

Third Edition



Management Communication

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Graphic Aids for Documents and Presentations

When the eyes say one thing, and the tongue another, a practiced man relies on the language of the first.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *American essayist and philosopher*

If you were to compare 50 business reports and proposals from the 1970s with 50 comparable documents from the present time, the most obvious difference would not be formality of style, length of paragraphs, or use of headings. What would leap to your eye from contemporary documents are their graphics—those interesting, attention-getting, and often entertaining forms of visual information. Despite this obvious change in business documents, many otherwise skilled business writers and presenters feel uncomfortable when it comes to creating and using visual aids. On the one hand, these communicators acknowledge the importance of graphs, charts, illustrations, photographs, and other visual aids in making a point. On the other hand, many writers and speakers wilt when they think about creating good graphics. They assume that creating the graphics will be time-consuming and difficult.

"I'm afraid," confesses a financial counselor in Dallas, "that my artistic efforts will look amateurish. Yet I don't have the time, money, or patience to work with a professional artist."

NEW TOOLS FOR NONARTISTS

Advances in word-processing and computer graphics technology have put the artist's pen in every business communicator's hand. Tables, line graphs, bar charts, wedged pie charts, flowcharts, maps, and many other visual aids are now easier to produce than ever before. A huge variety of graphics software is now available for every computer and company budget. This software makes it possible to prepare professional visual aids in a short time.

What has not changed, however, is the necessity to *think* about whether you want or need visual aids. You still must decide where they should be placed, what kind you need, and how your words and visual aids together can form a mutually supportive package of meaning.

REASONS FOR USING VISUAL AIDS

Although visual aids attract the reader's print-tired eyes, there are even more important reasons for using visual aids. Consider five key reasons for using visual aids in your business documents and presentations.

1. To *clarify* your point. A visual aid can show a process, procedure, relationship, cross-section, or quantitative view of topics.
2. To *emphasize* your point. Visual aids call attention to key ideas much more vividly than words do.
3. To *simplify* your point. Relationships among ideas, facts, and statistics can be shown simply in graphic form.
4. To *unify* your points. Several ideas can be brought together in one visual aid.
5. To *impress* your reader. Readers are swayed by your imaginative approach to the communication of ideas.

WHERE TO BEGIN: THE AUDIENCE'S NEEDS

Which graphics you use, if any, depends entirely on your audience's *need* for such visual supports to meaning. Begin, therefore, by asking yourself what passages in your document or presentation should be enlivened and clarified for the sake of your audience. This requires reading your work as if for the first time, watching and listening objectively for those portions that will seem difficult, vague, or complicated for your audience. Look also for *emphasis* opportunities—places in your communication where a visual aid would make a key point more memorable.

Having found these possible locations for visual aids, you're ready to choose which graphics belong where. The discussion of the many visual aids depicted in this chapter can help you make an informed choice. Be cautious with graphics, though. Graphics by themselves can hurt a business communication as easily as help it. A chart or table that appears out of context can perplex readers, drawing their attention away from your text and undercutting your credibility.

To avoid misusing visual aids, follow five commonsense *dos* and *don'ts*:

1. *Do* point out the conclusions you want your reader to draw from a visual aid. *Don't* expect a reader to automatically see your point in a chart, graph, or illustration.
2. *Do* locate your visual aids next to the text that explains them. *Don't* expect your reader to hunt for the text that explains a visual aid or vice versa.
3. *Do* simplify your visual aids so that they make their primary point within a second or two of the reader's attention. *Don't* cram visual aids so full of information that they cannot be interpreted by the reader.

4. *Do* provide keys, legends, captions, and titles as required by your visual aids. *Don't* assume that the reader will understand the intent and symbols of your visual aids.
5. *Do* scale your graphic aids and place them on the page so that they can be seen and interpreted easily. *Don't* frustrate the reader with postage-stamp-sized graphs and charts.

DISTORTION AND DECEPTION IN VISUAL AIDS

Like words, visual aids can be used to lie or, put more politely, to “shade the truth.” This text does not investigate in detail such misapplied uses of visual aids, but three deceptive practices appear so frequently that you should be aware of them.

DISPROPORTION

The visual representation of statistical data is disproportionate to the data itself. *Example:* A pie chart showing a large wedge identified as “welfare cheaters” when the proper wedge should have been no more than 6 percent of the circle.

MISALIGNMENT

The measurement scales along the axes of graphs and charts have been misaligned, often by moving or omitting the zero point, to create more dramatic graphic effects than the data deserves. *Example:* Profits at an automobile company grew only by 2 percent. By changing the measurement numbers along the vertical (y) axis, the upward curve of profits seems much more substantial than a mere 2 percent rise.

OMISSION

Visual aids are simplified representations of data. As such, they are especially vulnerable to distortion by omission of neutral or unfavorable data items. *Example:* A software company has had several rocky months, but because of tax write-offs, it is able to show somewhat steady growth at the end of each fiscal quarter. The roller-coaster nature of the company can be masked entirely by a bar chart showing only quarterly results.

The following Communication Checkpoint may aid you in your use of graphics.

Communication Checkpoint

Using Graphic Aids

- What are the key points of my talk or document? Which of these should be underscored by visuals? Will the graphic aids achieve my objectives?
- Will my visual aids clarify my ideas, or will they merely support them? If they only support them, should I still use them?
- Are my visual aids appropriate and concrete? Are they informative?
- Have I considered the cost, time, and thought any of these visuals will take? Does the particular presentation of my topic justify these? Can I manage just as well without them or without some of them?
- Is each of my graphic aids consistent with my objectives? Do they add up to a consistent basic structure and unity? Are they free from complicating typefaces, art techniques, and symbols?
- Can my audience easily grasp what they see, or is an added explanation necessary? Are my graphic aids direct and to the point?
- Should my graphic aids be representational, pictorial, or symbolic? Which treatment is best for my topic? Which treatment is best from the standpoint of the audience?

- Is the sequence for my visual aids logical? Are they so organized that they add strength and relevance to one another and to my overall topic?
 - Are my graphic aids as effective as they can be made? Did I put enough thought and effort into the planning of my graphic aids? Did I consider all the ways in which the topic could be reinforced and clarified by my graphic aids?
 - Are my graphic aids believable in terms of the overall topic? Will my audience appreciate and understand them? Will they be completely readable?
 - What kind of graphic aids should I use?
-

VISUAL AIDS FOR BUSINESS DOCUMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

To be able to choose the very best graphic aid for your documents and presentations, read the following gallery of commonly used visual aids. Be sure to look at the illustrations of graphic aids. Note that storyboards, flip charts, and physical objects are exclusively used in oral presentations. In addition, most of these could be used as overhead-projector transparencies, as slides, or even in filmstrips, films, or videotapes.

Photograph

While certainly a powerful visual communicator, the photograph can be difficult and expensive to reproduce. Depending on the distribution you intend for your work, you may also need to obtain written releases from all of the humans pictured in the photo. Nonetheless, photographs can prove invaluable in communicating product descriptions, geographical information, and personalities. For that reason, they are the most common graphic technique used in annual reports.

Line Drawing

Because of the advanced state of line drawings (including cartoons) today, public standards for line drawings are quite high. If your abilities with a pen don't measure up, ask a professional artist to create your line drawings. These can add emphasis and attraction to your documents and presentations (Figure 12-1).

Line Graph

This is the simplest of graphic aids; it shows trends at a glance (Figure 12-2). Note that only the dots (the data points) represent accurate measurements. The line between the dots does not portray, point for point, an accurate measurement of data.

Multiline Graph

By differentiating lines by color, size, or texture, a multiline graph portrays simultaneous trends, allowing easy comparison (Figure 12-3). Care must be taken not to include too many different lines (three are usually the maximum advisable) or to portray lines that intersect one another too often for easy visual interpretation.

FIGURE 12-1 Line Drawing

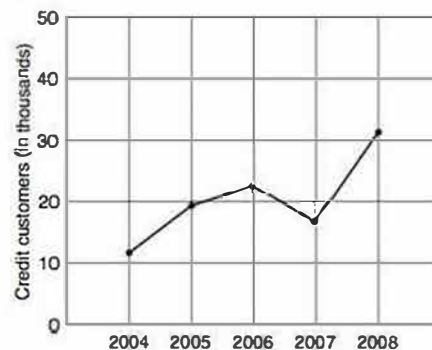
Effective marketing managers define their job as creating and delivering the proper market impact to well-defined market targets. This is a rifle approach that aims at a specific market target. This marketing manager does not waste resources and effort on the nontarget area of the market.

Bar Graph

The bar graph creates strong visual statements for comparative measurement (Figure 12-4). Trends can still be gauged but without the sloping (and often inaccurate) lines of a line graph. The simple bar chart compares two or more values and can be drawn either horizontally or vertically. Exact quantities represented by each bar are often written inside or at the top of each bar.

Grouped Bar Graphs

A grouped bar graph is, in effect, a series of simple bar charts, each measuring two or more values at specified intervals (Figure 12-5). It allows comparison of a single element across the chart or among elements at each place on or across the chart.

FIGURE 12-2 Line Graph

Six Graphs Based on the Same Data as Figure 12-2

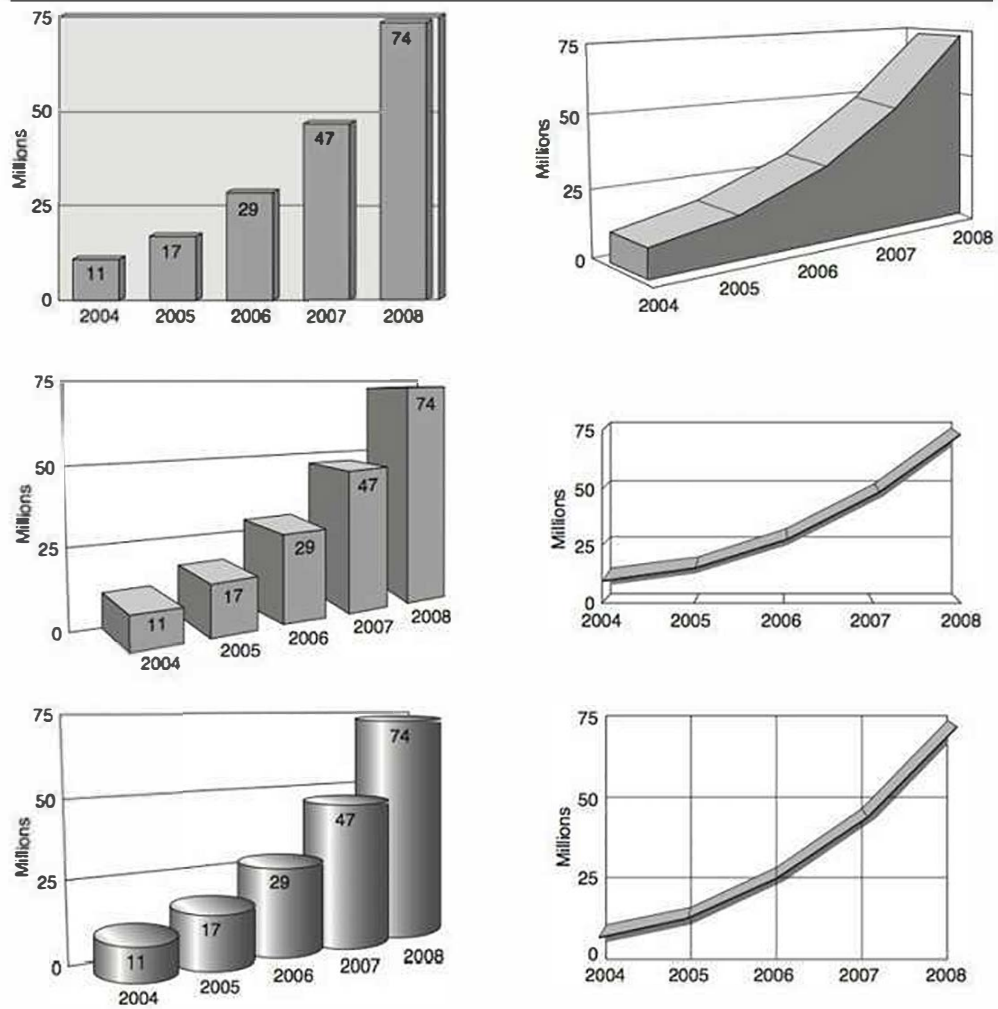
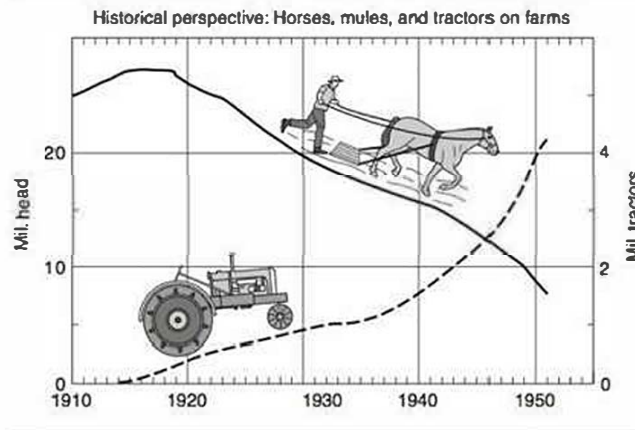


FIGURE 12-3 Multiline Graph

Segmented Bar Graph

The segmented bar graph distinguishes different parts of the whole by color or texture (Figure 12-6). Each bar is segmented into parts corresponding to amounts represented. This highlights the cumulative effect of the parts while still permitting comparisons among the parts.

