

# Unit 1

## The Process and Challenge of Communication



### Chapter 1

Setting the Stage for Effective Communication



### Chapter 2

Choosing the Right Words



### Chapter 3

Developing Sentences and Paragraphs

# Chapter 1

## Setting the Stage for Effective Communication

### OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Explain the importance of the ability to communicate in business.
2. Describe why and how we communicate.
3. Discuss the basics for communicating effectively.
4. Identify specific situations for using written communications.
5. Identify basic principles for good written communication.
6. Identify and apply the “six Cs” of effective correspondence.

## Workplace Applications: Writer's Block

Effective communication is the key to successful business transactions. But many people experience a mental paralysis when they must write a memo, letter, or report. They experience **writer's block**. Their ideas cannot penetrate the block. Writer's block is a combination of fears. One is the fear of having to fill a blank page or screen. The other is the anxiety of not being able to write well. Fortunately, writer's block can be overcome with a little practice and determination.

### Turn Off Your Inner Critic

One popular solution is a simple one—turn off the inner **critic** and get the ideas out of your head. Just write and see what happens. Writing is a process, and the initial flow of anyone's thoughts can be messy, chaotic, and confused. It starts shakily as you express your ideas. Then you go back and rearrange those ideas. Only then can you edit, revise, and proofread your writing.

Here are some strategies for overcoming writer's block.

- **Brainstorm**, or jot down lists. (For more on brainstorming, see page 127.)
- Talk out loud. Find a sympathetic listener and talk about your ideas for a few minutes. If no one is around, talk to yourself or into a tape recorder.
- Ask yourself questions. For example, ask "What am I trying to communicate?" or "What must my reader know?" Record your answers.
- **Freewrite** a journal entry. Write without stopping for two or three minutes about your idea as well as your anxiety about writing.

Remember, writer's block happens when you get ahead of yourself in the writing process. The key to overcoming it is having patience with yourself and your ideas.

### Thinking *Critically*

**Situation:** The coworker who agreed to write the report for a project you both worked on suddenly becomes ill. Your manager wants the report tomorrow. You are familiar with the project and have your coworker's notes, but you panic. You fear that you will not produce an excellent report in time.

**Ask Yourself:** What is the best way to approach the situation?

The ability to communicate is important in all aspects of life. Looking at classified advertisements and job descriptions, you will find the majority of companies specifying that a successful applicant should have excellent communication skills, both oral and written. The ability to communicate effectively with others is named by many employers as a top attribute of the successful business person.

Your communication skills are vital to your success in the workplace. The ability to communicate effectively with customers, coworkers, subordinates, and supervisors may be the determining factor in your career advancement.

## The Importance of Business Communication Skills

See Instructor Notes

1-1 and 1-2.

In obtaining a job, your technical skills are important. Employers want to hire the best candidate and will screen résumés and job application forms for evidence of applicants' job-related knowledge and experience. Equally important are your communication skills, both written and oral. To assist them in evaluating written communication skills, many employers include essay-type questions on their application forms. The applicants have an opportunity to demonstrate effective communication skills in their responses. At the interview, the employer may ask the applicants to respond orally to questions about a specific situation, such as a case study. Employers use this opportunity to evaluate applicants' oral communication skills.

Once you are employed, job skills alone will not ensure your success in business. If you lack the ability to communicate well with supervisors, customers, and coworkers, you are unlikely to be promoted.

### How Your Communication Skills Represent You and Your Company

Your communication skills are readily apparent whether they are in the form of a written document or a conversation. They reflect on both you and your organization. The impressions customers and business associates form of you and your organization are important and lasting. Many of these impressions are based solely upon the way you communicate.

#### Reflection on You

How you communicate with others determines their opinion of your overall competence and integrity. You may be an extremely intelligent, talented, and knowledgeable individual. If your communication skills are poor, however, others tend to question your abilities.

Whether you like it or not, many people judge your abilities and intelligence specifically by the quality of your writing, which includes the accuracy of your spelling, punctuation, and grammar. The messages you write demonstrate your ability, or lack of ability, to communicate.

Not only are others evaluating your competence, but they may also be judging your integrity. Being ethical in your communications, oral or written, is very important. If you promise to do things but fail to do so, if you make statements that are not factual, if you make untruthful comments about others, or if you are careless in your writing, others will not trust you.

#### Reflection on Your Company

When you communicate as an employee of your company, you represent the company. Customers will evaluate your company based on their interaction with you.

#### HELP WANTED

**Rocky Top Farms**, a supplier of farm and garden supplies, is seeking candidates for a Customer Service Representative. The successful candidate will handle customer questions and problems over the phone, develop and maintain a customer database, and provide support to District Sales Managers. Minimum job requirements include 1–3 years experience in Purchasing/Management, negotiation skills, and the ability to interact with suppliers and customers.

