

## ■ NOTE TO THE STUDENT

Welcome to the first edition of the *Foundations of Business Communication: An Integrative Approach*. This text will assist you in improving your communication skills regardless of your current skill level. Here are some major elements about the curriculum design of this text:

1. In the **Orientation and Assessment** section, you will measure your writing skills. The skill profile provides a realistic picture of your skills and your learning gaps.
2. **Chapter 1** reviews the writing process, surveying process tools to generate writing, such as mind maps and page maps. You may have learned some of these techniques in introductory writing classes such as composition. However, some of you have not learned writing as process, so a full survey of tools and techniques are there for you.
3. The text breaks writing into various skill sets entitled **Explore, Practice, and Apply**.
  - a. **Explore activities** allow you to discover the relevance of new concepts.
  - b. **Practice exercises** reinforce cohesive sets of principles through repetition.
  - c. **Apply exercises** give you an opportunity to incorporate principles into your decision-making strategy as you produce quality writing.
4. **The Writer’s Handbook** at the end of this text is both a learning tool and a useful reference section. **Parts 1 and 2** contain substantial materials to assist you with grammar and punctuation. **Parts 3 and 4** deal with formatting business messages and conducting research. **The Writer’s Handbook** is designed as a step-by-step guide and tailored for you to use individually, as part of a team, or in whole-class instruction.
5. **At-a-Glance** sections of The Writer’s Handbook are placed between chapters throughout the book so that you can have an abbreviated review of Handbook topics. For in-depth coverage of these topics, refer to the full **Writer’s Handbook** chapters.
6. Margin features such as **Vocabulary Builders** and **Coaching Tips** will help you understand the differences between similar words (such as *affect* and *effect*) and offer you additional learning cues.
7. **Unit 1** of the text helps you learn how to *structure* your words effectively. You will learn to make editing decisions first at the sentence level and then at the paragraph level. After you have developed an editing strategy with sentences, you will learn to develop cohesive, coherent paragraphs. **Units 2 and 3** of the text relate to composing, editing, and revising business correspondence, reports, presentations, proposals, and research projects (including newsletters and Web sites), among other applications.
8. Some classes may begin with **Unit 2**. (If your class begins with Unit 2, you would still benefit from a quick survey of **Chapter 2: What is Good Business Writing?** and **Handbook At a Glance, Part 1: The Mechanics of Writing**.) You could then use **Unit 1** of the text as a reference, working through selected sections alone or with a partner.
9. Chapters include **End-of-Chapter** activities, one of which is a **process memo**. You can use a process memo to describe your writing strategy and how your skills change throughout the program. Process memos can also be attached to “re-dos” to describe corrections and changes (part of your goal is to become more conscious of the patterns of mistakes you make so that you can gain control of your writing). The process memo is an excellent learning tool. You may also find it a vital communication tool which enables you to personalize messages to your instructor.

One of the premises of this text is that you will feel more freedom to write by becoming competent with mechanics (grammar and punctuation) and then writing style (active voice, parallel structure, removing redundancy, and information flow). Then, after you are proficient

with grammar, punctuation, and style, you will be ready to compose, edit, and revise effective business documents.

No one writes English perfectly, and no one speaks perfectly. Learn early on to use your mistakes as learning opportunities rather than moments of failure. In the first chapter, you may be asked to write about your past experiences with writing. Once you understand that writing is difficult for everyone at times, you may no longer feel isolated in your mistakes or fears about writing. So consider this: *the more you write, the stronger your skills will become*. Apply the principles you are learning, and your writing will become easier and more effective every day.

As noted above, you will have access to various types of resources and instructional assistance online, at the *Foundations of Business Communication: An Integrative Approach* Web site at [www.mhhe.com/djyoung](http://www.mhhe.com/djyoung).

This textbook can be used in several ways. The next few pages will assist you and your instructor in designing a learning strategy tailored to your skill profile.

