

REVIEW OF KEY POINTS

- A business message should be carefully written and properly formatted. The reader's reaction will dictate the approach the writer should take—direct, indirect, or persuasive.
- The writer should include an addressee's job title, avoid abbreviations, and state the subject clearly and briefly.
- Letters must look professional, as they are judged on their appearance as much as their content.
- The content of a business letter is to inform, to make requests, respond to requests, and to deliver social-business messages.
- When responding to a customer request, business correspondence should be prompt, sales-minded, and promote a positive image of the company.

CASE 9.1

Technological Business Communication

People in Japan are using keypads to communicate. The clunky keyboard and large American home computer do not impress the Japanese. Instead, they are using i-mode, technology that can be accessed on their cell phones.

I-mode is more than just e-mail; you can listen to music, make reservations, find out about restaurants, get stock quotes, and find medical help—all with a keypad.

How do technological advances, such as the i-mode, improve business communications? Do you think there are any disadvantages in using these methods of communication? Why or why not?

Internet Quest



Netiquette

In today's workplace, people communicate via e-mail everyday. It's important to understand the basics of "Netiquette"—the do's and don'ts of online communication. Explore the Core Rules of Netiquette at this Web site:

www.mhhe.com/cec9.

Internet Quest



Online Greetings

Everyone appreciates receiving greeting cards or letters on various occasions. Whether it is a special holiday, birthday, graduation, wedding, or even the loss of a family member, there are appropriate ways to express how you feel. Check out www.mhhe.com/cec9 to find the perfect card for someone you know.

CEC Online



Not everyone has e-mail. So what are the rules about what is acceptable, especially when using e-mail as a business tool? Visit www.mhhe.com/cec9 to find out.

CASE 9.2

Using Tactful Language

Shakell Sa'eed works as an insurance representative for Midwest Assurance. One of his job responsibilities is to send letters to clients and prospective clients. His manager, Elaine Pelligreni, asks that all employees keep a *reading file* that contains copies of all correspondence they send. She schedules time once a week to read several items of correspondence from each employee's reading file.

When Elaine read Shakell's letters, she discovered that he was not using tactful language. He frequently used expressions such as *your error*, *your claim*, and *you failed*. Elaine wondered whether Shakell realized that these expressions were negative and could result in the loss of goodwill, or even customer business. The letters also contained spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.

If you were Elaine, how would you approach Shakell about the negative tone and grammar errors in his correspondence?

What steps could you and Shakell take to ensure that his future correspondence is acceptable?

Communicating in Your Career

It is becoming more popular to search for a job online, and companies expect to receive their responses online. How will you know if your electronic résumé will be formatted correctly or if it can even be read? Should you send your resume as a file attachment? Visit www.mhhe.com/cec9 and explain the best way to post a résumé online.

Ethics in Action

Toll-Free Customer Service

Your company offers a toll-free telephone line for customers who have questions on products. Your friend recently moved out of state and would like to contact you, but she is afraid of paying costly long distance phone bills. You give her the company 800 number and talk on a weekly basis. What are the ethical issues involved? How does this affect the company?