

## Chapter Guides

This section provides information about the chapters in the textbook and suggested solutions and answers for the activities. Each Chapter Guide includes the following items:

- Chapter overview
- Chapter outline
- Lecture notes organized by Learning Objective, with class discussion questions in selected sections
- Answers to highlight box questions
- Answers to Apply Your Knowledge questions
- Answers to Practice Your Skills activities
- Solutions to cases (complete example solutions for short-message cases; solution guidelines for long-message cases)

## Part 1: Understanding the Foundations of Business Communication

The first three chapters give students a general understanding of why good communication skills are important in business, how today's communication is enhanced through technology (particularly the revolutions in social media and mobile communication), why effective interpersonal communication can be difficult, how communication is used in teams, and how it can overcome intercultural barriers. As you present this material, try to stimulate students to personalize basic concepts. Encourage them to think about their own careers and the communication skills they'll need to be successful. Ask members of the class who have work experience to comment on the communication requirements and challenges they have encountered.

### Chapter 1: Professional Communication in a Digital, Social, Mobile World

Chapter 1 emphasizes the importance of effective communication, explains what it means to communicate in a professional context, describes the communication process model and the ways social media are changing the nature of business communication, outlines the effects of the mobile revolution, advises students on how to use communication technology effectively, and offers guidance for making ethical choices as a business communicator.

## CHAPTER OUTLINE

### Understanding Why Communication Matters

- Communication Is Important to Your Career
- Communication Is Important to Your Company
- What Makes Business Communication Effective?

### Communicating as a Professional

- Understanding What Employers Expect from You
- Communicating in an Organizational Context
- Adopting an Audience-Centered Approach

### Exploring the Communication Process

- The Basic Communication Model
  - Barriers in the Communication Environment
  - Inside the Mind of Your Audience
    - How Audiences Receive Messages
    - How Audiences Decode Messages
    - How Audiences Respond to Messages

#### The Social Communication Model

### The Mobile Revolution

- The Rise of Mobile as a Communication Platform
- How Mobile Technologies Are Changing Business Communication

### Using Technology to Improve Business Communication

- Keeping Technology in Perspective
- Guarding Against Information Overload
- Using Technological Tools Productively
- Reconnecting with People

### Committing to Ethical and Legal Communication

- Distinguishing Ethical Dilemmas from Ethical Lapses
- Ensuring Ethical Communication
- Ensuring Legal Communication

### Applying What You've Learned

Learning Catalytics is a “bring your own device” student engagement, assessment, and classroom intelligence system. It allows instructors to engage students in class with real-time diagnostics. Students can use any modern, web-enabled device (smartphone, tablet, or laptop) to access it. For more information on using Learning Catalytics in your course, contact your Pearson Representative.

## LECTURE NOTES

### Section 1: Understanding Why Communication Matters

*Learning Objective 1: Explain the importance of effective communication to your career and to the companies where you will work.*

Communication is the process of transferring information and meaning between *senders* and *receivers*, using one or more written, oral, visual, or electronic media.

The essence of communication is sharing—data, information, insights, and inspiration.

#### Communication Is Important to Your Career

Improving your communication skills may be the single most important step you can take in your career.

Even great ideas won't go anywhere without great communication.

As you take on leadership and management roles, communication becomes even more important.

If you learn to write well, speak well, listen well, and recognize the most appropriate way to communicate in any situation, you'll gain a major advantage that will serve you throughout your career.

#### Communication Is Important to Your Company

Effective communication helps businesses in numerous ways:

- Closer ties with important communities in the marketplace
- Opportunities to influence conversations, perceptions, and trends
- Increased productivity and faster problem solving
- Better financial results and higher return for investors
- Earlier warning of potential problems
- Stronger decision making
- More persuasive marketing messages
- Greater employee engagement

#### What Makes Business Communication Effective?

Stakeholders are groups affected in some way by the company's actions: customers, employees, shareholders, suppliers, neighbors, the community, the nation, and the world.

When communication breaks down, the results can range from time wasting to tragic.

To make your communication efforts as effective as possible, focus on making them practical, factual, concise, clear, and persuasive.

## Section 2: Communicating as a Professional

*Learning Objective 2: Explain what it means to communicate as a professional in a business context.*

If you don't have a lot of work experience yet, meeting the expectations of a professional environment might require some adjustment.

Professionalism is the quality of performing at a high level and conducting oneself with purpose and pride.