Thank you for giving this class your best and for using this text to its max. Set your goals high and chase your dreams passionately—you will achieve whatever you set your heart and mind toward achieving.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dona Young". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page.

## ■ EXPLORE, PRACTICE, AND APPLY

Writing is a complex skill, and improving writing skills can be a complicated process. To simplify the process, this text breaks writing into smaller components, or skill sets. This approach teaches you to base your writing decisions on principles related to each skill set. You will start by exploring new ideas and practicing principles to learn them thoroughly; then you will gain experience by applying them in broader, more realistic contexts. To help you achieve proficiency, the text provides three types of exercises: **Explore**, **Practice**, and **Apply**.

- **Explore.** Exploration exercises engage your creativity so you discover more about new concepts and how to integrate them into your thinking and writing.
- **Practice.** Practice relates to repetition. With practice exercises, you achieve proficiency with specific skills or principles.
- **Apply.** Once you understand a principle, you apply it in new and broader contexts. Application exercises require you to make more complex decisions similar to what you will find on the job. With application exercises, you are often creating a product that can be evaluated.

Thus, exploration exercises introduce concepts, practice exercises develop skill in specific areas, and application exercises demonstrate what you have learned.

Throughout the text, you will be invited to supplement your learning by visiting the *Foundations of Business Communication: An Integrative Approach* Web site at [www.mhhe.com/djyoung](http://www.mhhe.com/djyoung). At the *Foundations* Web site, you will explore new concepts, hone your skills, or be given direction to navigate the resources on the World Wide Web.

## ■ SKILL SETS

Writing is a decision-making process, and you will learn to make decisions from various skill sets as you solve writing problems. Here are the various skill sets and what you will learn:

- **Process:** How to push through writer's block using techniques to get your ideas on paper.
- **Planning:** How to develop your purpose, connect with your audience, and adjust your tone.
- **Mechanics:** How to use punctuation and grammar correctly.
- **Style:** How to write in a simple, clear, and concise manner.
- **Structure:** How to make sentences and paragraphs flow logically. How to connect with readers, get to the point, and identify next steps.
- **Critical Thinking:** How to analyze problems and solve them effectively.
- **Format:** How to structure e-mail, letters, memos, and various reports by developing a sense of visual layout for business documents.

## ■ DIAGNOSTIC APPROACH

This text includes pretests and learning inventories to help you identify your strengths and diagnose your learning gaps. With skill sets that can be measured objectively, you will assess your ability through pretests. With skill sets that cannot be measured objectively, you will inventory your understanding. As you make more effective writing decisions in each skill set,

the overall quality of your writing will improve. (You can gauge your improvement through posttests at the end of each chapter, which provide a measuring stick for what you have learned.)

By the time you have worked through this text, you will understand what good writing is and how to produce it. Writing will no longer seem like a mysterious process, and you will make writing decisions confidently. You will also learn to analyze writing for its effectiveness. Thus, you will not only produce good writing but also successfully edit another's writing.

## ■ DESIGNING YOUR LEARNING STRATEGY

Here's how to design your learning strategy:

1. **Skill Profile.** Each pretest measures a different skill set relating to proofreading and editing.
  - **Skill Profile Part 1: Proofreading Skills**
    - Pretest No. 1: Punctuation Skills (commas and semicolons)
    - Pretest No. 2: Grammar Skills
    - Pretest No. 3: Word Usage Skills
  - **Skill Profile Part 2: Editing Skills**
    - Pretest No. 4: Editing Skills
    - The Editing Inventory
2. Proofreading skills are the foundation for editing skills; hence, editing will make more sense after you have a solid foundation in proofreading. Take the time to become proficient with proofreading skills *before* you do serious work on your editing skills. (You will begin learning principles related to editing in **Chapter 2: What Is Good Business Writing?**)
3. When you have an accurate skill profile, set goals and develop a plan. You will find a place to record your objectives at the end of this section (page xii).