**Figure 1–1**

Job placement ads such as this show that strong communication skills are important qualifications for employment.

**Goodwill** is the positive feeling or attitude that you show or that customers have about a business that encourages customer loyalty. As an employee, you can strengthen or you can destroy that goodwill based on the manner in which you communicate.

Your written communications are a permanent record of your ability to write. People who read these communications form an opinion of both you and your organization. Presenting yourself well in writing means that you will project a favorable image of your organization as well as promote successful business operations both internally and externally.

## Thinking CAP 1.1

### Discuss:

Do you believe that communication is the most important skill in life? If yes, why? If no, why not?

[See Instructor Note 1-3.](#)

# The Changing Workplace Environment

Communication skills have always been important in the workplace. As the business world changes, the importance of these skills increases. Workers today are faced with the following challenges:

- Increased use of technology
- Increased global competition
- Restructured management and/or product lines
- Increased quality emphasis and customer focus
- Increased focus on legal and ethical problems

All these changes influence the communication process within organizations. Technology, however, has had the greatest impact on how we communicate. Electronic mail, voice mail, teleconferences, computer networks, fax machines, and the Internet have expanded our methods of communicating. More employees are talking to each other and sharing data as they use the various technologies to search for, collect, prepare, and report information. Computer communication is also used for activities such as group problem solving, consensus building, and group projects.

These technological advances have also changed the world in which businesses operate. We now live in a global economy. To be successful, businesses need to compete in the global marketplace. Since English is the international business language, correct translations are critical. Correct grammar is vital since the information communicated will be based on a literal translation of the original message. Slang, jargon, and acronyms need to be eliminated. In addition, you must become aware of different cultures and their unique communication processes.

As companies have restructured and invested in increased technology, more employees at all levels are having to create their own written communications. In addition, the emphasis on quality has put increased importance on employees doing work correctly the first time, working in teams, and being more customer focused. All these changes in the environment have resulted in increased emphasis on ethical and legal concerns for all employees throughout the organization.

As the use of teams and groups expands within companies, the ability to work cooperatively and collaboratively becomes more important. Working together adds a new dimension to the communication skills needed in business. Previously, most communications were developed individually. Now, several people may work together in creating various documents and communications, a process requiring additional written and oral skills.

[See Instructor Note 1-4.](#)

[Go to PowerPoint 1-1.](#)

[See Instructor Note 1-5.](#)

## Thinking CAP 1.2

### Discuss:

How does global competition affect the way we communicate?

## NOTES



### Teaming Up

Collaborative writing consists of two or more individuals working together to produce one document.

[See Instructor Note 1-6.](#)



# Using Business Communication at Work

Communication is a vital part of our world today. You may be a very well-educated, talented individual who has much to offer your company. However, if you cannot get your ideas across to others, you will not be able to share your knowledge and skills. Ideas are commonplace, but the ability to communicate ideas clearly to others is rare. Learning to communicate your ideas is the major thrust of this book.

*Business Communication at Work* is designed to provide you with the background and skills needed to enter the business world and achieve success. Simply listening to a concert will not teach you to play the guitar, nor will strolling through an art museum teach you to paint pictures. Similarly, reading good business letters or reading about how to write good business letters won't teach you to write them, and hearing good reports won't teach you to create them.

To develop your communication ability, you must do three things:

1. Analyze good and bad examples of communication.
2. Use the principles and techniques of good communication.
3. Practice creating your own communications.

Both planning and composing effective messages require that you study and put into practice certain principles and techniques of effective communication. At first, you will have to concentrate on using these principles and techniques; after practice, you will be able to master them and use them with ease. *Business Communication at Work* will offer you many opportunities for practice as you respond to the realistic communication situations presented. The major focus of this textbook will be on written business communication.

The principles and techniques presented can also be used to assist you in communicating effectively in non-work-related areas of your life, whether you are writing a letter to your insurance company or preparing a report for a community group.

## Why We Communicate

As you communicate, your goal may be one or more of the following:

- To inform
- To request
- To persuade
- To build goodwill

The purposes of communication may involve the sharing and exchange of information, such as:

- Ideas
- Facts
- Recommendations
- Proposals

Business communication is functional and useful. Without the ability to exchange information, business as we know it could not exist.

## How We Communicate

Normally, we think of communication skills as talking and writing. We communicate, however, in several important ways, including:

[Go to PowerPoint 1-2a.](#)

[See Instructor Note 1-7.](#)

## Global DIVERSITY 1.1

### Saving Face

In some cultures, the concept of "saving face" refers to the perceived status a person holds. In countries such as China or Thailand, "face" refers also to the entire organization the person represents. Criticizing an employee in public can result in the employee losing face, thereby disrupting the business relationship. *Suppose your company works closely with a Chinese manufacturing firm. How would you approach the manufacturing firm's representative with a complaint about the quality of the product?*

[Go to PowerPoints 1-2b and 1-2c.](#)

[See Instructor Note 1-8.](#)

- Written communications—letters, memos, reports, e-mail, faxes
- Oral communications—one-on-one meetings, phone conversations, speeches, videoconferencing, group meetings
- Nonverbal communications—eye contact, facial expressions, body language, physical appearance
- Active listening—listening with a high level of concentration; listening for information

This text will expand your expertise in communicating in each of these important ways.