Professionalism can be broken down into six distinct traits:

- Striving to excel
- Being dependable and accountable
- Being a team player
- Demonstrating a sense of etiquette
- Making ethical decisions
- Maintaining a positive outlook

### Understanding What Employers Expect from You

Today's employers expect you to be competent at a wide range of communication tasks:

- Organizing ideas and information logically and completely
- Expressing ideas and information coherently and persuasively
- Actively listening to others
- Communicating effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and experiences
- Using communication technologies effectively and efficiently
- Following accepted standards of grammar, spelling, and usage
- Communicating in a civilized manner
- Communicating ethically, even when choices aren't crystal clear
- Managing your time wisely and using resources efficiently
- Using critical thinking, evaluating evidence completely and objectively in order to form logical conclusions and make sound recommendations

### Communicating in an Organizational Context

In the formal communication network, ideas and information flow along the lines of command in three directions; downward, upward and horizontally.

In the informal communication network, often referred to as the grapevine or the rumor mill, communication occurs outside the formal network; social media now play a huge role.

### Adopting an Audience-Centered Approach

An audience-centered approach involves understanding and respecting the members of your audience and making every effort to get your message across in a way that is meaningful to them.

Also known as adopting the “you” attitude, in contrast to messages that are about “me” (the sender).

Etiquette encompasses the expected norms of behavior in any particular situation.

### **Section 3: Exploring the Communication Process**

*Learning Objective 3: Describe the communication process model and the ways social media are changing the nature of business communication.*

Even well-intentioned communication efforts can fail.

By understanding communication as a process with distinct steps, you can improve the odds that your messages will reach their intended audiences and produce their intended effects.

### The Basic Communication Model

By viewing communication as a process, you can identify and improve the skills you need to be more successful:

- The sender has an idea.
- The sender encodes the idea as a message.
- The sender produces the message in a medium.
- The sender transmits the message through a channel.
- The audience receives the message.
- The audience decodes the message.
- The audience responds to the message.
- The audience provides feedback.

Considering the complexity of this process, it should come as no surprise that communication efforts often fail to achieve the sender’s objective.

### Barriers in the Communication Environment

Messages can be disrupted by a variety of communication barriers:

- Noise and distractions, including multitasking
- Competing messages
- Filters, both human and technological
- Channel breakdowns

**Class discussion question:** Think back to a time you experienced a communication breakdown in a personal or social setting (something you're comfortable discussing with the class). Did you figure out why the breakdown occurred? Was it related to cultural differences, emotional factors, technology, or some other identifiable cause? How might you avoid similar breakdowns in the workplace?

Everyone in an organization can help minimize barriers and distractions.

Take steps to insulate yourself from distractions, including disconnecting from constant message feeds and updates.

### Inside the Mind of Your Audience

For an audience member to receive a message, the receiver has to:

- *Sense* the presence of a message.
- *Select* it from all the other messages clamoring for attention.
- *Perceive* it as an actual message.

Five habits to increase the chances that your messages will be sensed, selected, and perceived:

- Consider audience expectations.
- Ensure ease of use.
- Emphasize familiarity.
- Practice empathy.
- Design for compatibility.

A received message doesn't mean anything until the recipient decodes it and assigns meaning to it.

There is no guarantee that the receiver will assign the same meaning that the sender intended.

Audiences tend to extract the meaning they expect to get from a message.

Culture plays a huge role in how messages are decoded.

Individual beliefs and biases influence the meaning that audiences extract from messages.

Selective perception occurs when people distort threatening or confusing information to make it fit their perceptions of reality.

Differences in language and usage influence received meaning.

Individual thinking styles affect message decoding.

Audience members will respond in the way you'd like them to if:

- They *remember* the message long enough to act on it.
- They are *able* to respond as you wish.
- They are *motivated* to respond.

### The Social Communication Model

The basic communication model shows how a single idea moves from one sender to one receiver.

In a larger sense, it also helps represent the traditional nature of much business communication, which was primarily defined by a *publishing* or *broadcasting* mindset.

In contrast to the publishing mindset, this new social communication model is *interactive* and *conversational*.

Customers and other groups are now empowered through social media, which transform passive audiences into active participants in the communication process by allowing them to share content, revise content, respond to content, or contribute new content.