Line Bar Graph

The line bar graph simultaneously emphasizes individual measurements and trends (Figure 12-7). It may offer the advantages of both bar and line graphs. However, it may also overly complicate the effects or make the graphic aid appear cluttered.

Pie Chart

In a pie or circle chart, each portion represents part of the total amount (often, the total is 100%) depicted in the full circle (Figure 12-8). Portions represented must be proportionate in size to the value they represent. To prepare the pie chart, compute percentages of the total for each portion and then multiply each percentage by 360 degrees. Using a protractor, mark the degrees for each part starting with the largest portion at the top of the circle. Proceed clockwise to smaller and smaller divisions. In general, the pie chart should not contain more than eight parts, to avoid clutter and confusion. Group some categories, as needed, to reduce the number of wedges. For example, “apples” and “oranges” might be put into one wedge as “fruit.” Names for segments can be placed inside or outside the chart itself. However, try always to have the names appear horizontally on the page.

Pictogram

Pictograms usually combine line drawings with graphics such as line, bar, and pie charts to make a point in an attractive, eye-catching way (Figure 12-9). Pictograms are often

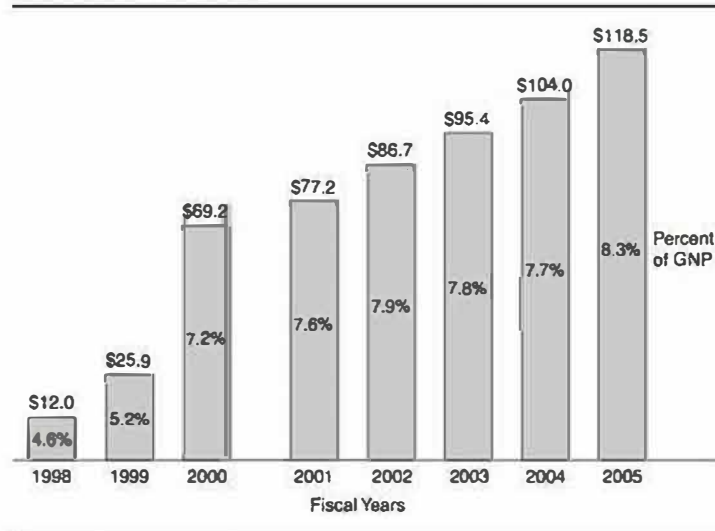
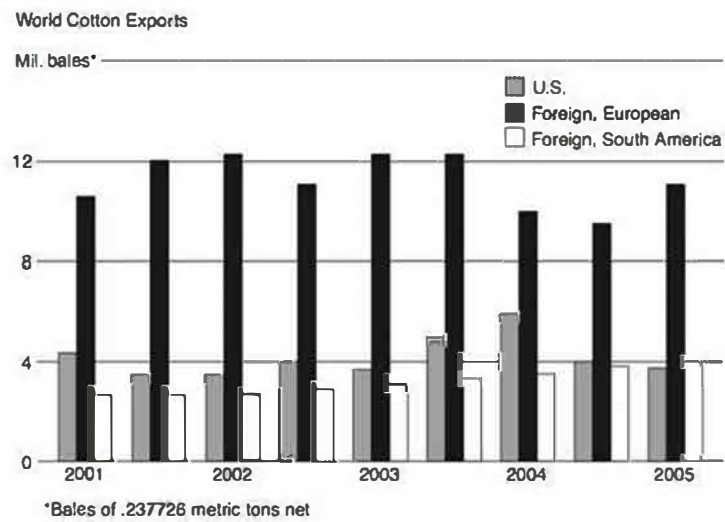
FIGURE 12-4 Bar Graph**FIGURE 12-5 Grouped Bar Graph**

FIGURE 12-6 Segmented Bar Graph

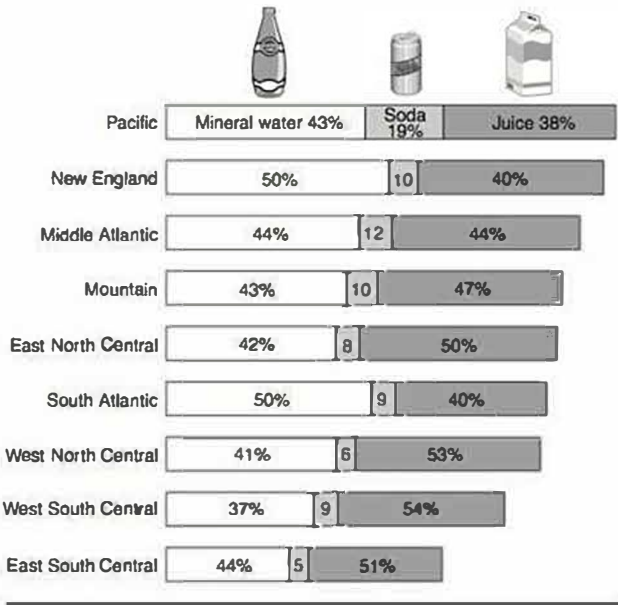


FIGURE 12-7 Line Bar Graph for Sixth-Month Periods

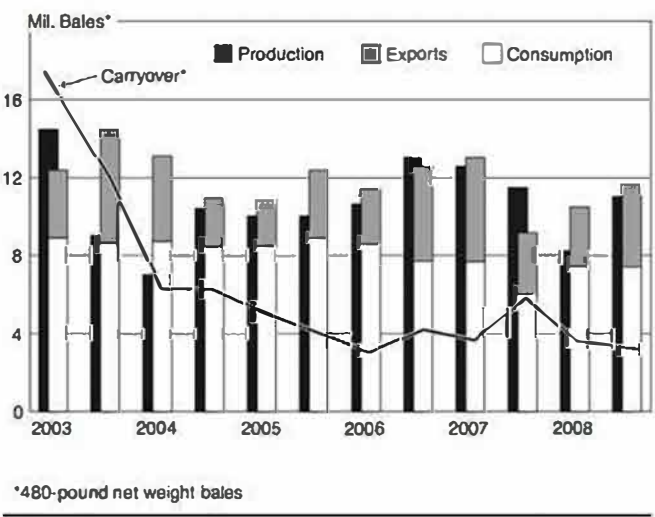


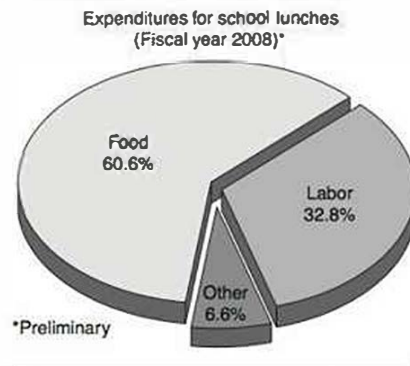
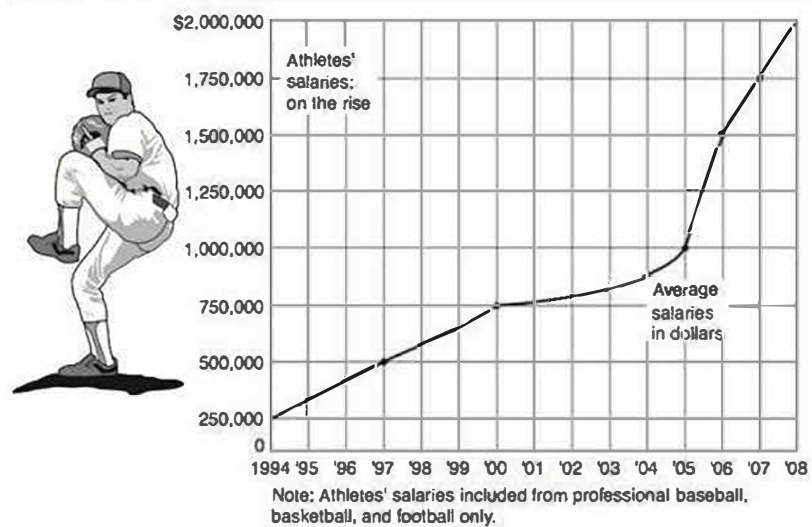
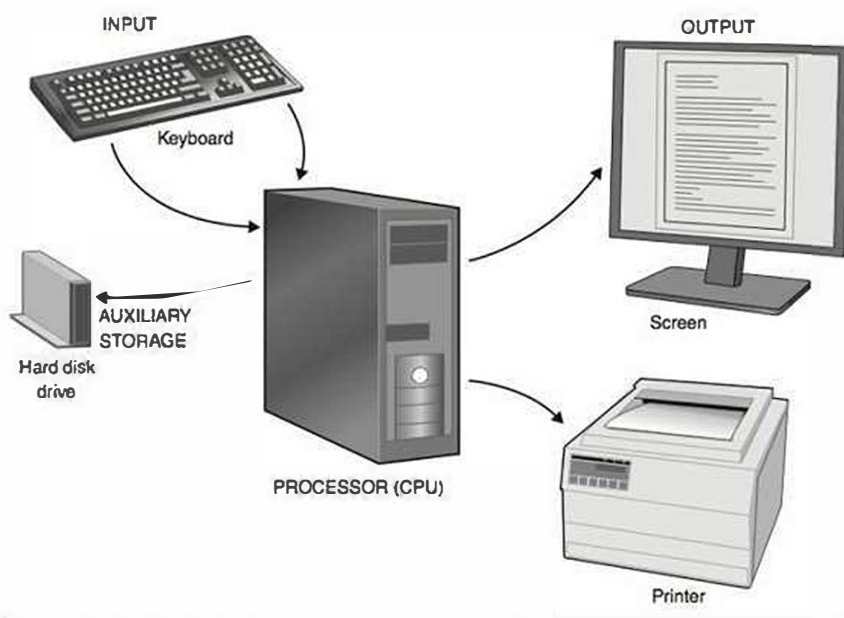
FIGURE 12-8 Pie Chart**FIGURE 12-9 Pictogram**

FIGURE 12-10 Flowchart

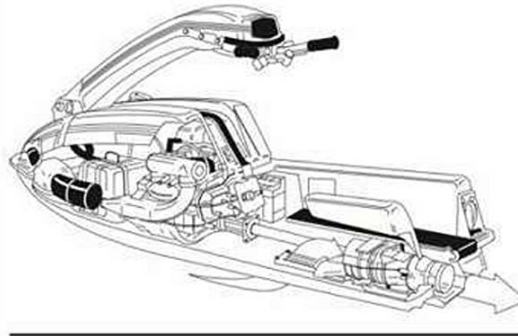
used to try to influence emotions and attitudes. Be careful not to let your creativity involved in a pictogram become your only objective. If so, it might distort or hide the central point of the statistics you want to show.