### Pretest No. 1: Punctuation Skills

Insert commas and semicolons where needed in the following sentences.

1. If you are unable to attend the meeting find a replacement immediately.
2. Should Bob Jesse and Marlene discuss these issues with you?
3. As soon as we receive your application we will process your account.
4. Your new checks were shipped last month therefore, you should have received them.
5. Will you be attending the seminar in Dallas Texas later this year?
6. Fortunately my manager values my efforts and believes in my ability to do quality work.
7. Mr. Anderson when you have time please review this contract for me.
8. We received his portfolio on May 15 and we promptly developed a new strategy.
9. Ali brought her report to the meeting however it was not complete.
10. Ms. Suarez sent a letter to my supervisor the letter was very complimentary.
11. The merger however required that each corporation learn to trust the other.
12. Thank you Mrs. Dodd for supporting our quality assurance efforts.
13. I am not sure about the costs but I recommend we consider this proposal.
14. You must file your application by July 15 2003 to meet all requirements.

## Pretest No. 2: Grammar Skills

Underline each error in the following sentences; write the correction in the space provided. If there is no error, just write OK.

1. The issue should remain between Jim and yourself. 1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. If you want the promotion, take their recommendations more serious. 2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Your department did very good on last week's report. 3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. The funds in our department will be froze until next quarter. 4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Thank you for inviting Charles and I to the discussion. 5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. The customer should of enclosed the check with the application. 6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Her and her manager will achieve their goals by working together. 7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. They gave us the project at the most busiest time of the month. 8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Mr. Brown asked you and I to design the workshop. 9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. My supervisor has spoke about that policy many times. 10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Everyone in the marketing department felt badly about the problem. 11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. The new accounts should be divided between Bill and I. 12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. Seth is the person that made the referral. 13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. If you have more experience than myself, you should be the project director. 14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. If Tim was available, he would accept the challenge. 15. \_\_\_\_\_
16. The manager has not yet given the information to no one. 16. \_\_\_\_\_
17. When you need assistance, call Joe or myself. 17. \_\_\_\_\_
18. We would have been pleased if the pilot project had went better. 18. \_\_\_\_\_
19. Don't Ms. Becker need to approve the proposal before we accept it? 19. \_\_\_\_\_
20. Ed, along with his team, are going to the conference. 20. \_\_\_\_\_

## Pretest No. 3: Word Usage Skills

Correct the following sentences for word usage.

1. The policy changes will effect every department in the company.
2. The total amount reflects your principle and interest.
3. He ensured his manager that the project would be completed by June.
4. The title of the report did not accurately reflect it's content.
5. Our assets may not be sufficient for the bank to loan us the capital we need.
6. The finance department has to many new policies to consider before the merger.
7. There interests are not being taken into consideration.
8. What references do you plan to site?
9. You can reach me this Wednesday some time in the afternoon.
10. We ensure the quality of all items we carry.

## Pretest No. 4: Editing Skills

Edit and revise the following sentences for structure and style. (Sentences may be grammatically correct but still benefit from editing.)

1. Bob was the right person for the job because he is the most qualified.

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2. There are many issues relating to current policies that our committee will resolve during the April meeting.

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3. The supervisor asks that every manager report their findings by the 15th of the month.

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4. If a student does not get a good education, they may not be successful in the business world.

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5. Improving writing skills promotes critical thinking, will enhance career opportunities, and develop confidence.

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6. Either the research will assist us in our decision making or it will not.

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7. Working right up to the deadline, Marie's presentation was finally completed.

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8. The contract was negotiated by the attorney and corporate representatives for hours.

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9. The applicant, although well prepared for the interview, failed to make her points clear.

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10. Concerned managers asked for changes in company policies, are appealing recent decisions, and will plan to schedule a meeting to discuss their recommendations.

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11. Management will take all applicants into consideration.

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12. Account managers purchased new software from a reliable source that cost only \$2000.

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13. It is Gerald's recommendation that the executive committee take into consideration the proposal.