The social communication model changes business communication in profound ways:

- Customers and other stakeholders participate in, influence, and often take control of conversations in the marketplace.
- They rely on each other for information about products, offer technical support, and even participate in group buying using social tools.
- Social media tools can increase the speed of communication, lower communication costs, improve access to pockets of expertise, and boost employee satisfaction.

A hybrid approach is emerging in which some communications follow the traditional approach and others follow the social approach.

**Class discussion question:** Is it ethical for social media users to “gang up” on a company after a single customer complains about poor service or a faulty product? What if the company made a rare mistake, but the social media uproar creates the impression that the company routinely disappoints customers?

## **Section 4: The Mobile Revolution**

*Learning Objective 4: Outline the challenges and opportunities of mobile communication in business.*

Some experts predict that mobile communication will change the nature of business and business communication even more than social media have.

Firms on the leading edge of the mobile revolution are working to integrate mobile technology throughout their organizations.

## The Rise of Mobile as a Communication Platform

Mobile is now the primary Internet-access technology for millions of people.

Mobile has become the primary communication tool for many business professionals, including a majority of executives under age 40.

Continuous, intimate mobile connectivity can start to resemble a continuous stream of conversations that never quite end, which influences the way businesses need to interact with their stakeholders.

Companies that work to understand and embrace mobile, both internally and externally, stand the best chance of capitalizing on this monumental shift in the way people communicate.

## How Mobile Technologies Are Changing Business Communication

Mobile necessitates some obvious changes in communication practices, such as the need to deal with smaller screens and different input methods.

Many users expect websites to be mobile friendly, so many companies are adopting a *mobile-first* approach, in which they design to fit the needs of mobile users. This typically involves simplifying screen designs and changing navigation controls to accommodate touch-based swiping maneuvers.

Other changes brought about by mobile are often deeper and sometimes more subtle:

- Mobile users expect to have immediate access to information and the ability to stay connected to their various social and business networks.
- Constant or radical connectivity is a mixed blessing, as it can prevent people from healthy disengagement from work.
- Mobile users are often multitasking, which means they are distracted and therefore getting through to them is more challenging.
- Mobile communication has put pressure on traditional standards of grammar, punctuation, and writing in general.
- Mobile devices can serve as sensory and cognitive extensions.
- Mobile devices create a host of security and privacy concerns; e.g., employees who want to use their personal devices for business-network access.
- Mobile tools can enhance productivity and collaboration.
- Mobile apps can assist in a wide variety of business tasks.
- Mobile connectivity can accelerate decision making and problem solving.
- With mobile capabilities such as cameras, accelerometers, and GPS, the communication experience can be made more engaging.



## Section 5: Using Technology to Improve Business Communication

*Learning Objective 5: List four general guidelines for using communication technology effectively.*

Today's businesses rely heavily on technology to facilitate the communication process.

To use communication technology effectively, you need to:

- Keep technology in perspective.
- Guard against information overload and information addiction.
- Use technological tools productively.
- Disengage from the computer frequently to communicate in person.

### Keeping Technology in Perspective

Remember that technology is simply a tool, a means by which you can accomplish certain tasks.

Technology is an aid to interpersonal communication, not a replacement for it.

Technology has business value only if it helps deliver the right information to the right people at the right time.

### Guarding Against Information Overload

The overuse or misuse of communication technology can lead to information overload, in which people receive more information than they can effectively process.

Information overload makes it difficult to discriminate between useful and useless information, lowers productivity, and amplifies employee stress both on the job and at home.

As a recipient, use the filtering features of your communication systems to isolate high-priority messages that deserve your attention; be wary of subscribing to too many feeds; focus on the information you truly need to do your job.

As a sender, reduce information overload by making sure you don't send unnecessary messages; indicate the priority of messages to help receivers know how to react to them.

### Using Technological Tools Productively

In the "information technology paradox," information tools can waste as much time as they save.

Inappropriate web use not only distracts employees from work responsibilities but can also leave employers open to lawsuits.

Social media can expose confidential information or damage a firm's reputation in the marketplace.

Employers need clear policies that are enforced evenly for all employees.

Knowing how to use tools efficiently can make a big difference in your productivity.

Managers need to guide and train their employees in productive use of information tools.

### Reconnecting with People

Even the best technologies cannot truly match the rich experience of person-to-person contact.

Reconnect in person, or at least over the phone, from time to time in order to maintain positive working relationships.