Flowchart

Flowcharts present a process or procedure (Figure 12-10). Examples include the steps involved in the procedure for applying to college or the stages of a chemical process. Each step should be labeled clearly and may be differentiated by shape to suggest different functions. Some scientific and technical fields use specific shapes for specific elements. If you are using flowcharts for scientific or technical audiences, find out and use the correct flowchart symbols.

Cutaway or Exploded Drawing

The cutaway or exploded drawing lets the viewer see into a structure to observe the relationships among its parts (Figure 12-11). Such representations are often used in product descriptions and technical discussions.

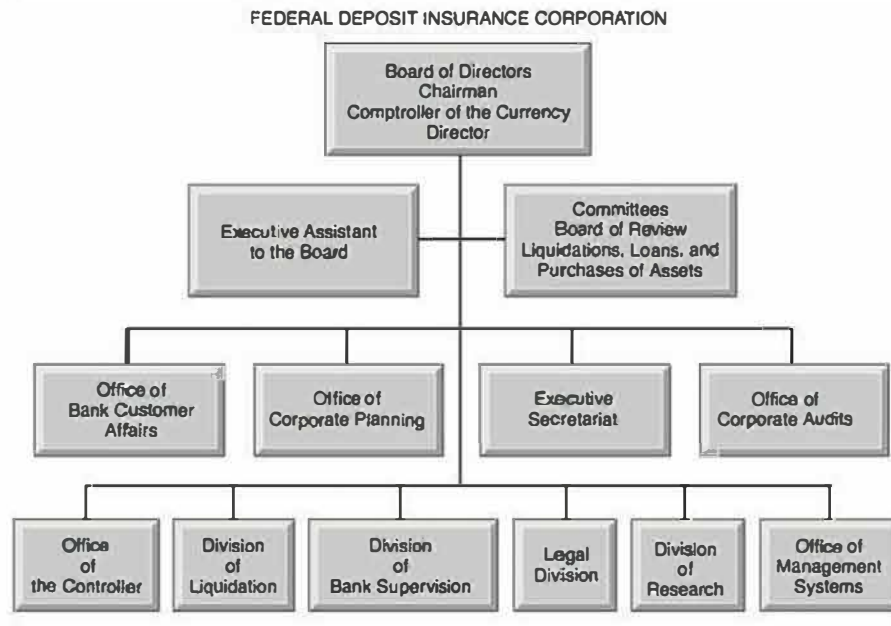
FIGURE 12-11 Cutaway

Time Chart

Time charts use bars or lines inside a work-time matrix, to show when jobs, tasks, or other activities begin and end (Figure 12-12). Used often in reports and proposals, the time chart serves as a work progress schedule for projects. Many businesses have special software that generates this type of chart, often referred to as “project management” software.

FIGURE 12-12 Time Chart

Activities	Time periods—week beginning							
	Jan. 14	Jan. 21	Jan. 28	Feb. 4	Feb. 11	Feb. 18	Feb. 25	Mar. 4
Review absentee files in personnel office	■							
Interview supervisors and operations personnel		■	■	■				
Collect data on absentee plans from professional journals and books				■	■	■		
Organize and evaluate the data						■	■	
Write the report							■	■
Type and proofread the report								■
Submit final report to personnel manager								■

FIGURE 12-13 Organizational Chart

Organizational Chart

Organizational charts are similar to flowcharts but represent hierarchies of relationships among people rather than processes or procedures (Figure 12-13). An organizational chart, for example, could show related functions or departments within a corporation.

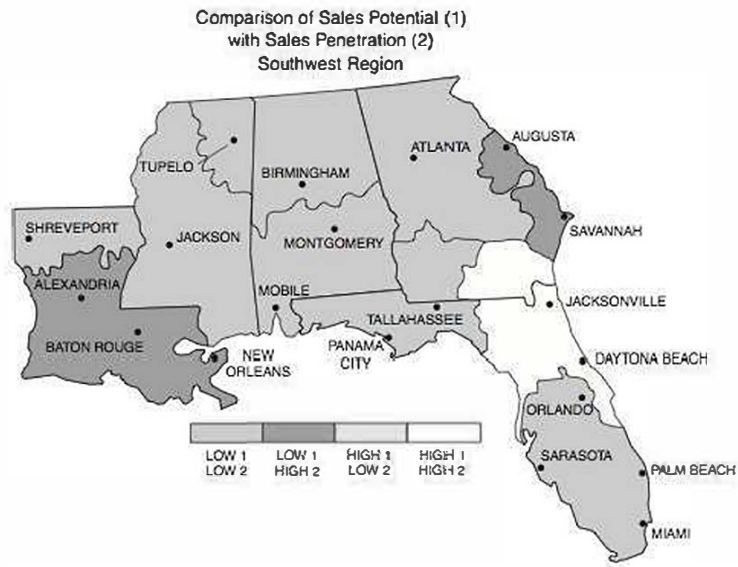
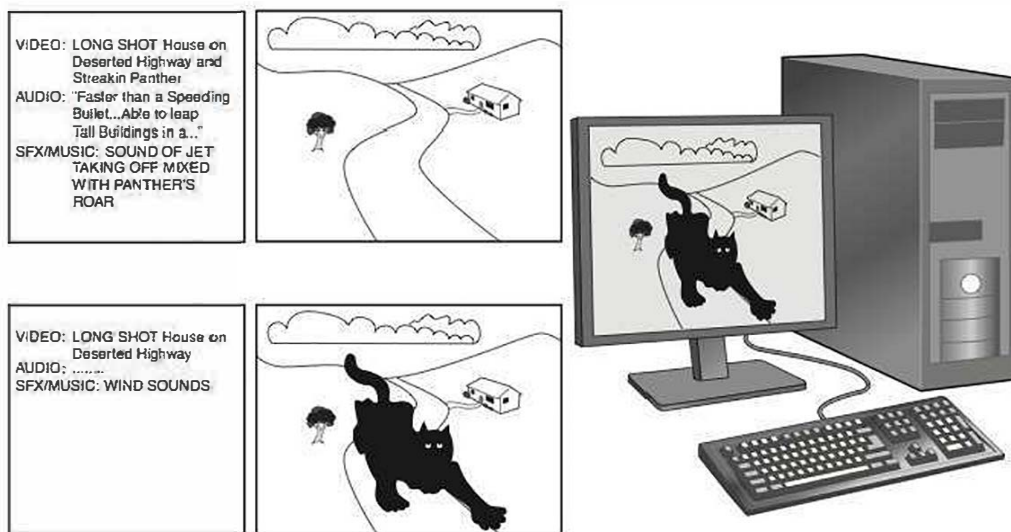
Map

Maps present geographical representation of data (Figure 12-14). Family incomes, for example, could be represented on a state-by-state or region-by-region basis using a United States map. Shading, coloring, or texturing can distinguish different regions on the map.

VISUAL AIDS FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Storyboard

Storyboards may be presented on cloth or on computer screens or other media. They allow the presenter to prepare in advance a series of words, shapes, and pictures that literally “tell the story” of the presentation as it unfolds (Figure 12-15). These words, shapes, and

FIGURE 12-14 Map**FIGURE 12-15 Storyboard**

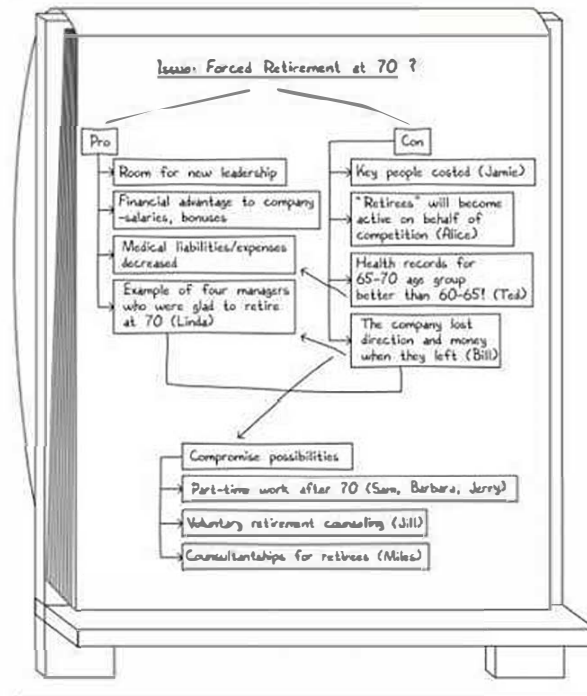
pictures can be put up, rearranged, or removed as the speaker makes his or her point. In addition, on the computer screen, the pre-prepared screens can be called up at the press of a key. Presentation software packages that allow storyboarding to be done easily are widely available, often also as computer-aided instruction software design packages.

Probably most familiar among such software products is PowerPoint, included within Microsoft's Office software package. PowerPoint gives the presenter the ability to format attractive screens, call up bullet points as needed (with sophisticated movement and "dissolve" features), include sounds in various forms, and integrate images and graphs. More extensive multimedia software products such as Adobe Director make it possible to include animated figures in the presentation and even some 3-D effects. Producers of popular presentation software packages recognize that users usually do not want to read an extensive manual in order to put together visual displays. Therefore, a variety of on-screen "wizards" and short-cut tutorials are included for ease of use.

Flipchart

Flipcharts are pads of large-sized paper mounted on a display stand (Figure 12-16). Pages can be prepared in advance, then *flipped* as the speaker goes from point to point. The

FIGURE 12-16 Flipchart



speaker can choose to create visual aids on the spot, using bold-stroke pens in a variety of colors. Sometimes, a speaker may extemporaneously (while speaking) highlight key items on a readymade flipchart.

A gallery of graphic aids appears on the following pages to show various ways of conveying ideas and statistics.

Physical Object

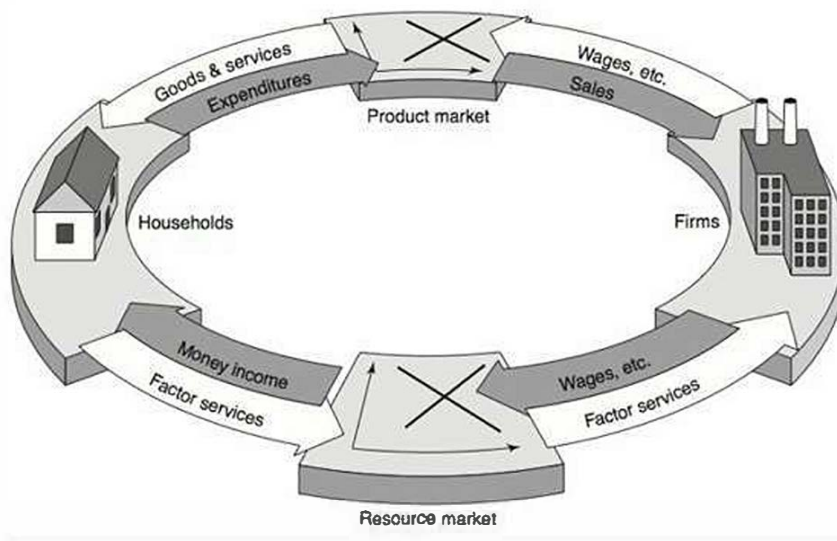
Physical objects can be held up and even passed among the audience. These serve presenters well in making ideas, descriptions, and functions concrete, particularly for product or component demonstrations or for “hands-on” workshops.