## Basics for Communicating Effectively

When you are communicating, regardless of the purpose or situation, you should remember and make use of certain basics for communicating effectively. You should:

- Determine the purpose of your communication.
- Identify your “audience”—the person(s) who will receive the communication.
- Consider what your audience needs to “hear” in order for your communication to be effective.
- Develop your message in a clear, concise, and logical manner.
- Maintain a positive attitude throughout your communication.

In addition, being an effective business communicator requires you to be aware of your ethical and legal responsibilities and to be sensitive to language bias and cultural diversity. If you use the following as your guide, you will be on your way to meeting these responsibilities:

- Be honest in your communications.
- Give the correct information.
- Use gender-neutral language. Use words that reflect non-bias, such as *police officer* instead of *policeman*. Avoid using occupational phrases that indicate gender. For example, a manager should discuss the budget with *his or her* staff instead of *his* staff or *her* staff. You’ll learn more about how to avoid these situations in Chapter 2.
- Do not intentionally misrepresent or mislead others.
- Include all vital information that is relevant to the situation.
- Guard against damaging another person’s name and reputation by making false accusations.
- Familiarize yourself with the laws pertaining to any communications for which you are responsible.

Keep these definitions in mind when communicating:

- Legal: permitted by law
- Ethics: moral principles or standards
- Slander: orally defaming an individual’s character
- Libel: defaming an individual’s character in writing

The people you will communicate with may be very different from you. They may be from another part of the world, and their ways of doing things as well as the way they think may be different. This difference in people is referred to as **cultural diversity**. As you recognize and become sensitive to cultural diversity, you will see that different groups of people communicate in different ways. When you

## NOTES



### Words Unspoken

What we say nonverbally may communicate more than our spoken words.

[Go to PowerPoint 1-3.](#)

## Thinking CAP 1.3

### Discuss:

How might hostility be apparent in written communications, in oral communications, in nonverbal communications, and in listening?

[See Instructor Note 1-9.](#)

[Go to PowerPoint 1-4.](#)

[Go to PowerPoint 1-5.](#)

[See Instructor Note 1-10.](#)

[Go to PowerPoint 1-6.](#)

communicate in a global community, remember that different meanings are often attached to the ways people communicate. Not only do people around the world have diverse values and beliefs and use different languages, but their written and oral communication styles and formats vary. For example, some styles are more formal than others. Nonverbal communication also varies widely—gestures, body language, eye contact, and touch are all used in diverse ways by different cultures.

As you communicate with people in other cultures, you will need to learn about the specifics of communication for those cultures. Those who have learned English as their second language have been taught formal English. You, too, should use formal English and eliminate slang, jargon, acronyms, and other informal language in your writing and speaking. Remember to keep your communication brief, clear, and simple.

## CHECKPOINT 1.1

1. Explain the significance of goodwill in a business situation.
2. Consider the following concepts in the light of business communications: *cultural awareness*, *efficiency*, *factual truth*, *goodwill*, and *integrity*. Arrange the ideas in the order of importance, and explain your choice of arrangement.
3. You must prepare a business letter to a potential customer, and you have time to cover only three of the following four concepts: *goodwill*, *awareness of cultural diversity*, *gender-neutral language*, and *good grammar*. Which three would you choose and why?

# Principles of Written Communication

The principles and techniques you'll learn to use to prepare effective written communication can be applied to oral communication as well. You should know, however, when written communication is more appropriate than oral communication.

## Using Written Communication

You may choose to use written communication for a variety of reasons. Among the reasons are the following:

- **Conveying complex information.** You may need to communicate technical, statistical, or detailed information. Your reader may find it easier to comprehend written material than material presented orally. You may also need to include charts, graphs, diagrams, or other visual data when presenting complex information.
- **Reaching your intended receiver.** You may find it is easier to reach your intended receiver through written communication. A person who may not be available by phone will eventually read written correspondence.
- **Providing proof of the communication.** A written communication provides proof of the communication and becomes a document that may be legally acceptable as a binding contract or as evidence in a court of law.
- **Ensuring confidentiality of information.** You may want to convey information in writing that would be unsuitable to communicate in a



telephone conversation. You may indicate “confidential” or “personal” on the communication if you want it to remain confidential.