## **Section 6: Committing to Ethical and Legal Communication**

*Learning Objective 6: Define ethics, explain the difference between an ethical dilemma and an ethical lapse, and list six guidelines for making ethical communication choices.*

Ethics are the principles of conduct that govern behavior within a society.

Ethical communication:

- Includes all relevant information
- Is true in every sense
- Is not deceptive in any way

Examples of unethical communication include:

- Plagiarism
- Omitting essential information
- Selective misquoting
- Misrepresenting numbers
- Distorting visuals
- Failing to respect privacy or information security needs

The widespread adoption of social media has increased the attention given to the issue of transparency.

**Class discussion question:** Have you ever contributed to “social media outrage” (using your social media accounts to boost the anger about a contemporary issue by forwarding it, liking it, etc.) without stopping to think who might’ve originated the message or what the originator’s motives might’ve been?

### Distinguishing Ethical Dilemmas from Ethical Lapses

An ethical dilemma involves making a choice when the alternatives aren't completely wrong or completely right:

- Two conflicting alternatives that are both ethical and valid
- Two alternatives that lie somewhere in the vast gray area between right and wrong

An ethical lapse is a clearly unethical choice.

### Ensuring Ethical Communication

To ensure ethical communication, three elements need to be in place and work in harmony:

- Ethical individuals
- Ethical company leadership
- The appropriate policies and structures to support employees' efforts to make ethical choices

A code of ethics is an explicit written policy of ethics guidelines that helps employees determine what is acceptable.

Ethics audits monitor ethical progress and point out any weaknesses that need to be addressed.

Every employee has the responsibility to communicate in an ethical manner.

In the absence of clear guidelines, ask yourself the following questions about your business communication efforts:

- Have I defined the situation fairly and accurately?
- What is my intention in communicating this message?
- What impact will the message have on those who receive it or who might be affected by it?
- Will the message achieve the greatest possible good while doing the least possible harm?
- Will the assumptions I've made change over time? That is, will a decision that seems ethical now seem unethical in the future?
- Am I comfortable with my decision? Would I be embarrassed if it were printed in tomorrow's newspaper or spread across the Internet?

### Ensuring Legal Communication

In addition to ethical guidelines, business communication is also bound by a wide variety of laws and regulations, including the following areas:

- Promotional communication. Marketing specialists need to be aware of the many laws that govern truth and accuracy in advertising.
- Contracts. A contract is a legally binding promise between two parties, in which one party makes a specified offer and the other party accepts.

- Employment communication. A variety of local, state, and federal laws govern communication between employers and both potential and current employees.
- Intellectual property. In an age when instant global connectivity makes it effortless to copy and retransmit electronic files, the protection of intellectual property (IP) has become a widespread concern.
- Financial reporting. Finance and accounting professionals who work for publicly traded companies must adhere to stringent reporting laws.
- Defamation. Negative comments about another party raise the possibility of defamation, the intentional communication of false statements that damage character or reputation. (Written defamation is called *libel*; spoken defamation is called *slander*.)
- Transparency. To help audiences make informed decisions, various laws now require communicators to disclose financial relationships and other factors that could influence the presentation of their messages.

**Class discussion question:** Should companies be allowed to advertise to children who are too young to make fully-informed choices? If there should be a cutoff age, what should it be and how would it be enforced?

## HIGHLIGHT BOX: THE ART OF PROFESSIONALISM

### Maintaining a Confident, Positive Outlook

1. Yes, employees do have an ethical obligation to maintain a positive outlook on the job, because doing so helps ensure that they perform to expectations—which is what they are being paid for. In addition, their behavior and attitude on the job affects the performance of other employees. However, they also have an ethical obligation to keep the company’s best interests in mind, and there are times when doing so can mean sharing negative news, raising legitimate concerns, confronting problems, and even whistleblowing if need be.
2. Students should be able to suggest a variety of ways to lift their spirits, including reminding themselves that a positive frame of mind makes the workday easier and faster, refocusing their minds on near- or far-term objectives (e.g., simply completing an unwelcome task to get it off their plates or thinking how completing that task is a step in the direction they want to go), or interacting with colleagues or customers in a positive way that momentarily takes the focus off work and reminds one of the human value in business interaction.