SUMMARY

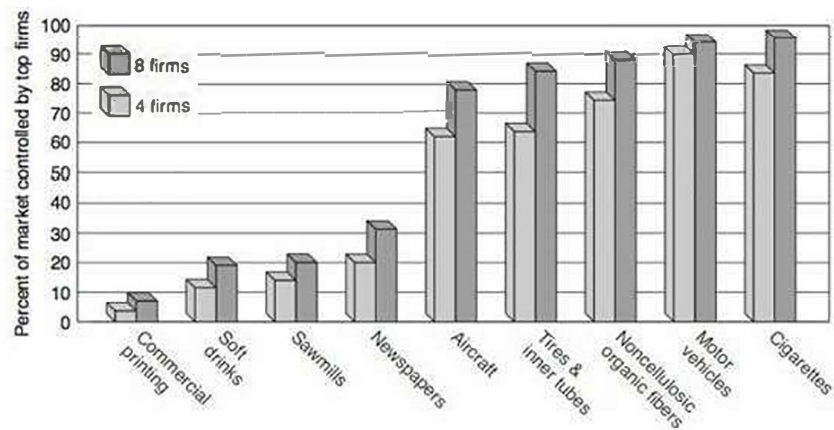
1. Computer graphics software allows nonartists to create professional-looking visual aids.
2. Visual aids can clarify, emphasize, simplify, and unify your points, as well as impress your audience.
3. Visual aids must be specifically introduced and identified in nearby text.
4. Those who create and use graphic aids should not attempt to deceive readers and audience members by using disproportionate, misaligned, or incomplete graphic aids.
5. Common graphic aids are photographs, line drawings, line graphs, bar graphs, pie charts, pictograms, flowcharts, organizational charts, time charts, maps, and cutaway drawings.
6. Common graphic aids used by oral presenters are storyboards, flipcharts, and physical objects.

Cases 12 and 13 in Appendix A are intended to accompany this chapter. Each case provides many opportunities for individual writing, group writing, individual speaking, and group speaking activities.