- **Providing convenience for your reader.** A written communication allows your reader to review the material at a convenient time and place without interruptions.
- **Expediting the response to the communication.** A written communication allows the reader to refer to the original correspondence when responding. This will assist the reader in developing a complete reply.
- **Planning your message.** A written communication allows you to spend time on the content of your message and to word it in the most advantageous way. A telephone or personal contact, however carefully planned, is subject to the events of the moment.
- **Saving time and money.** A written communication may be less expensive and time-consuming than a personal visit or a telephone call.
- **Stressing the importance of the communication.** People may attach greater importance to a letter than to a phone call. You may use a special mail service such as registered or certified mail that will attach even greater importance to the message. A letter sent by a courier service in a special envelope may also attract attention and show importance or urgency.
- **Aiding in the distribution of information to several individuals.** Using a written communication is a fast method of sending the same information to a number of individuals and ensuring that they receive the identical information.
- **Translating international communications.** A written communication allows the reader time to translate the information at an appropriate pace.

[See Instructor Note 1-11.](#)

## LEGAL & ETHICAL 1.1



**Listening In.** You overhear a coworker at the coffee machine discussing a client. Your coworker states that the client is “a thief.” Is this ethical conduct? What are the legal implications?

### Good Letter Writing Techniques

[See Instructor Note 1-12.](#)

Writing effective business correspondence is a many-sided challenge. Through practicing the principles and techniques in *Business Communication at Work*, you will be able to achieve two goals in producing written messages: (1) a message that is structurally complete, and (2) a message that achieves its purpose quickly, clearly, and effectively.

The techniques you will learn will help you compose written communication that will impress the reader and accomplish your purpose. You should not expect to master all the techniques at once. As you develop your writing skills, you will quickly see that writing is a combination of activities going on at the same time. Writing is not a disconnected series of steps.

### The Impact of a Unified Message

As you write, think of the overall effect of the whole message instead of individual parts of your message or individual writing principles. Be aware that by overlooking

## NOTES



### Focus on Results

The real test of good written communication is the total effect it has on the reader.

Go to PowerPoint 1-7.

even one principle that is important to the reader you may weaken or destroy the effectiveness of your message.

In planning your message, you will need to consider the following:

- The purpose of the communication
- Your intended audience
- The content of the communication
- The organization of the message

You will determine the important points to include and the best method of organizing and presenting them. After your first draft, you will need to review and edit what you have written. Then, if you believe the reader's response will be positive, you will have succeeded.

## The Total Effect on the Reader

Most people respond favorably to a letter that flows naturally and exhibits courtesy, friendliness, and sincerity. Picture your reader receiving your letter. Will he or she be receptive to its message? Try to visualize the receiver's reactions in reading the letter. For example, a reader may stiffen at the sentence, "We give every request full consideration," but the same reader may relax when the sentence is rewritten as, "Your request will be given full and prompt consideration."

Your letter's total effect on the reader determines whether he or she will react the way you want. If you have done your job properly, you'll be able to answer *yes* to the following three questions:

- Will the reader understand the message?
- Is the tone of the letter positive?
- Will the letter do its specific job and also build goodwill?

## NOTES



### Ask Yourself

How would you react to the message you have written?

### Question 1: Will the reader understand the message?

Writing must be simple to be clear. The simple sentence is the most useful tool in business correspondence. The simple sentence is a single clause containing a subject and a verb, and it expresses a complete thought. Resist the temptation to join a single idea to another idea with a conjunction such as *and*, *but*, *nor*, and *or* unless using a conjunction will make the sentence easier to understand. To keep your sentences simple, avoid overuse of terms such as *therefore*, *moreover*, *however*, and *accordingly*.

Although you will most often use simple sentences in your writing, you will want to have a balance in your sentence structure. Some compound sentences as well as complex and compound-complex sentences will add variety to your writing. If you need to review sentence structure now, the Reference section in the back of your textbook provides a good review for you.

Avoid using complex and vague words. Ornate or difficult words won't impress the reader. Use simple words that your reader will easily understand without having to consult a dictionary. Be correct and natural in your use of words and in the construction of sentences. This will help your writing flow smoothly—your reader will understand your message and be grateful to you as well. The highest compliment a reader can pay you, the writer, is to say, "Your letter was simple, clear, and easy to read."

### Question 2: Is the tone of the letter positive?

*How* you say something may influence your reader just as much as what you say. Your letter will appeal to the reader if you use a conversational, informal writing style and stress positive rather than negative ideas. Be sure to emphasize a "you"

## NOTES



### Keep It Simple

Simple words and sentences will aid the understanding of your message.

## NOTES



### Keep It Friendly

The tone of your written message should be as friendly as the tone of your spoken message.

viewpoint throughout the letter. The **you-attitude** means that you put the reader first in your communication and emphasize the reader's wants and needs and how you can meet them. Using certain words and phrases—"you failed," "you don't understand," "you can't"—are not what is meant by the you-attitude. Use words and phrases that say to the reader that you care and want to help. For example, "Your order will be filled promptly and will be on the way to you by Express Mail tomorrow" does show the you-attitude.