## HIGHLIGHT BOX: DIGITAL+SOCIAL+MOBILE: TODAY’S COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT

### It’s All Fun and Games—and Effective Business Communication

1. Refer students to the coverage of communication ethics in “Committing to Ethical and Legal Communication.” They should conclude that gamification is ethical if it doesn’t distort or hide information audiences need in order to make informed decisions. For example, if a personal finance game app offered by a bank or credit card company minimized the negative consequences of credit risk in such a way that it prompted consumers to make unwise decisions, this could be considered

unethical. This question can also be a good entry point for a larger discussion about the ethics of persuasive communication.

2. Student answers will vary.

## ON THE JOB: SOLVING COMMUNICATION DILEMMAS AT JETBLUE

1. JetBlue emphasizes a friendly, open style of communication with its customers, even those occasional customers who make unrealistic demands or expect special treatment. Unfortunately, you've learned that some of the company's customer service representatives have been letting their emotions get in the way when dealing with these difficult customers. Several customers have complained about rude treatment. You're sensitive to the situation because you know customer service can be a difficult job, particularly in a social media environment where consumers are empowered to broadcast any disappointment they may feel. However, having a reputation for hostile customer service could spell doom for the company, so you need to communicate your concerns immediately. Which of the following sentences would be the best way to begin an email message to the customer service staff?
  - a. No. This implies that everyone in the customer service department is guilty of providing poor service.
  - b. No. Like (a), this implies that everyone is guilty; its tone is also overly harsh and threatening, particularly when raising this issue for the first time.
  - c. No. While this option doesn't blame everyone, its accusatory tone will immediately put everyone on the defensive.
  - d. **Yes.** This positive and sympathetic introductory statement (a *buffer*, explored in the negative message chapter) creates a communication environment that is conducive to problem solving, rather than finger pointing.
2. The culture in your office is conscientious and professional but with a generally informal "vibe." However, as with any company, individual employees vary in how closely their own styles and personalities fit the corporate culture. For example, the new accounting manager in your organization tends to communicate in a formal, distant style that some company old-timers find off-putting and impersonal. Several of these people have expressed concerns that the new manager "doesn't fit in," even though she's doing a great job otherwise. How should you respond?
  - a. No. These people aren't just complaining; they're expressing concern about the future of the company's culture. A company is more than just the sum of its various job functions; the people in those roles also need to work together in some degree of harmony. Therefore, the people raising this issue believe they have a valid concern.
  - b. No. Demanding that someone change her personal communication style is only going to generate confusion and resentment. Moreover, the company might eventually lose a valuable employee if the manager decides she can't fit in.
  - c. **Yes.** Newcomers can often benefit from a helpful introduction to a company's culture. The manager might simply be communicating in a style that was expected in her previous employment.
  - d. No. If her style is causing concern, ignoring the situation isn't going to make it go away.

3. A false rumor has begun circulating among JetBlue employees that the company plans to replace its social media team with an automated “bot” system that will answer tweets and email messages using artificial intelligence. Members of the social media team are worried about their jobs, and other employees are worried that customers will miss the human touch if customer service representatives are replaced by a computer. How should you respond to the rumor?
  - a. No. What should employees be expected to believe if the only messages they receive are conflicting rumors coming through the grapevine? Moreover, grapevines are unpredictable; you can’t be sure that your message would get through undistorted. And finally, the choice of medium itself would send a message—that the company didn’t care enough to bother sending out an official message.
  - b. **Yes.** This is a potential crisis that requires both immediate attention and careful handling to calm people’s fears. Face-to-face communication provides the best way to interact with the audience, answering their questions and addressing their fears.
  - c. No. A blog posting is too passive for a message of this importance, and it doesn’t offer the rich nuances of face-to-face contact that are important when audiences are upset.
  - d. No. Ignoring the rumor would be a huge mistake. Productivity will immediately fall as people begin worrying more about their jobs than about their work, and some will likely leave the company as well.
  
4. A passenger whose luggage didn’t arrive on his flight from Boston to San Francisco is sending a string of angry tweets from the baggage claim at the San Francisco airport, accusing JetBlue of everything from lying to stealing his luggage. He is including the @JetBlue handle in every tweet, so his rants are showing up in the timelines of the company’s followers on Twitter—all 1.9 million of them. How should you respond?
  - a. No.
  - b. No.
  - c. No. Even if Twitter complied, this is a strong-arm tactic that many would consider unethical to boot. And even if it were an acceptable response, it would not be a wise response. The customer would probably set up another Twitter account within minutes and magnify his original complaint with the justifiable outrage that JetBlue was trying to silence him—a story angle that would surely resonate across social media and probably get picked up by conventional media as well.
  - d. **Yes.** This approach acknowledges the customer frustration, which is paramount to resolving any highly-charged situation like this. In addition, it attempts to move the discussion into private channels so that the problem isn’t on nonstop public display. Lastly, interacting with the customer in person may help defuse the situation further by putting a human face on the company and forcing the customer to interact with another human being in person.

## APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- 1.1. **Visit MyBCommLab for suggested answers. [LO-1] AACSB: Written and oral communication**
- 1.2. **Visit MyBCommLab for suggested answers. [LO-2] AACSB: Written and oral communication**
- 1.3. Students will learn more about writing and formatting messages for mobile devices in subsequent chapters, but they can answer this question by using what they've learned in this chapter about effective communication and the basic communication process. Their answers should address the needs for concise messages and clear, simple designs that display well on small screens. **[LO-4] AACSB: Information technology**
- 1.4. The answer is a definite yes. Communication technology has three potential shortcomings that can and do hamper communication. First, technologies such as email and instant messaging are unable to convey the full richness of human communication, particularly nonverbal signals. For instance, email messages can come across as blunt or overly harsh simply because the medium lacks a practical and effective way to convey emotional nuances. Second, technology can't replace human planning and oversight. Spellcheckers that correct spelling but "approve" poor word choices or nonsensical phrases are a common example of this flaw. Third, even the best technologies are rarely 100 percent reliable, and if people come to depend on technological channels too heavily, they can be cut off from one another whenever these systems fail. **[LO-5] AACSB: Information technology**
- 1.5. **Visit MyBCommLab for suggested answers. [LO-6] AACSB: Written and oral communication**

## PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS

### Message for Analysis: Analyzing Communication Effectiveness [LO-1] AACSB: Written and oral communication

Students will recognize this document as ineffective because it presents so many barriers to effective communication. The blog:

- Creates emotional barriers right from the first sentence (accusing employees of lying and cheating, later calling them names), preventing readers from perceiving the intended message
- Presents a restrictive and authoritarian attitude, reflecting an environment that discourages open communication and thus discourages employee candor
- Expresses bias or prejudice (in the slur against women employees)
- Reflects the author's anger and defensiveness ("I simply have no choice")
- Assumes bad intentions on the part of the employees, underlining the lack of audience-centered thinking
- Uses vague, confusing language (More than three times during what period? Will have to answer to the author for what specific penalties?)

- Polarizes workers by inciting conflict between “punctual” employees and others

## Exercises

- 1.6. Look for information about students’ majors, hobbies, likes, dislikes, and future career plans. The email messages, blog posts, or social networking updates will give you an idea of the level of your students’ writing, in addition to helping you learn more about your students. **[LO-1] AACSB: Written and oral communication**
- 1.7. This question provides a good opportunity to discuss the advantages and limitations of utilizing social media for business communication. Students should be encouraged to explain how the content of their messages reflects the demands of a social communication model and medium. **[LO-1] AACSB: Information technology**
- 1.8. This exercise reveals how well students translate the chapter material into a practical analysis of business communication—the first step to crafting more effective messages of their own. Look for descriptions of specific communication elements, such as solid logical argumentation, persuasive emotional appeals, successful integration of audio and video components, or an audience-centric message. **[LO-1] AACSB: Written and oral communication**
- 1.9. In completing this exercise, students should recognize the often-significant differences between how they prioritize their own personal and professional qualities and how a prospective employer might prioritize them. **[LO-2]**
- 1.10. This message needs to communicate the importance of the situation without preemptively offending anyone (since there have been no instances of etiquette mistakes and only a general concern about them). The first paragraph could provide the general manager with a brief overview of the situation, describing how customers come in contact with production personnel and explaining the potential damages to sales that could result from etiquette mistakes. The second paragraph could then follow with an explanation of how etiquette training would minimize the risk of lost sales. Depending on the circumstances and the writer's relationship with the recipient, the message might also propose a solution, such as adapting the sales department's etiquette training course for re-use in the production department. **[LO-2] AACSB: Written and oral communication**
- 1.11. Before writing the report, the team will want to know:
  - a. The audience’s culture (so that cultural biases can be avoided)
  - b. The audience’s level of knowledge about the subject (so that the report’s style, content, organization, and tone will address that level)
  - c. The environment in which the report will be received (to compensate for any noise interference)
  - d. Whether the report will be read directly by the intended audience or will first pass through several layers of gatekeepers (so that anticipated distortions can be minimized before the report is read and summarized by gatekeepers)