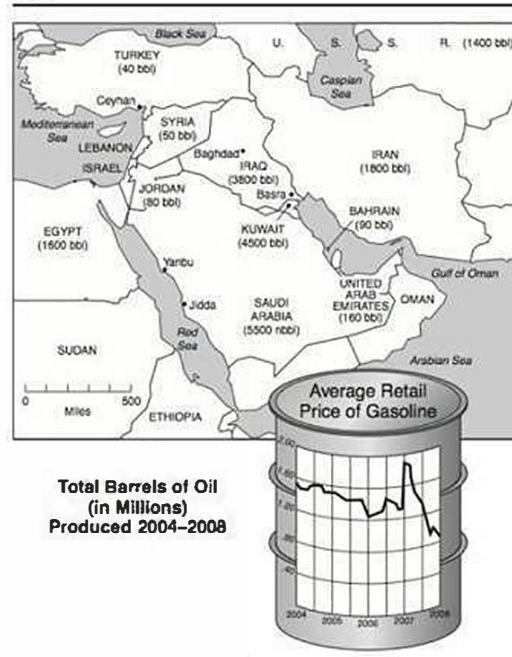
Flowchart



Grouped Bar Graph

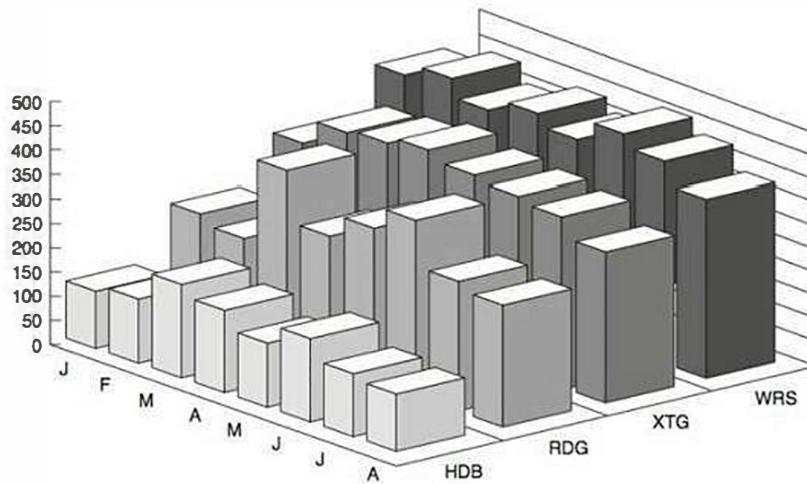


Map

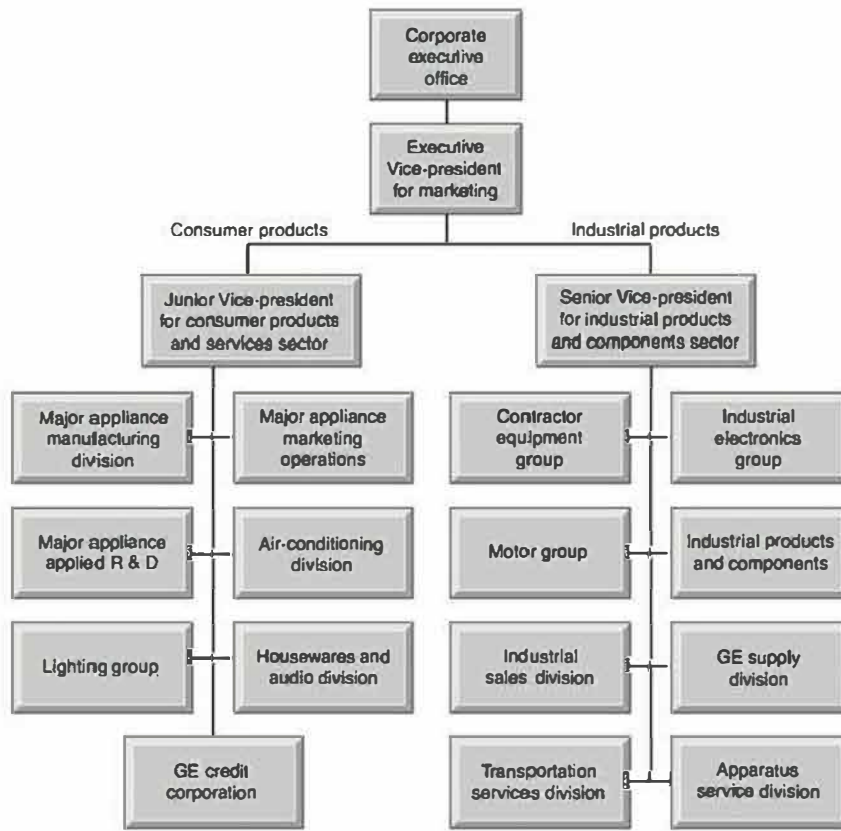


Bar Graph

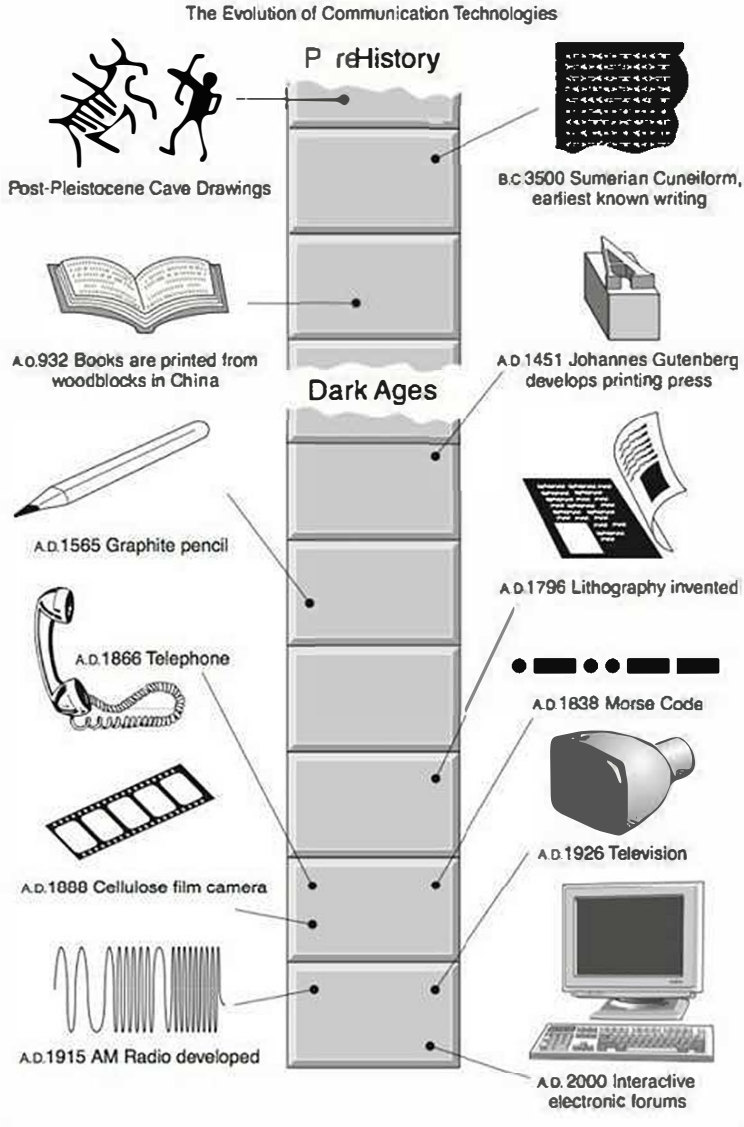
Relative Sales Projections



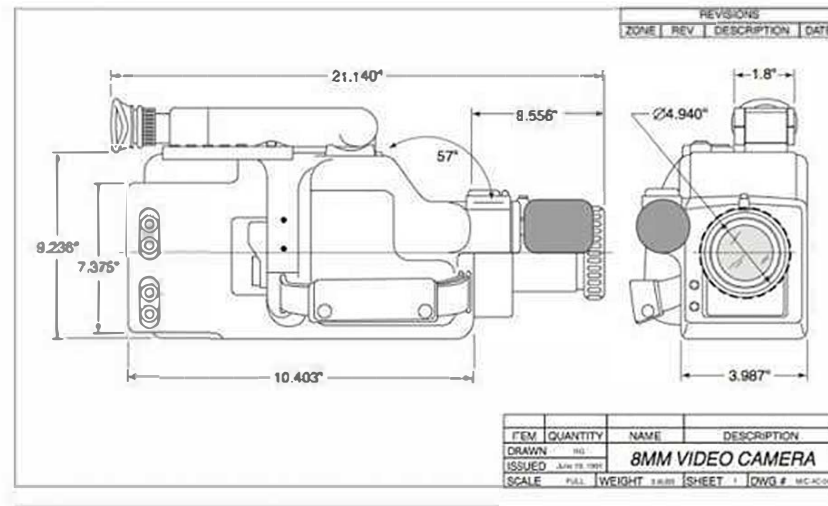
Organizational Chart



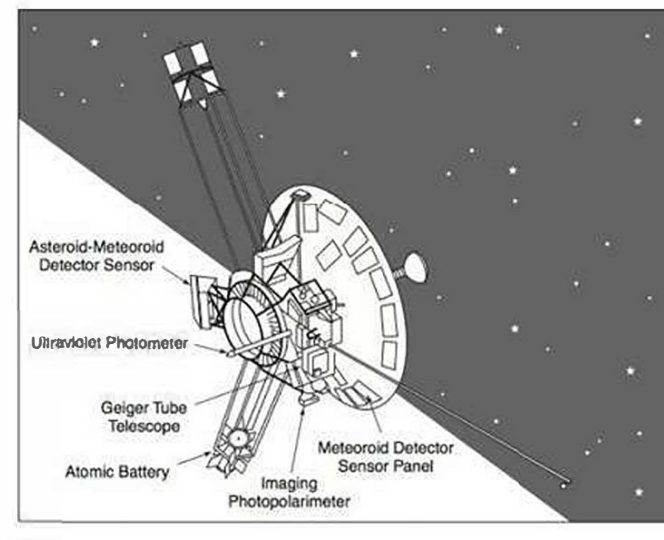
Time Chart



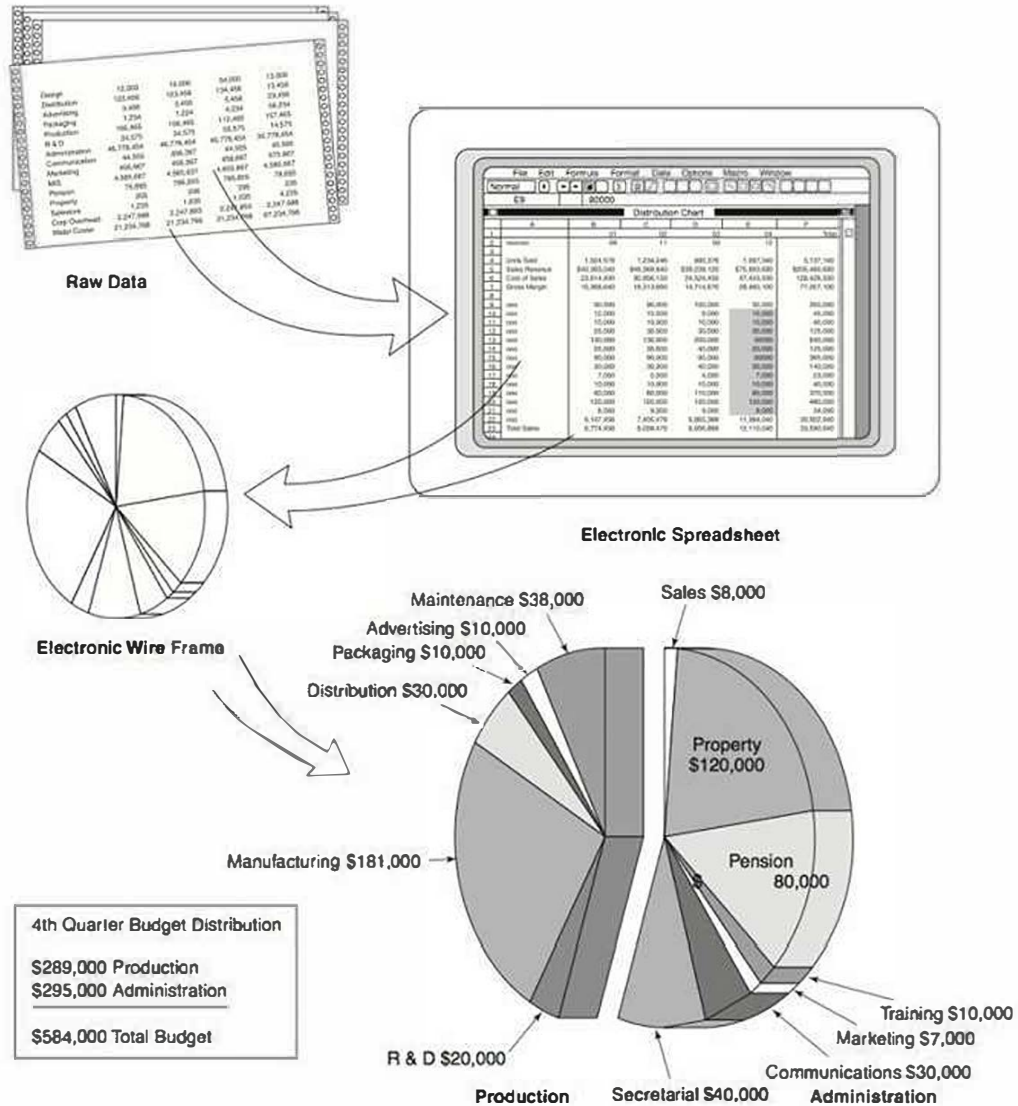
Line Drawing



Cutaway



Pie Chart Generated from Selected Data



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the relation between words and graphics in business documents. How do they support one another?
2. Why do readers like graphic enhancements in the form of photos, charts, graphs, pictograms, maps, and so forth? Explain in detail.
3. On what basis would you decide to use a bar chart instead of a line graph? Give an example.
4. Discuss common errors in using the following graphics:
Pic chart
Bar Chart
Line Graph
Pictogram
Map
5. Discuss the impact of computer software packages for generating graphics. How have such packages influenced the look of typical business documents?
6. Are graphics always appropriate? If not, discuss a situation in which words are more appropriate than graphics.
7. Discuss the placement of graphics on an 8½" by 11" page. What guidelines can you suggest? Explain the reasons for each guideline you mention.
8. How can even a low-budget office operation make use of graphics in its documents? Discuss.
9. In what ways can particular parts of a graphic be made to catch the reader's eye?

EXERCISES

1. Choose a short document (perhaps a letter or brochure) that has no visual aids. Create a visual aid, and retype or cut-and-paste the original document to place the graphic into the document with any additional words you require. Write a paragraph justifying your selection and handling of the visual aid you chose.
2. Visit a local computer store and learn about graphics packages for business use. Write a brief report of your findings, adding any literature you receive from the store.
3. Create a portfolio of at least eight different kinds of visual aids used in a business context. You may find such graphics in magazines such as *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *BusinessWeek*, and *Nation's Business*. Write one paragraph evaluating each item in your portfolio. Assess the success or failure of the graphic at hand.
4. Obtain a photograph and then include it in a business document at least one page in length. Take particular care to identify and introduce the photograph using the words that surround it on the page.

5. Assume that you want to graphically represent the income levels of various neighborhoods, areas, or towns in your region. (Unless your instructor specifies otherwise, you may make up statistics for the purpose of this exercise.) Show at least six different income groups by number, annual income, and any other distinguishing characteristics you wish to include. Choose three different visual aids by which to represent your statistics, and create each visual aid with pen and paper or a computer software package.
6. Photocopy a map of the United States. Use it to create a statistical map in which you point out regional differences in a category you've chosen. (You may, for example, show population differences for states or regions; education differences; age differences; and so forth.)
7. Create a flowchart showing the step-by-step progress of a process or procedure of your choice. Your chart should have at least eight distinct stages.
8. Create two transparencies for use in an in-class presentation. Write one or two paragraphs in which you explain what you are attempting to achieve in the transparencies. Deal particularly with your choice of words, shapes, and pictures, including their placement.
9. Investigate computer storyboard software. Write a brief report in which you discuss the uses of these programs for business presenters. Attach any literature you are able to get on the programs.
10. Find an example of distortion or deceptive emphasis in a graphic aid (perhaps from a magazine or newspaper). Photocopy the graphic, then write a memo explaining how the graphic distorts information and how it can be repaired for accuracy. Assume that one of the your employees created the graphic; address your memo to that person.
11. Decide what kind of graphic aid you would use to visually depict each of the following. Explain your choice for each.
 - a. The number of foreign cars sold in the United States each year, compared to domestic cars sold here
 - b. The average length of employment for employees in these salary categories: to \$20,000, to \$30,000, to \$40,000, to \$50,000, to \$60,000 and to \$70,000
 - c. The number of departments within your company and the number of employees in each department
 - d. The interrelation of parts in a new bicycle design
12. Select a graphic aid in a recent business news magazine. Study the relation of the graphic to the text of the surrounding article, including the sentences leading into the graphic and those leading away from it. Evaluate in writing how well the use of the graphic is coordinated with the article text.
13. Call to mind several graphic aids that you've seen used in your college classes. Which of those graphics was most effective? Why? Record your opinions in a written response.
14. Find a graphic aid that you consider too complicated for easy understanding. Show how the graphic can be simplified or divided into two or more graphics for clarity and effect.

WEB ASSIGNMENTS

Your small company is preparing to develop its first catalog for direct-mail sales. You know that the quality, placement, and quantity of graphic elements in this catalog will in large part determine its success. Unfortunately, no one in your company has much expertise in the development of effective graphics. Discover Internet resources that can guide your employees in their self-education on how, where, when, and why to use graphics in the upcoming catalog. Write a memo or prepare a brief presentation addressed to your employees. Describe which Internet sites you believe to be the most useful and why. Conclude with a specific action plan your employees can use to improve their skills in graphic design and placement.

Use a search engine to explore the many new "business graphics" software packages. Make a list of unique features for several of the packages you investigate. Discuss which of those features you would find useful in your business writing and why.

A PRACTICAL COMMUNICATION DILEMMA

The off-color joke or graphic. Last year your boss and the HR department cracked down on the distribution of jokes and other materials containing "four letter words." This enforcement of policy hasn't stopped several jokesters (two of them managers) from forwarding Internet humor, none of which is patently pornographic but much of which is objectionable in that it mocks people on the basis of political opinions, attitudes toward immigration, retirement age, body type, and other issues. You have to admit that some of the humor you receive is funny—but at the same time you're uncomfortable having it arrive in your e-mail (and being unable to delete it permanently). You don't pass it on, but you know that many of your co-workers do. Since you're not the manager of your division, you have no direct authority to stop the proliferation of marginally offensive Internet "humor" in the office. Describe your feelings about this issue and your decision-making. Will you contact anyone? Will you allow these materials to continue to record (permanently) on your hard-drive? Do you have an obligation to do anything at all?

SITUATIONAL COMMUNICATION EXERCISE FOR PART III**The Nottingham Twins in the Fascinating World of Fast Food**

Bill and Mickey Nottingham, identical twins, each went to work as counter clerks in fast-food restaurants immediately after graduating from high school. Bill worked for Choice Chicken and Mickey worked for Bright Horizons Hamburgers. After two weeks on the job, the novelty of taking customer orders and serving lukewarm fastfood had worn off for Bill, who confided as follows to Mickey:

Bill: "Man, I'm already sick of my job. I'm getting \$8.50 an hour, which isn't bad, but I don't know if I can hang in there another two months just to get a 50-cent an hour raise. And after that I have to work another

six months before my pay goes up another 50 cents. What a drag. By the way, what kind of raises are they giving you at Bright Horizons Hamburger?"

Mickey smiled. "Well, I'm getting \$8.25 an hour right now, and there aren't any scheduled raises the first year, but it's still basically a good deal. If I get through my 30-day probation period without any complaints, I automatically go into the management training program. They teach you everything you need to know to be a manager, and those guys do really well in the pay department."

Bill: "So how long is this program?"

Mickey: "I don't know exactly. Four or five months, maybe."

Bill: "And you get paid more when you're in the management training program?"

Mickey: "No, I told you: you're in it for the chance to be a manager. I'm not kidding, those guys get a big salary with benefits, and they do practically zero work. It's a good opportunity."

Bill: "They give you a guarantee that they will make you a manager?"

Mickey: "Heck, no, there aren't any guarantees in life. But both the manager and the assistant manager where I work came up through the management training program. The manager drives a Corvette."

Bill: "So everyone who works there is going to be a manager someday?"

Mickey: "No way. I basically work with a bunch of losers. It isn't hard to stand out."

Consider the type and content of communication made likely by these circumstances:

- What will Choice Chicken attempt to communicate to their entry-level employees? By what means? Will a larger raise be sufficient? If so, how large?
 - What will Bright Horizons Hamburger attempt to communicate to their entry-level employees? By what means? What will keep Mickey motivated?
 - What communication breakdowns could occur? What would be the result of such breakdowns?
 - What ethical concerns do you have regarding the two companies' ways of motivating their entry-level employees?
-

PART FOUR

**CAREER
COMMUNICATION**

MEET A MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATOR



Harriet L. Lipson

Harriet is a Senior Partner of Lipson & Co., an international, retained executive search firm, which has been servicing the executive needs of entertainment, emerging technology and consumer packaged goods clients since 1985.

"I joined Lipson & Co. after a successful career in consumer advertising. I worked for several multinational agencies including Ogilvy & Mather and Young & Rubicam, overseeing the communications programs for global clients including Johnson & Johnson, Mattel and Microsoft."

"Effective communication, in addition to the ability to grasp a client's business quickly, is the hallmark of a skilled Management Supervisor in the advertising industry, and happily, has served me equally well since transitioning into executive search."

Headquartered in Los Angeles, with a satellite office in San Francisco, Lipson & Co. has completed senior level searches for Fortune 500 and start-ups alike. For more than two decades, Lipson & Co. has recruited CEO's, Presidents, Marketing/Sales/Business Development and Financial executives for clients including Disney, Microsoft, Turner Broadcasting, Cartoon Network, Sony Pictures Television International, Bandai America, Scholastic Corp., HBO, iPerceptions, New Motion and Zingy, among others.

"Regardless of the economy," Harriet points out, "the best people are typically not looking for new jobs. The challenge I face every day is successfully communicating a client's opportunity to busy executives who are not sitting around thinking about a career move. It is essential that I am well-prepared, listen actively and convey key information in a compelling, concise and relevant manner. You seldom get a second chance up at bat. Effective communication is really the price of entry."