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14. Per our discussion, the corrected form is being sent to you by our customer service department.

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15. We are discontinuing the contract due to the fact that your shipments are always late.

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### The Editing Inventory: A Self-Assessment

Based on the challenges you had on **Pretest No. 4: Editing Skills**, please rank your knowledge of the following editing topics. On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 means little or no competence and 5 means complete competence. Your self-assessment of these topics will help you develop learning objectives for Chapter 2. (If you don't know what the category means, rank it as a "1.")

1. Controlling Sentence Structure	1	2	3	4	5
2. Using the Active Voice	1	2	3	4	5
3. Using Real Subjects and Strong Verbs	1	2	3	4	5
4. Being Concise	1	2	3	4	5
5. Being Consistent with Point of View (pronouns)	1	2	3	4	5
6. Being Consistent with Verb Tense	1	2	3	4	5
7. Using Parallel Structure	1	2	3	4	5
8. Avoiding Misplaced Modifiers	1	2	3	4	5

*The keys to the proofreading and editing pretests are located on the Web site.*

### ■ TOTAL SKILL PROFILE

How did you score?

#### Part 1

#### Posttest Scores

Pretest No. 1: Punctuation Skills \_\_\_\_\_ incorrect answers (20 possible) \_\_\_\_\_

Pretest No. 2: Grammar Skills \_\_\_\_\_ incorrect answers (20 possible) \_\_\_\_\_

Pretest No. 3: Word Usage Skills \_\_\_\_\_ incorrect answers (10 possible) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Part 2

Pretest No. 4: Editing Skills \_\_\_\_\_ corrected sentences (15 possible)

The Editing Inventory  
(self-assessment)

\_\_\_\_\_ average from scale:

1 = no competence; 5 = complete competence

### Skill Profile for Pretest Nos. 1 and 2

**How did you score?** Each of the following pretests had 20 possible correct answers. Deduct 5 points for each error and then subtract your total from 100. How did you score? (Your score represents your percentage of accuracy.)

Punctuation Skills \_\_\_\_\_ incorrect answers \_\_\_\_\_ percentage correct  
Grammar Skills \_\_\_\_\_ incorrect answers \_\_\_\_\_ percentage correct

**Note:**

**For Pretest No. 1: Punctuation Skills:** if you made 4 or more errors, work on **The Writer’s Handbook, Part 1: The Mechanics of Writing.**

**For Pretest No. 2: Grammar Skills:** if you made 4 or more errors, work on **The Writer’s Handbook, Part 2: Writing Essentials—Grammar for Writing.**

Your instructor will determine the learning strategy for your class. The following plans are recommended based on pretest performance:

**Plan 1** (*Scores below 80 percent on Pretest Nos. 1 and 2*)

1. Chapter 1: Communication and the Writing Process
2. Handbook, P1: The Mechanics of Writing
3. Chapter 2: What Is Good Business Writing?
4. Handbook, P2: Writing Essentials—Grammar *for* Writing
5. Chapter 3: Developing and Revising Short Business Messages

**Plan 2** (*Scores below 80 percent on Pretest No. 1 or Pretest No. 2*)

1. Chapter 1: Communication and the Writing Process
2. Handbook, P1 or 2: The Mechanics of Writing or Writing Essentials—Grammar *for* Writing
3. Chapter 2: What Is Good Business Writing?
4. Chapter 3: Developing and Revising Short Business Messages

**Plan 3** (*Scores 80 percent or above on Pretest Nos. 1 and 2*)

1. Chapter 1: Communication and the Writing Process
2. Chapter 2: What Is Good Business Writing?
3. Chapter 3: Developing and Revising Short Business Messages

**■ OBJECTIVES**

Now that you have completed the assessment, you have a better understanding of your skill profile and what you need to do to improve your writing skills. Please take a few moments to write objectives. Your objectives should reflect what you would like to achieve from this textbook and your class.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_