and intranets from remote locations. Users can check customers' files, complete orders, collect payment, and send out receipts without returning to the office. The need for separate electronic gadgets is waning as digital smart devices are becoming multifunctional and highly capable. With streaming video on the Web, connectivity between TVs and computers, and networked mobile devices, technology is converging, consolidating into increasingly powerful devices. Many smart devices today are fully capable of replacing digital point-and-shoot still photography and video cameras. Mobile smart devices are also competing with TVs and computers for primacy.

maxsattana/Getty Images

Videoconferencing

Videoconferencing allows participants to meet in special conference rooms equipped with cameras and television screens. Individuals or groups see each other and interact in real time, although they may be far apart. Faster computers, rapid Internet connections, and better cameras now enable 2 to 200 participants to sit at their own computers or mobile devices and share applications, spreadsheets, presentations, and photos. The technology extends from the popular Internet applications Skype and FaceTime to sophisticated videoconferencing software that delivers HD-quality audio, video, and content sharing.

Source: Polycom, Inc.

Web Conferencing

With services such as GoToMeeting, WebEx, and Microsoft Live Meeting, all you need is a computer or a smart device and an Internet connection to hold a meeting (*webinar*) with customers or colleagues in real time. Although the functions are constantly evolving, Web conferencing currently incorporates screen sharing, chats, slide presentations, text messaging, and application sharing.

Hero Images/Getty Images

Mobile Apps

Mobile apps are the software that enables smartphones to run and accomplish amazing feats. Despite their natural size limitations, mobile apps rival the capabilities of full-fledged software applications on laptops, on desktops, and in the cloud.

Scanrail1/Shutterstock.com

Electronic Presentations and Data Visualization

Business presentations in PowerPoint, Prezi, or Keynote can be projected from a laptop or tablet, or posted online. Sophisticated presentations may include animation, sound effects, digital photos, video clips, or hyperlinks to Internet sites. In some industries, PowerPoint and other electronic slides (decks) are replacing or supplementing traditional hard-copy reports. Data visualization tools such as SAS can help businesses make sense of increasing amounts of complex data.

Monty Rakusen/Getty Images

Social Media

Broadly speaking, the term *social media* describes technology that enables participants to connect and share in social networks online. For example, tech-savvy companies and individuals use Twitter to issue up-to-date news, link to their blogs and websites, and announce events and promotions. Microblogging services, such as Twitter and Tumblr, also allow businesses to track what is being said about them and their products. Similarly, businesses use social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, and others to interact with customers and build their brands. Companies may also prospect for talent using social media networks. Efforts to launch corporate social networks have seen mixed results. So far workers have been slow in embracing SharePoint, Jive, Yammer, Telligent, and similar enterprise-grade collaboration platforms, social networks, and community forums.

OmniArt/Shutterstock.com

Collaboration With Blogs, Podcasts, and Wikis

Businesses use *blogs* to keep customers and employees informed and to receive feedback. Company news can be posted, updated, and categorized for easy cross-referencing. An audio or video file streamed online or downloaded to a digital music player is called a *podcast*. A *wiki* is an Internet or intranet site that allows multiple users to collaboratively create and edit digital files as well as media. Information can get lost in e-mails, but wikis provide an easy way to communicate and keep track of what has been said. Wikis for business include Confluence, eXo Platform, Socialtext, and Jive.

Westend61/Getty Images