Harriet is a native of Montreal and graduated from McGill University. She was hand-picked to participate in Ogilvy & Mather's Global Leadership Training Program and served on the Board of Directors of Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation. Harriet relocated to Southern California in 1984 and to the Bay Area in 2008. For more information on Lipson & Co., you can visit their corporate website, www.lipsonco.com.

The Career Search, Résumés, and Follow-Up Communications

The art of communication is the language of leadership.

James Humes, *American director and producer*

The first decade of the new century promises to be an ideal period for finding the right job. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that 21 million new jobs will be filled during this decade. Two-thirds of all new job applicants will be women. The members of the “baby-bust” generation, that relatively small group of college graduates from the one- and two-child homes of the 1960s and 1970s, are likely to be hired in large numbers. However, even when there are many career opportunities, you’ll still have to know how to find the job and the company that are right for you. Also, you may have to work hard to find the job you want, and you’ll definitely have to write well in order to get it. Your first step is to find the job you want.

FINDING THE JOB

Your training, interests, and abilities determine the general field of your job search. However, because jobs and job descriptions often change, you may not know exactly what job you want to get. The very process of job hunting may help you to decide on a career. A finance major, of course, rarely strays into a career as a surgeon. Still, finance majors often do find themselves in a wide variety of interesting jobs that they might not have expected to have. Look at the help-wanted ads, and try to find as many different kinds of jobs that you might qualify for. Broaden your horizons.

Keeping Track of Your Job Leads

Create a systematic way of keeping track of your job search. For example, you might keep a file of 3" × 5" cards modeled after the card shown in Figure 13-1. Use this file to prevent

FIGURE 13-1 Record Card for Job Search

Position _____	Date _____
Company _____	
Address _____	
Phone _____	
Contact name _____	
Action taken _____	(date) _____
Response received _____	(date) _____
Notes: _____	

yourself from accidentally applying to the same place twice or making other embarrassing mistakes. You may, at any one time, have as many as 50 résumés circulating in the professional world. A file keeps your many fishing lines from becoming tangled.

You may want to use your computer to store your job-lead information. Several recordkeeping software programs allow you to store names, addresses, and comments for each of your job leads. Most word-processing programs, spreadsheet programs, or database programs could be adapted for this purpose. Contact a college computer center or a local computer store for recommendations. Once you have set up a system, consider various job sources.

Tips and Introductions from Friends

Personal referrals (that is, someone you know who might know someone who has a job opening) continue to work magic for job seekers. Managers who have no time at all for interviewing might find a few minutes to see you because “Frank” or “Sue” called to say how bright you were. The brief interview later turns into a job offer. One way to get these contacts is to let every one of your friends and acquaintances know that you are looking for a job. Speak freely about the broad range of your interests. Ask friends and acquaintances to let you know if they hear of an opening or of someone who is resigning or retiring from a job in your field.

Some job seekers have personal business cards printed up for this purpose. While friends may have your phone number and address, the large number of casual acquaintances in your life may not. If they have your card, they can let you know when a job possibility arises.

Career Opportunities with Former Employers

Review career opportunities in companies for whom you have worked part-time or during the summer. Even if your temporary or part-time job wasn’t in your career field, don’t overlook the career possibilities at that company. Many companies take pride in bringing someone along from the bottom of the ladder. Your experience even in the most mundane company responsibility may give you an important step up over the competition when it

comes time for selecting management trainees. The company knows you, and you know the company.

Internet job sites can be extremely useful ways to locate jobs, get job-seeking tips, and post your résumé for review by potential employers. But don't rely on these sources alone in your job search. Research each site thoroughly by looking through the site with care and check on blogs and consumer sites to learn about the experience of others with the site. Pay particular attention to the limits of your privacy in placing your résumé with the site. To whom will they release your information? Can you withdraw your résumé and personal information from the site if you aren't satisfied with their service? What additional charges or fees will come due as you use the services of the site?

The following on-line job sites are actively serving jobseekers and employers as this book goes to press. (Like many web sites, on-line job companies often blink out of existence without notice.) Please note that the following list is alphabetical, without prioritization of any kind or recommendation. The authors have verified that these sites exist, but do not vouch for or guarantee in any way the services they offer. Again, check out any on-line job service thoroughly before doing business with it, especially where information as personal and private as your résumé is concerned.

www.afrotc/careers	www.hrsjobs.com
www.alljobsearch.com	www.indeed.com
www.bls/oco	www.international-job-search.com
www.careerbuilder.com	www.job.com
www.careermag.com	www.jobbankinfo.org
www.careeronestop.com	www.jobbankusa.com
www.careeroverview.com	www.jobbi.com
www.careerpath.com	www.jobcentral.com
www.careerplanner.com	www.jobfinderelite.com
www.careers.yahoo.com	www.jobfox.com
www.charitychannel.com	www.job-hunt.org
www.chimby.com	www.job-opportunities.ws
www.chronicle.com	www.jobsearchtech.about.com
www.collegeboard.com/html/careerbrowser.html	www.jobsonline.net
www.collegegrad.com	www.jobspro.ca
www.computerwork.com	www.jobstar.org
www.disaboom.com	www.jobster.com
www.ebaycareers.com	www.jobvolume.com
www.employment911.com	www.jobweb.com
www.employmentguide.com	www.jsearch.com
www.energyjobsearch.com	www.languagejobs.com
www.execu-search.com	www.liveCareer.com
www.federaljobsearch.com	www.mapping-your-future.org
www.flipdog.com	www.mycarcersearch.com
www.fortcfoundation.com	www.monster.com
www.freeresumetemplate.net	www.nationjob.com
www.hotjobs.com	www.nelsonjobs.com
www.hotjobs.yahoo.com	www.openlist.com
	www.petersons/cca/search.asp

www.projectCareer.com
www.quintcareers.com
www.recruiteronline.com
www.rileyguide.com
www.sciencecareers.com
www.self-directed-search.com
www.simplyhired.com

www.snagajob.com
www.thebeehive.org
www.thejobspider.com
www.theladders.com
www.truecareers.com
www.womensjoblist.com

Visit Personnel Offices

Stop by the personnel office of companies that interest you. Ask about job openings, and pick up application packets. Personnel officers do not mind seeing you as an uninvited visitor as long as you do not press them for what they cannot provide: instant evaluations of your chances for a job, definitive lists of what positions are available in the company, or a willingness to interview you.

You visit the personnel office of a company simply to express your interest in any openings they have and to pick up any materials they routinely give away to interested job seekers. Of course, you could also do this by mail, with less effort. However, that's just the point: by visiting for just a moment or two in person, you show more effort than the average job seeker. Secretaries in the office and perhaps even the personnel director see your face, shake your hand. Later, when your résumé arrives for review, they might remember you.

While visiting the personnel office, find out (and jot down the exact spelling) of the personnel director's name, or any other company official to whom you plan to write your letter. Record these names in your file. Mail that is addressed to a named person usually gets opened and read by that person. Mail that is addressed to a title or office (Personnel Director or Personnel Office) often is opened and read by a secretary.

You also have an additional reason to go to the personnel office personally: you might just get lucky and show up just when they need you. Many job seekers have literally walked into a job on their first visit to a personnel office. If the company's personnel office is within driving range of your home, stop by. The crucial key, again, is not to ask for too much.

College Placement

Make use of nearby college placement services. Participate in any workshops in interviewing skills, résumé preparation, and application procedures they may offer. Companies seeking new employees in your area work closely with the campus placement office. They often send representatives to your campus to interview prospective employees. Sign up for such interviews.

Find out whether the college department in your field maintains a file of help-wanted notices from business and industry. Departments such as marketing, finance, accounting, and management frequently receive invitations from local companies to send graduates for interviews. These notices sometimes are posted on bulletin boards for you to see, but often they are filed, and you'll have to ask about them.

Every year, *The College Placement Annual* lists more than 1,000 employers who are seeking entry-level employees. For many of these companies, the annual contains specific job descriptions, salary ranges, and information on company projects and policies. Your local or college library or placement office will have the latest edition; if not, the annual can be purchased at major bookstores in the early spring of each year.

Using Ads

Advertisements are another helpful source of information regarding what jobs may be available in your field or in your community. In general, these ads fall into one of three categories:

1. Help wanted ads (usually in newspapers or other periodicals, such as magazines)
2. Job wanted ads
3. Public agency listings

Newspaper and Magazine Help-Wanted Ads

These advertisements can be read by anyone, but you have to be able to understand a few things they don't say in order to use them effectively. Essentially, there are three kinds of help wanted ads:

- Company ads
- Agency ads
- Blind ads

Company Ads. The most common ads are *company advertisements*, in which the name and address of the company are clearly stated, sometimes accompanied by a contact name ("Ms. Barker") for those interested in making application.

COMPANY AD

LANGSFORD MEDICAL CO., INC., an industry leader in hospital and doctor supply, seeks an Inventory Analyst. Experience in computer inventory systems required, with medical knowledge helpful. Salary commensurate with experience. Top benefits, potential advancement. Apply to Box 4563, Willowborough, New Hampshire 39574

Agency Ads. Also common are *agency ads* placed by private employment agencies that receive percentages of the salaries of employees for whom they get jobs. Agency ads typically describe positions more glamorously than company ads: "Outstanding opportunity . . . unlimited potential . . . truly exceptional benefits package." They are much more like regular commercial ads. Often they aren't offering a job as much as they're trying to sell you the agency's services. Only answer agency ads if you know exactly what you're buying.

AGENCY AD

READY TO TAKE CHARGE?
Great opportunity for motivated person with sales background to head up regional commission sales group. Salary plus bonus incentives. Some travel. Call Gil Branch, 592-3942. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Blind Ads. You'll also see *blind ads*, some placed by the country's best corporations and some placed by fly-by-night liars and con artists. A typical blind ad does not specify a company, a location, or an agency.

BLIND AD #1

National company seeks reliable management trainees for expansion territory in Sun Belt. Knowledge of mass marketing techniques essential, college degree optional depending on experience. Send résumé to Drawer 92, *Los Angeles Times*.

Very reputable companies sometimes run blind ads for a number of good reasons. For example, they might not want their present employees to know that they're planning to hire supervisory staff from the "outside." The company may not want its competitors to know about their plans or their personnel. Perhaps the company is protecting its public image by not showing that it needs qualified personnel immediately. Hospitals, for example, often run blind ads when they seek nurses, administrators, and support personnel.

On the other hand, a blind ad can be used to snare unwary job seekers. Just how realistic do you suppose that blind ad #2 is?

BLIND AD #2

Don't read on unless you're determined to make at least \$60,000 this year, and twice that amount next year. We're seeking men and women who fit in socially, who present themselves well, who like to set and meet their own goals. We provide full training. Write to Box 523, *New York Times*, for an appointment with Mr. Blackley.

If you checked into it, you would discover (after investing time and energy) that the ad was placed by Mr. Blackley himself, who—virtually out of a briefcase—runs a business he calls "Psychonetics." He meets you in the lounge of a fancy hotel and starts giving you his pitch. (He doesn't invite you to his office because he doesn't have one.) For \$2,500, he'll let you in on the ground floor of the greatest thing since sliced bread. "Psychonetics" teaches professional people to unleash their hidden psychic strengths, thereby mastering those around them. Your job? To offer "Psychonetics" franchises to others, on a commission basis. Mr. Blackley estimates that you could easily make \$60,000 your first year.

Beware of blind ads. If you answer them, judge your first contact (whether a letter or phone call) with the advertiser with care. At the first sign of being asked to make "an investment" or "buy your samples" or otherwise spend your money to get a job, you may want to run in the other direction. Go back to your primary goal: finding a satisfying career.

Job-Wanted Ads

Some job seekers place ads on their own in such business publications as the *Wall Street Journal*, *Business Week*, and large urban newspapers. Although these ads are usually quite expensive, they occasionally bring worthwhile responses. Look over such ads in business newspapers and trade journals. Before advertising yourself, you may want to

call one of the advertisers to ask whether they got the responses they wanted for their money.

Public Agency Ads

Public agencies (usually listed under *employment* in the white or yellow pages of your phone directory) provide free job listings. Often these offer temporary or day-labor positions. Don't ignore these altogether. If you can get a job lead from any source, take it.