Use a friendly tone that suggests that your attitude is positive and that you are interested in the reader. Naturalness, courtesy, friendliness, and sincerity are all essential to a positive tone in a letter. You will learn more about how to use the you-attitude as you continue in your studies of effective business communication.

### Question 3: Will the letter do its specific job and also build goodwill?

The easy readability and friendly tone of your message will attract and impress your reader. In addition, your letter should accomplish its specific job and increase goodwill.

One of the main objectives of all business correspondence is to encourage the reader to react favorably to the message. You cannot always do all that the reader wants, but you can communicate to the reader that you understand her or his problems and that you want to do something about them.

Effective business letters build or retain goodwill, a priceless commodity that is hard-earned and easily lost. Writers who recognize this purpose of business letters strive to sharpen their understanding of **psychology** as well as English composition. Because the exchange of written communication is vital to business and essential for promoting goodwill, perfecting the art of creating effective correspondence will help ensure your success in business.

## The Six Tests of Effective Correspondence

To communicate easily and effectively with your reader, apply the following "six Cs" to your correspondence. Is your communication (1) courteous, (2) clear, (3) complete, (4) concise, (5) correct, and (6) consistent?

### Courteous

A courteous communication is polite, tactful, friendly, and "reader-centered." Successful writers carefully choose the words they use, avoiding words to which they themselves would react unfavorably. In short, they put themselves in the reader's place by trying the words out on themselves before writing them to others. The expression, "It's not what you say, it's how you say it," applies.

The people who read your letters will judge you and your organization by your friendliness and courtesy. *Friendliness* is evident when you write informally and in a natural, conversational style. Use "please" and "thank you"—good manners are good business.

Through your writing, project an attitude that focuses on the reader—the you-attitude. Show the reader that you are genuinely interested in communicating. The **tone** (the attitude your words express to the reader) of your letter should also show your sincerity and desire to be of service.

### Clear

Clear writing is easy to understand. The exact meaning intended by the writer should be clear in the reader's mind.

That your message can be understood isn't enough—you must strive to write so that your message cannot possibly be misunderstood. The keys to clarity include the use of the following:

## Thinking CAP 1.4

### Discuss:

"How you say something may influence your reader just as much as what you say." Do you agree with this statement? If yes, why? If no, why not?

## Go to the Web



### Activity 1-1

To test your skills.

[See Instructor Note 1-13.](#)

[Go to PowerPoint 1-8.](#)

## NOTES



### Good Vibrations

If a word produces a negative feeling for you, do not use it when writing to others.

[See Instructor Note 1-14.](#)

[See Instructor Note 1-15.](#)

[See Instructor Note 1-16.](#)

## Go to the Web



### Activity 1-2

To test your skills.

- **Logical, coherent arrangement.** Words should flow appropriately.
- **Specific, concrete words instead of general terms.** Calling a car “a red vehicle” would be less specific than calling the vehicle “a red Ford.”
- **Directness.** Save the reader’s time by staying on the main points of the message.
- **Balance.** Use a variety of sentence structures to provide balance and interest.
- **Comparison and contrast.** Use words that show how things are similar to or different from each other. (Compare to show similarities; contrast to show differences.)
- **Unification.** Paragraphs should have one topic sentence and all other sentences should support that main idea; the message should be unified around a single topic.

Trite, vague phrases are the enemy of clear writing and should be avoided. See Table 1.1 for suggested substitutions for some trite phrases that are frequently used.

Verbs may be active or passive. Active verbs make writing forceful and more interesting to read or to hear. In the **active voice**, the subject of the sentence performs the action described by the verb.

**The postal carrier delivered the packages.**

(The *carrier* is performing the action.)

**Our administrative assistant prepares the check requests.**

(The *assistant* performs the action to request the checks.)

In the **passive voice**, the subject receives the action described by the verb.

**The packages were delivered by the postal carrier.**

(The *packages* receive the action performed by the *carrier*.)

**The check requests were prepared by the administrative assistant.**

(The *check requests* receive the action performed by the administrative assistant.)

See Instructor Note 1-17.

Go to PowerPoint 1-9.

See Instructor Note 1-18.

**TABLE 1.1** Trite Phrases and Their Substitutes

Trite or Vague Phrase	Substitute Phrase
acknowledge receipt of as per your request at an early date at this point in time attached please find due to the fact that enclosed please find in due course in receipt of regarding the matter take under consideration this is to acknowledge under separate cover we are pleased to note	thank you for as you requested by Thursday, April 27 now attached is because enclosed is in ten days have received (omit this phrase from usage) consider thank you for separately (omit this phrase from usage)

The active voice creates the illusion of movement; the passive voice limits movement. While the active voice is used more often, there are situations in which the passive voice may be preferred. One such instance is in the presentation of negative information. You will study negative or bad news messages in Chapter 5.