- e. The audience's gender and family status (because childcare may be viewed from a different perspective by men, women, parents, and nonparents)

**[LO-2] AACSB: Interpersonal relations and teamwork**

- 1.12. Regarding the issue of employee blogs and information that is critical of an employer, a much stronger case can be made for placing such restrictions than for not doing so. Publicly-aired criticism of internal company matters is likely to cause harm to the company (by scaring away potential customers, employees, or investors, for instance) while probably doing little or nothing to resolve whatever situations a blogger might be upset about. In fact, an argument can be made that criticizing one's own employer in public is unethical, since employees are paid to further the company's interests, not their own. If they are unhappy in their jobs, they have a responsibility to either work to improve the situation through appropriate channels or to find other employment.

**[LO-2] AACSB: Information technology**

- 1.13. This exercise challenges students to apply their understanding of the communication process. Ask them to be specific about how they encoded and transmitted the idea they wanted to share; also ask them to explain exactly how they knew whether the message had been accurately decoded.

Students might identify such barriers as a difference in perception due to differences in age, background, culture, or language; a lack of credibility, precision, congeniality, or control; a lack of information about the audience; a misunderstanding caused by unfocused, incoherent, or sloppy communication; a miscommunication resulting from one party being sidetracked or constantly bringing up unnecessary information; an inability to relate new information to existing ideas; or the noise from environmental distractions, from the emotional states of the people involved, or from a person's poor listening ability. **[LO-3] AACSB: Written and oral communication**

- 1.14. Students should evaluate the websites using the criteria for effective business communication and the discussion of the audience-centered approach in the chapter. For example, a website that isn't mobile friendly (meaning the presentation isn't simplified for smaller screens and touch/swipe controls) doesn't do a good job of meeting the needs of mobile users. **[LO-4] AACSB: Information technology**

- 1.15. To improve the discussion that this exercise can generate, consider assigning different services to different students. The wide variety of services students will access can provide powerful evidence of how widespread the social communication model has become. **[LO-5] AACSB: Information technology**

- 1.16. Students should recognize that the boss's request itself is potentially unethical, putting the employee in a situation of policing his or her colleagues—which will surely lead to circumstances in which the employee is forced to be disingenuous with colleagues (e.g., not saying anything to a colleague who steals office supplies but then reporting the behavior to the boss). The employee would want to consider the following in a discussion with the boss: the uncomfortable situation this request will create for the employee; the effect this informal assignment would have on

workplace dynamics; the damage to the employee's career prospects or ability to work with others if colleagues find out about such reporting; and last but not least, the fact that asking employees to spy on one another is a misguided way to solve a problem (e.g., ethics training and making employees aware of the costs of their decisions would be a much more enlightened approach). **[LO-6] AACSB: Ethical understanding and reasoning**

- 1.17. The ethics of each situation may be decided as follows:
- a. Keeping quiet about the possible environmental hazard would be an ethical lapse that could possibly affect lives if not wildlife.
  - b. Stretching the truth, even "a bit," is never ethical.
  - c. Helping a friend would be ethical, unless "privileged" information were being conveyed without permission.
  - d. Using allocated funding for bogus purchases is unethical. It would be better to justify the need for next year's budget than to preserve it by cheating.

**[LO-6] AACSB: Ethical understanding and reasoning**

- 1.18. Students should be able to identify dozens of potential violations of Cisco's Code of Conduct. Three examples include entering into or sustaining a business relationship that creates a conflict of interest with an employee's professional responsibilities at Cisco, providing financial information that is not accurate or not objective, and discussing confidential information with an outside party who is not bound by a nondisclosure agreement. Opportunities to report or discuss ethical concerns include contacting the company's Ethics Program Office, the General Counsel, or the Audit Committee. **[LO-6] AACSB: Ethical understanding and reasoning**

### **ASSISTED GRADING QUESTIONS (accessed in MyBCommLab)**

- 1.28. **Visit MyBCommLab for suggested answers. [LO-3] AACSB: Written and oral communication**
- 1.29. **Visit MyBCommLab for suggested answers. [LO-4] AACSB: Information technology**