WRITING YOUR APPLICATION LETTER AND RÉSUMÉ

Once you find the job you want, you'll have to take the time to write effectively to get the job. In fact, in questioning more than 20 chief executive officers of major corporations about their own writing attitudes and experiences, we asked "Do you recall a particular writing task that changed the course of your career?"

A few recalled particular letters, reports, and proposals that had marked career turning points, but most named the writing they did when trying to get a new job. For example, here are three typical responses:

I spent a whole day composing a bright, direct letter to accompany my résumé. That letter, along with good luck, started me on my way.

The time and effort I spent on my résumé probably made the single largest contribution to my initial career opportunities.

Believe it or not, the most important piece of writing I did at the beginning of my career was two paragraphs long: the brief essay I had to write as part of my job application. I took time to do it right and received praise—and a job—from those who interviewed me.

Like these executives, you may find that career communications are the most important business writing you'll ever do. It is no accident that so many aspects of searching for and applying for a job require you to write well. Once you have the job, you will be expected to write well in order to succeed in the company. Further, what you write will have the company's letterhead on it. What you write as a company employee will represent not only your image but also your company's image.

Naturally, a company that hires you wants to make sure that you know how to present a professional and competent image through your writing. Therefore, almost every company asks new job applicants to submit résumés and letters as part of the job-seeking process. In essence, the résumés and applications letters you send to prospective job-offering companies are sales letters—you are selling both your job skills and your writing abilities. The company that hires you is buying both.

The Application Letter

The personnel directors of Fortune 500 companies strongly prefer that people who want to apply for jobs should do so in writing before they try to get telephone or face-to-face interviews. That preference makes sense. Without looking at your résumé, they can't

really tell you anything. Whatever they say before they see your written application may have to be taken back, once your record lies open.

Begin the application process, therefore, not with a telephone call but with an application letter accompanied by a résumé.

Letters of application, like other business letters, are printed out on 8½" by 11" white or off-white bond paper. Don't use colorful stationery. When your materials are photocopied by the company, such stationery does not reproduce well.

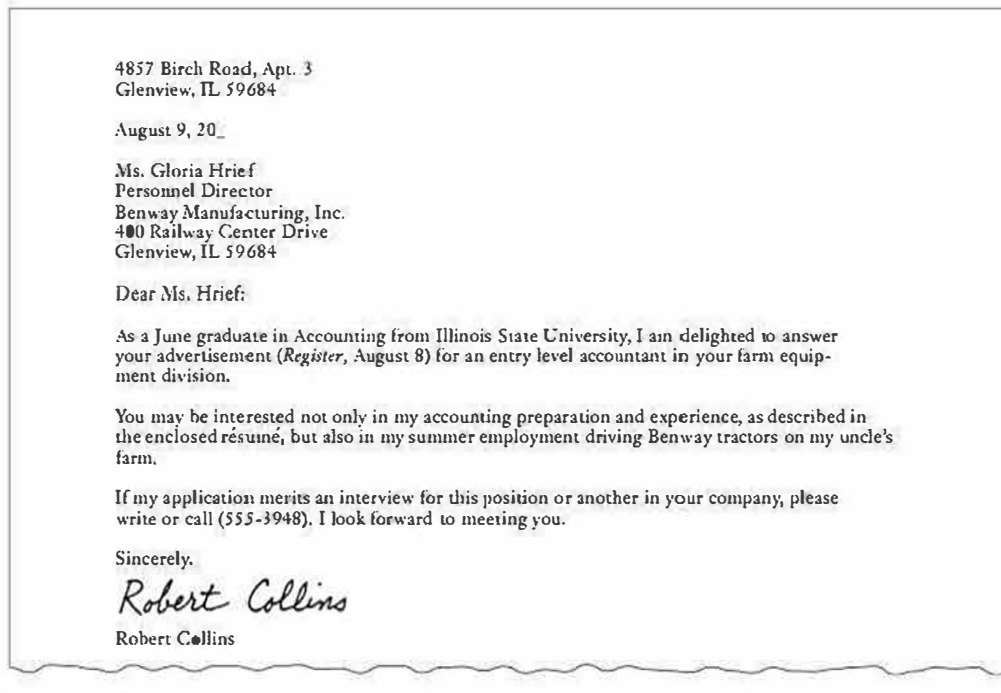
The Invited Application Letter

An *invited* application letter (one that responds to a company advertisement or other offering of a job opening) opens by making reference to the position described in the ad and where the ad was seen. See the letter in Figure 13-2, for example.

Note that the letter of application typically has three parts:

1. Clear response to a clear invitation. The invitation is mentioned, in case the company has several job openings advertised in various places.

FIGURE 13-2 Invited Letter of Application



2. Reference to the attached résumé, with a highlight or two pointed out in a polite way.
3. Appeal for an interview, with contact address and phone number.

Communication Insights

Does the business world care about the level of your writing skills? Listen to Paul Dillingham, former vice-president of the Coca-Cola Company:

In today's complex society, the ability to communicate effectively is essential. I am appalled at the number of graduates coming out of our universities in recent years who cannot compose a simple, readable letter. I recently saw an application for employment by a college graduate who neglected to answer a number of important questions on the form. Surely he will have difficulty finding a job.

Application letters, according to personnel directors, should be short and to the point. The reader is eager to get on to the résumé where your story will be told in close detail.

The Uninvited Application Letter

An *uninvited* letter of application requires a more creative opening. You are writing, after all, to a company official who has not told you that a job is even open. You begin, therefore, by breaking the ice, as shown in the letter in Figure 13-3.

The uninvited application letter moves immediately to the "you" perspective—something in the first sentence that interests or involves the reader. That you are seeking a job and you work hard is not particularly interesting to the reader who has not even asked you to apply for a job.

The following are some ways of beginning with the "you" perspective:

- Mention a common name, such as someone who may have put you in contact with the reader.
- Mention common professional interests or products.
- Mention developments in the company that you have observed, either from your reading or from your experience with company products or services.
- Express appreciation for the moment or two of the reader's time necessary to consider your qualifications.

The letter of application can demonstrate to the reader that you are a polite, literate, and persuasive person. The letter should not try to outdo or redo the résumé itself by rehearsing a number of work experiences or accomplishments. Select one or two of your most impressive or interesting achievements, and weave them smoothly into the course of the application letter so as not to appear to brag.

In the final paragraph of the uninvited letter of application, consider leaving the door open for something less than a job interview. If a company has no openings at the moment, the manager may still wish to make your acquaintance with an eye toward future openings. Make it clear that you would enjoy meeting even though there may be no openings right now.

FIGURE 13-3 Uninvited Letter of Application



The Résumé

The most important guidelines for the job-application process can be summed up as follows:

1. Use a cover letter of application
2. Keep your résumé to one or two pages if possible.
3. Eliminate typos and other mistakes.
4. Use "at-a-glance" appeal to attract attention to your résumé.
5. Match the style of your résumé to the job and the company you want.
6. Highlight the major categories of the résumé.
7. Choose the form of the résumé that fits you best.

8. Tailor the résumé to the job you're trying to get.
9. Use your résumé to highlight your best features for the job you want.

Use a Cover Letter of Application

If you mail your résumé, always cover it with a letter of application. A letter of application helps to provide the friendly opening that a handshake might provide in a face-to-face meeting. The preceding section described the other benefits of a cover letter of application. If you e-mail your résumé as an attachment, write a brief message containing the same points as a cover letter.

One or Two Pages Are Best

Keep your résumé limited to one or two pages. You want to highlight your best features in order to get an interview. Don't bore the reader with details that you can give in your interview.

Eliminate Typos and Other Mistakes

Don't permit any typos or other mistakes to appear in your résumé. Recently, the head of a writing and editorial service received an application from a college graduate asking for work as an assistant. In the résumé describing her experience and her abilities, she included a spelling error. Needless to say, she was not even interviewed for the position.

Writing mistakes may not be quite that crucial to the job you seek. However, because your résumé is supposed to show you at your best, the people who look at your résumé might think, "If this person makes mistakes on the résumé, just imagine how many mistakes will be made on the job! I don't want this person on my payroll."

If at all possible, use a word processing program so that you won't have to retype your résumé each time you notice a mistake or need to make changes. Ask a friend or someone whose opinion you value to proofread your résumé before you let prospective employers see it.

Use "At-a-Glance" Appeal

Attract your readers' attention to your résumé at first glance. Look at the résumé formats in Figure 13-4. Both clearly emphasize categories of information with subordinated details.

Here are some techniques used to create résumés with at-a-glance appeal:

- Make headings parallel in meaning also parallel on the page.
- Surround important headings with white space.
- Allow the eye to read separate sections of print, not large dense blocks of type.
- Use capitals only on one or two words at a time for special emphasis.
- Use lines and small graphic symbols (bullets, asterisks, dashes) to unify and organize the résumé.

FIGURE 13-4 Two Résumé Formats

NAME	NAME
ADDRESS	ADDRESS
TELEPHONE	TELEPHONE
CAREER OBJECTIVE	CAREER OBJECTIVE
EDUCATION	EDUCATION
EMPLOYMENT	EMPLOYMENT
ACTIVITIES	ACTIVITIES
REFERENCES	(or other category)

Match Your Style to Your Job

If you are applying for a business position, use a business style. Don't try to attract attention by being overly creative. Most personnel directors prefer an attractive but traditional résumé to a flashy one. This is particularly true for traditional kinds of businesses or jobs, such as finances-related jobs and managerial positions. It may be less so for jobs in advertising or other industries in which creativity would be valued. If you aren't sure how important creativity is in getting a particular job, go with a traditional résumé.

Highlight Crucial Elements

On a résumé, the four crucial elements to highlight are (1) name and address, (2) career objective, (3) education, and (4) employment experience. Even if you include other elements, make sure that these four can be seen quickly at a glance.

A special note about your telephone: if you are regularly away from your phone during business hours and have no answering machine or service, identify two numbers at the top of the résumé—your home number, e-mail address, and a message number where the employer can be sure to reach someone during business hours. Probably thousands of job offers are lost each year because employers (who hate to write letters) have no luck reaching job applicants by telephone.

Choose the Form that Fits You Best

You have two choices: the chronological résumé and the functional résumé. As explained in the following pages, the chronological résumé (see Figure 13-5) organizes your experience according to years. If you have quite a bit of education but not a great deal of work experience, the chronological résumé allows you to highlight your academic work.

The functional résumé (see Figure 13-6) suits those who have proven their abilities through years of professional activity. It groups work experiences under two to four (seldom more) major abilities you have demonstrated over the years.

Tailor Your Résumé to the Job

Not all companies are alike, and not all jobs are alike. Make sure that the details of your résumé are finely tuned to match the particular job you're trying to get. If at all possible, match your skills and experience to the specific company to which you're applying.

For example, suppose that you're applying for two bookkeeping positions. One of them is in a huge Fortune 500 corporation, and the other is in a small nonprofit agency. In the résumé for the big company, highlight how well your experience and skills fit into a large department of fellow bookkeepers. In the other résumé, highlight the ways in which you'd take initiative to single-handedly tackle all bookkeeping tasks that might come your way.