A frequent enemy of forceful writing is the participial phrase. Words such as *hoping*, *assuring*, *believing*, and the like introduce the participial phrase. Because these phrases may be the weakest verbal construction in the English language, you should not use them to introduce sentences. Compare these two sentences:

**WEAK:** Assuring us that Plan A was the best deal, the sales representative wrote the order.

**STRONG:** The sales representative wrote the order as she assured us that Plan A was the best deal.

The most important advantage of clear writing is that the reader can grasp the essential message quickly. Preparing and following a plan or outline will help you organize your thoughts and present a clear structure that will aid the reader in understanding and retention.

### Complete

A complete communication contains all the essential information needed by the reader for action. Completeness is closely related to clarity; a written message will be unclear if essential information has been omitted. Unlike in oral communication, a reader is unable to ask for clarification, additional information, or interpretation. For example, the request, “Please send me some paper,” cannot be acted upon with any degree of accuracy because it is incomplete. The reader needs to know how much, what size, what type, and other specifications of the paper before supplying it. A good way to test for completeness is to ask whether your message answers the five **Ws** and one **H**: **Who?** **What?** **Where?** **When?** **Why?** **How?**

When you are replying to an inquiry or request, be thorough in answering all questions asked. You may even anticipate the reader’s reaction by providing other relevant information. Writing a complete message will show your genuine interest in the reader and your wish for a favorable reaction. A complete message will also save you the expense and possible embarrassment of a follow-up message.

### Concise

A concise communication uses as few words as possible to communicate the message in a clear, courteous manner. Conciseness doesn’t necessarily mean short or curt. Instead, being concise is saying what you have to say in the fewest possible words. You are concise when you reduce your communication to essentials, stripping it of unnecessary words.

Teaming up two or more words of the same or similar meaning robs letters of conciseness. For example:

We are grateful and appreciative . . . .

We stand ready, willing, and able to be of assistance and service . . . .

We look forward with anticipation to . . . .

Being concise means saying all that needs to be said and no more. Do not leave out important facts, but do increase effectiveness by omitting irrelevant details and by giving complete, pertinent information. To achieve conciseness in your writing, you will need to edit and rewrite your message, eliminating unnecessary words, phrases, and sentences.

## Go to the Web



### Activity 1-3

To test your skills.

[See Instructor Note 1-19.](#)

## NOTES



### Right the First Time

A complete communication eliminates the need for follow-up communication. Anticipate additional information the reader may need.

[See Instructor Note 1-20.](#)

[See Instructor Note 1-21.](#)



See Instructor Note 1-22.

## NOTES



### Check Before Sending

To catch all errors, always proofread your message again just before you send it.

### Correct

A correct communication is accurate in every way. Even a small error in a date or an amount of money may result in loss of time, money, or goodwill—or all three. Verifying facts and paying attention to details are vital to being an effective communicator. Dates, times, places, amounts, and other facts need to be confirmed. In order to produce communications that are error-free and consistent, you will want to proofread and verify all information.

In most instances, errors in correctness fall into two categories:

- **Typographical:** Errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; insertion of extra words; omission of important words; and errors in spacing and alignment.
- **Failure to check reference sources:** Names spelled incorrectly; dates and figures not verified; information incomplete; capitalization and punctuation misapplied.

### Consistent

Consistency is closely related to correctness. Use similar formats so that the reader understands the purpose of the messages; don't use one style in one part of the message and then switch to another style. You would not list the date of a convention as *June 31* because June has 30 days. Likewise, you would not write a letter to *Miss John Jones* when you can verify that John is a male. When you give a person a *three-day grace period*, you should specify the dates chronologically, rather than a day here or there (e.g., May 1, July 3, and June 2). To be consistent, you would also check to be sure that the information you provide is consistent each time you provide it. Saying something one way one time and another way the next time violates the element of consistency (e.g., Paul Jones, Mrs. Lily Siu, and Mr. Pate).

## LEGAL & ETHICAL 1.2



**Too Few Zeros.** You fail to carefully proofread and verify the numbers in a price quotation—you type in \$500 instead of \$5,000 in the quotation for a painting contract. It was “just a typo” and the client certainly realizes that you could not do the job for \$500. What are the possible legal ramifications of your error?

### CHECKPOINT 1.2

1. Identify the advantages and disadvantages of written communication.
2. Explain why you agree or disagree that the following statement is a compliment: “Your letter was simple, clear, and easy to read.”
3. How does written communication, in particular, promote goodwill? Give an example from your own experience if possible.



## Chapter 1 Summary

The ability to communicate effectively in business is essential to both the individual and the organization. For the individual, effective communication skills are necessary in getting the job initially, accomplishing assigned tasks, and advancing to higher positions within an organization. For the organization, effective communication results in developing and maintaining goodwill among employees, customers, and business associates while getting the job done efficiently.

Communication skills can be developed through the process of analyzing communication, using the principles and techniques of good writing, and practicing the creation of different forms of communication. In all types of communication, it is important to determine the purpose of the communication, the intended audience, and the content. As you organize your message in a clear, concise, correct, and logical manner, you need to maintain a positive tone. When your written message passes the six tests of effective correspondence (the six Cs), you have reached your goal of building goodwill. You will also have achieved your purpose to request, inform, or persuade your receiver to respond positively. The techniques of composing business correspondence presented in this text will help you produce letters, memos, e-mail messages, and reports that achieve their purpose.



### Checklist for Communication

#### Check Your Cs for Communicating:

Courteous	_____	Complete	_____	Correct	_____
Concise	_____	Consistent	_____	Clear	_____

# CHAPTER 1 WORKSHEETS

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## PRACTICE 1

### Chapter Review

*Instructions: Answer each item below by writing your response in the space provided.*

- Identify four groups of people with whom employees in organizations communicate.
  - customers \_\_\_\_\_
  - supervisors \_\_\_\_\_
  - coworkers (peers) \_\_\_\_\_
  - subordinates \_\_\_\_\_
- List four environmental changes that are influencing communications in business.
  - restructured management and/or product lines \_\_\_\_\_
  - increased use of technology \_\_\_\_\_
  - increased emphasis on quality and customer focus \_\_\_\_\_
  - increased global competition \_\_\_\_\_
- List the six Cs of effective correspondence.

a. clear _____	c. complete _____	e. correct _____
b. concise _____	d. courteous _____	f. consistent _____
- What are three practices that will help you develop your communication ability?
  - analyze good and bad examples of communications \_\_\_\_\_
  - use the principles and techniques for good communicating \_\_\_\_\_
  - practice creating communications \_\_\_\_\_
- List four elements to be considered when you plan a written message.
  - the purpose of communication \_\_\_\_\_
  - the audience \_\_\_\_\_
  - the content \_\_\_\_\_
  - the organization \_\_\_\_\_
- Identify six differences that you may find as you communicate with people from another culture.
  - Students may respond with any six of the following: \_\_\_\_\_
  - values, beliefs, practices, languages, \_\_\_\_\_
  - written and oral communication styles and methods, \_\_\_\_\_
  - formality of communication, \_\_\_\_\_
  - nonverbal communications—gestures, body language, eye contact, touch, \_\_\_\_\_
  - format of communications, time, space \_\_\_\_\_

# CHAPTER 1 WORKSHEETS

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

7. Describe six reasons for choosing written communications.
  - a. Students may respond with any six of the following: conveying complex information,
  - b. reaching the intended receiver, providing proof of the communication,
  - c. ensuring confidentiality of information, providing convenience for the reader,
  - d. expediting the response to the communication, planning the message,
  - e. saving time and money, stressing the importance of the communication,
  - f. aiding in the distribution of the same information to several people, translating international communication
8. Give five techniques you will use to improve the clarity of your writing.
  - a. use of simple and concise words to convey intended meaning
  - b. use of simple sentences that convey a completed thought
  - c. planning what needs to be said and presenting it in logical sequence
  - d. use of conjunctions sparingly
  - e. effective use of paragraphs, or use of active voice instead of passive voice

## PRACTICE 2

### Six Cs

**Instructions:** Each of the following sentences lacks one of the C qualities. On the line provided, write the C quality that is lacking and the word or phrase that improves the italicized word(s).

1. Please *advise me as to the date on which* you plan to review our proposal.  
concise                      let me know when OR tell me when
2. The personnel manager reviews all the impressive *résumés* and calls *them* for interviews.  
clear                      the applicants
3. We *demand* payment now.  
courteous                      We must have your OR Please mail your
4. The supporting documents will be mailed in a *seperate* envelope.  
correct                      separate
5. *You didn't send* your check.  
courteous                      We have not yet received
6. Please send me *some black printer cartridges*.  
complete                      one dozen FZ108 black computer ribbons
7. The student told the instructor that *she* did not have time to review the homework assignment.  
clear                      the instructor OR the student

# CHAPTER 1 WORKSHEETS

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

8. *I am writing to take this opportunity to say thank you for representing me at the meeting last week.*

concise

Thank you for . . .

9. The confirmation of your *accomodations* was mailed yesterday.

correct

accommodations

10. *We are in receipt of your check for \$120.*

courteous and concise

Thank you for

11. You can attend the training during the three-day period *June 10, 11, and 13.*

consistent

June 10, 11, and 12

12. *I regret to inform you that the May 16 performance is sold out.*

concise and courteous

omit these words    The May 16 . . .



# CHAPTER 1 WORKSHEETS

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## PRACTICE 3

### Business Letter Analysis

**Instructions:** In developing your communication skills, it is important to analyze examples of good and bad communication. For this course, it will be beneficial to start collecting various business communications for analysis. Keep a file of the materials collected. You will be able to analyze them for different principles as you progress through *Business Communication at Work*.

Obtain a business letter. Analyze the business letter according to the principles and techniques presented in this chapter. As you analyze your letter, answer the following questions, which emphasize the principles and techniques stressed in this chapter. **Answers will vary.**

- a. What is the purpose of the letter?

\_\_\_\_\_

- b. Who is the intended audience of the letter?

\_\_\_\_\_

- c. Is the tone of the letter positive? If it is not positive, what changes should be made?

\_\_\_\_\_

- d. Did the writer practice the six Cs of effective correspondence?

	Yes	No	If no, explain why
Courteous	_____	_____	_____
Clear	_____	_____	_____
Concise	_____	_____	_____
Complete	_____	_____	_____
Correct	_____	_____	_____
Consistent	_____	_____	_____

- e. Did the message achieve its purpose?

\_\_\_\_\_

- f. If you were the recipient of the message, what would your reaction be?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# CHAPTER 1 ONLINE EXERCISES

## Getting Started:

To complete the Online Exercises in this text, you will need access to a computer with an Internet connection and a Web browser. A Web browser is a program that allows you to view and explore information on the World Wide Web. Examples of Web browsers are Internet Explorer® and Netscape Navigator®.

In the Online Exercises that follow throughout the book, you will go to the following address: **www.mhhe.com/bcw3**. Use all lowercase letters. Be sure to put in a period (called “dot” in Internet addresses) between **www** and **mhhe**, but do not type a period after **com**. The *Business Communication at Work* Web site should appear on your screen. You will be connected to the site’s home page, or main page. From here you can connect with information available at the site.

Once you have connected to the *Business Communication at Work* Web site, you are ready to begin the first Online Exercises below.

## Objective:

In these Online Exercises, you will learn what the Internet is and become familiar with terms related to the Internet.

After opening the *Business Communication at Work* Web site, select Chapter 1. Next, click on Online Exercises. You will see a list of Web site links that will bring you to sites featuring Internet definitions and Internet dictionaries.

## Activity 1.1

1. Select one link to visit from *Web Sites Describing the Internet*.
2. Read through your selection.
3. On a piece of paper, answer the following questions using complete sentences:
  - a. What is the purpose of the Web site you have chosen?
  - b. Who is the intended audience of the Web site?
  - c. What are some of the techniques used for organizing the description of the Internet?
4. Using the **Back** button on your Web browser, return to the *Business Communication at Work* Online Exercises page and click on another Web site that offers Internet definitions.
5. After reading your selection, write two sentences describing the differences in how the two Web sites you visited are organized.
6. Write your name on your answer sheet, and hand it in to your instructor.

# CHAPTER 1 ONLINE EXERCISES

## Activity 1.2

1. Select one of the Internet dictionary Web sites to visit.
2. Key *WWW* in the **Search** box (some Web sites may require you to click on the first letter of the word).
3. On a sheet of paper write a two sentence definition of *WWW*.
4. Search for the definitions of the following Internet terms: *hypertext*, *hypermedia*, *Internet service provider (ISP)*, *HTML*, and *HTTP*. Write the definition of each term using two sentences. If a term is not listed in the Web site you selected, return to the *Business Communication at Work* Web site and select another site to visit.
5. Write your name on your paper and the front of each printout, and hand it in to your instructor.

# CHAPTER 1 CONCEPT REVIEW WORKSHEET

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Setting the Stage for Effective Communication

1. Your communication skills reflect on both you and your company.
2. What is the term for the positive feeling or attitude that you show or that customers have about a business that encourages customer loyalty? goodwill
3. What is *collaborative* writing? Two or more individuals working together to produce one document
4. As you communicate, your goal may be one or more of the following:
  - a. to inform
  - b. to request
  - c. to persuade
  - d. to build goodwill
5. What is the difference between *legal* and *ethical*?  
Legal is permitted by law. Ethical refers to moral principles or standards
6. What is *cultural diversity*? the differences in people—people around the world have diverse values and beliefs
7. When planning your message, you need to consider the following:
  - a. The purpose of your communication.
  - b. Your intended audience.
  - c. The content of the communication.
  - d. The organization of the message.
8. What is meant by the *you-attitude*? you put the reader first in our communication and emphasize how you can meet the reader's wants and needs
9. You need to understand psychology as well as English composition to write messages that build or retain goodwill.
10. The six Cs of effective communication are:

<u>courteous</u>	<u>clear</u>	<u>complete</u>
<u>concise</u>	<u>correct</u>	<u>consistent</u>
11. What is *active* voice? the subject of the sentence performs the action
12. What is *passive* voice? the subject of the sentence receives the action
13. What questions do you ask for the *completeness* test?

<u>who</u>	<u>what</u>	<u>when</u>
<u>where</u>	<u>why</u>	<u>how</u>