TWENTY RÉSUMÉ ERRORS THAT CAN KILL A JOB APPLICATION

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Typographical errors and misspellings | 12. Failure to attach a cover letter identifying the job for which you are applying |
| 2. Punctuation and usage errors | 13. Outlandish experiments in font, format, and other appearance aspects of the résumé |
| 3. Difficult-to-read formats | 14. Unnecessarily stiff or jargonized language |
| 4. Disorganized information | 15. Unfamiliar terms, acronyms, and abbreviations |
| 5. The presence of information that by law, the company cannot consider in its hiring decisions (e.g., your religion or race) | 16. Vague information about degrees received or anticipated, jobs held, and other important data |
| 6. Omission of necessary names, dates, and other information | 17. Failure to tailor résumé information for a specific job and company |
| 7. Misstatement or exaggeration of your college and work record | 18. Poor photocopying or other form of duplication |
| 8. Inadequate contact information for your references | 19. Unwarranted focus on extraneous information (such as some high school sports activities and club memberships) |
| 9. Too little résumé data to create a favorable impression | 20. Unnecessary addition to your résumé of other documents and support materials not requested by the company |
| 10. Too much résumé data, with the result that important features of your record become obscured | |
| 11. Outdated references that can't be contacted at the addresses you provide | |
-

FIGURE 13-5 Chronological Résumé**Rachel Evans**

7614 Traverse Drive
 Hartford, CT 0287
 Home: (312) 555-2784; Message: (312) 555-6784
 revans@host.net

CAREER OBJECTIVE	To join McCoy/Adams Advertising as an entry-level accounts representative; with experience and training, I want to progress to a supervisory role in creative projects.						
EDUCATION	B.A. in Marketing University of Washington Degree expected June, 2009 Pertinent Coursework <table> <tr> <td>Professional Selling</td><td>Retail Economics</td></tr> <tr> <td>Marketing Management</td><td>Advertising Strategies</td></tr> <tr> <td>International Marketing</td><td>Management Communication</td></tr> </table> G.P.A. 3.5 on 4-point scale Awards and Scholarships Laketon Art Scholarship, 2004 University of Washington Marketing Award, 2005 Future Educational Plans After completing my B.A., I plan to enroll in an M.B.A. program during nonwork hours. I am now enrolled in a B.A. program at the University of Washington.	Professional Selling	Retail Economics	Marketing Management	Advertising Strategies	International Marketing	Management Communication
Professional Selling	Retail Economics						
Marketing Management	Advertising Strategies						
International Marketing	Management Communication						
EMPLOYMENT	2005 Field representative, Rent-a-Treasure Art, Inc., Hartford, Connecticut (part-time) Responsibilities: Call on upscale corporate clients; rent, deliver, hang art in their offices; especially enjoy providing decorating advice 2006 Store clerk, Computer Village, Hartford, Connecticut Responsibilities: Demonstrate products and closed sales on home computers 2008 Designer, painter of super-graphics, Weston Playhouse, Hartford, Connecticut (summer) Responsibilities: designed and painted eight wall-sized panels						
REFERENCES	Furnished upon request						

FIGURE 13-6 Functional Résumé**CHARLES OWENS**

200 Wilson Dr.
 Los Gatos, CA 90432
 Home: (515) 555-1234 Message: (515) 555-6789
 c Owens@host.net

CAREER OBJECTIVE

To join the Business Publications group at Metropolitan; after experience as a writer, to work into an editorial position.

EDUCATION

M.A. in English, Southern Methodist University, 2008
 B.A. in Finance, Lester College, 2006
 A.A. Sage Community College, Bridgeton, Texas, 2003

DEMONSTRATED ABILITIESAbility to write well

Instructor, Business Writing, Southern Methodist University, 2008-to present. Taught business memo, letter, proposal, and report writing.

Member, Association for Business Communication.

Ability to edit publications

Assistant editor, *Neighbors* (Texas lifestyles), 2005-2006

Editor, *News and Views* (campus newspaper), Lester College, 2005

Knowledge of the insurance business

Office manager, Allstate Insurance, Bridgeton, Texas, 2001-2003. Supervised six sales people. Served as area manager for the sales region.

Insurance sales representative, Allstate Insurance, Bridgeton, Texas, 2000-2001. Sold auto, life, and fire policies; handled client claims.

References will be furnished upon request.

When tailoring your résumé in this way, word processing comes to the rescue. With your résumé stored on disk, you can tailor it to suit quite different employers. In stating your career objective, for example, notice how you can appeal to a conservative corporate audience through more general language, yet customize your résumé also for less formal environments through personalized language:

GENERAL ABSTRACT
VERSION

CAREER OBJECTIVE:

Restaurant management, with eventual progress into corporate responsibilities

PERSONALIZED
VERSION

CAREER OBJECTIVE:

Begin as a management trainee in Auntie's Kitchen chain, and progress with experience to Franchise Representative

Businesses, like people, love to see their own names and interests in print. Satisfy that need by personalizing your résumé in any way possible.

Create your Résumé to Highlight Your Best Qualities

Your résumé should select those qualities that represent you at your highest potential—what you plan to be—instead of trying to state all the details of what you have been.

Consider leaving out such extraneous matters as these:

- A brief job that has little to do with your application
- Personal facts that don't concern your employer
- Insignificant responsibilities listed under particular jobs
- College affiliations, memberships, societies, and sports teams that go beyond making the point that you are a social, likable, and active person

We can now examine the two most useful résumés in close detail.

The Chronological Résumé

Place your name at the top of the résumé, followed by your mailing address and telephone number. Note that your name is usually centered for eye-catching emphasis (Figure 12-5).

Stating Your Career Objective

In a prominent heading, write, "Career Objective" or "Career Goal." If you want to state more than one goal, write "Goals" or "Objectives."

You may want to state a two-part objective that shows you are realistic about an entry-level position, but you also want to grow professionally.

CAREER OBJECTIVE:

Beginning as a salesperson, I want to progress with experience to supervisory work on a regional level.

CAREER OBJECTIVE:

In the short term, client portfolio analysis, evaluation, and recommendation; in the long term, management of a pension fund trust

By such "short-term, long-term" statements, you have the best of both worlds. As much as possible, personalize the career objective of the résumé on each résumé you send out.

CAREER OBJECTIVE:

To begin in Henderson and Schmidt's Accounting division; with experience and further education, to supervise tax analysis and planning for major corporate clients.

CAREER OBJECTIVE:

To learn Northwest Bank's operations in the management training program; later, to work in a supervisory capacity in Northwest Bank's real estate loan sector.

If you cannot obtain specific information about the titles and hierarchies of job positions within a company, write more general objectives.

CAREER OBJECTIVE:

To work in cash flow management and economic analysis, with growing managerial responsibility

Describing Your Education

Begin by listing your most recent degree or certificate or highest level of education, then list other degrees and significant academic work.

B.A. in Economics, University of Pennsylvania, 2008

A.A., Windsor College, 2006

Certificates of Participation in two National Science

Foundation Summer Seminars:

"Solar Energy Alternatives," University of California
at Davis, 2007

"Geothermal Resources and Their Applications," Harvard
University, 2006

You may choose to group information pertaining to one degree beneath that degree before moving on. Mention special competencies or accomplishments.

B.A. in Economics, University of Pennsylvania, 2008

Senior thesis: "A Comparative Analysis of Coin-vs.

Ticket-System Mass Transit Programs"

Don't get bogged down in details, though. Highlight the things that make you perfect for *this* job in *this* company.

If you have a good grade-point average (G.P.A.), mention it on your résumé. If you worked while getting your good grades, mention it. That impresses some employers.

Listing Awards and Scholarships

List any awards and scholarships you received. Place those items first that will be most meaningful and impressive to your reader. If you won a scholarship to college at the end of your high school years, you can list the scholarship by name and date.

Awards and Scholarships

Outstanding First-Year Student, School of Business, 2008

Chevron Scholarships, 2006-2008

Dean's List, 2005-2008

Rotary Club Tuition Award, 2004

Mentioning Future Educational Plans

This category is optional on your résumé, but you should consider its advantages. Your employer may be even more interested in your future than in your past. If you plan to acquire a new business skill, master another language, or work toward advanced degrees, why not say so?

Future Education Plans

I have begun taking courses at night toward my M.B.A. at Occidental College.

Be careful, however, not to give your potential employer the wrong impression that you're going to quit soon to return to college.

Describing Your Employment History

Begin by listing your most recent work experience, then previous jobs. When your job had a title (such as "night manager"), use it. If your job had no title, feel free to name the job within the bounds of truth (a recreation job might be titled "Swimming Instructor," but not "Nautical Locomotion Consultant"). Title this section, "Employment," or "Employment Experience," "Work Experience," "Employment Background," or "Experience."

EMPLOYMENT

2005–to present	Accounting Intern, Bliss and Wethers, Accountants, Boulder, Colorado (Jan.–May, part-time)
2004	Night Manager, Cleaver Restaurant
2003	Assembly Line Supervisor, Jay-Ray Cosmetics
2001	Assembly Line Worker, Jay-Ray Cosmetics

If your employment has been steady year by year, emphasize the dates by placing them first, as shown in Figure 13–5. If, on the other hand, you have had long employment gaps, give the dates less emphasis by placing them after the job listing.

EMPLOYMENT

Accounting Intern, Bliss and Wethers, Accountants,
Boulder, Colorado, Jan.–May, 2007–to present. (part-time)
Night Manager, Cleaver Restaurant, 2006

You do not have to account for each and every month of your employed life on such a list. Employers, too, want to get to the heart of the matter: what *significant* experiences have you had?

If you have had virtually no paid work experience at all, list volunteer experiences related to business concerns. You can rename the Employment category as Experience. Perhaps you have helped to manage the financial affairs of a club at school or a church organization.

Under no circumstances should you simply skip the employment section of your résumé. Employers will look for this category, even if it has only one work item listed under it.

Job titles alone often fail to give a clear picture of your employment background. You can use the subcategory, “Responsibilities,” to list significant aspects of the job.

EMPLOYMENT

Accounting Intern, Bliss and Wethers, Accountants, Boulder,
Colorado, Jan.–May, 2007 (part-time)

Responsibilities: worked under the supervision
of a senior accountant in preparing
evaluations and audits; particularly
enjoyed participating in the writing of
financial analyses

Night Manager, Cleaver Restaurant, 2006

Responsibilities: supervised staff of nine;
managed cash and ordering of provisions;
participated in hiring interviews

In listing your responsibilities (not “duties”), choose active verbs: *supervised*, *oversaw*, *managed*, *headed*, *assisted*, *helped*, and so forth. To give your job a spark of life, occasionally tell how you *felt* about what you did.

enjoyed meeting clients (or) liked preparing press releases

Take care not to overstate the responsibilities of past positions. Remember that you are writing for a streetwise business audience not likely to be easily fooled. They don’t expect you to have the corporate background of a CEO.

Providing Information on Activities and Interests

Because of federal and state legislation on guidelines for hiring, most companies do not want you to place information on your résumé that they cannot legally consider in evaluating your application for employment. For this reason, omit pictures and references to your age, marital status, number of children or family plans, religious and political affiliations, and other personal information.

You may nevertheless indicate that you are a well-rounded person by the list of activities you cite. Record here any professional or industry associations (particularly leadership positions), volunteer work, civic involvement, and student government roles.

If space allows, consider writing out your personal information in *full sentences*. In a résumé otherwise composed of short, staccato phrases, the practice of writing out personal comments and facts can add a touch of sincerity and warmth to the page.

The Activities portion of the résumé is optional. The information it contains often appears under different category names such as Personal Background or Personal Information.

Listing References

You can simply state that “References will be furnished upon request.” If you have room, though, and your references sound impressive, you might want to list three or four references as follows:

Dr. Alfred Williams
Chief of Internal Medicine
Central Union Hospital
88 Jensen Street
Topeka, KS 70589
(385) 555-6859
awilliams@host.net

Note that the reference is identified by name, position, address, e-mail, and telephone number. It is wise (and polite) to ask—not inform—your references if you intend to include their names on your résumé. You thereby provide time for them to call your qualities and accomplishments to mind well before the phone rings. By asking references in advance for permission to include their names, you also give them a chance to politely decline your request.

The Functional Résumé

Unlike the chronological résumé, which tends to emphasize your education and potential, the functional résumé emphasizes what you’ve proven you can do.

The functional résumé, too, opens with your name, and address, and telephone number positioned in an eye-catching way. The *career objective* and *education* portions are handled in the same way as in the chronological résumé.

However, in writing the employment section of the résumé, prepare for major changes. Instead of listing your jobs one by one in chronological order, decide what major abilities you have developed and proven in those positions. Let those abilities, stated as brief phrases, serve as categories under which you can place individual job experiences.

As shown in Figure 13–6, you need not keep such job experiences in chronological order. Put your most impressive jobs first, and your least impressive jobs last within a category. Let the emphasis fall on the job title and description of responsibility, rather than on the dates you held the job (though dates should always be specified).

Many employers favor the functional résumé, especially for experienced applicants, because the document gets right to the key issue: What can this applicant do? Note that those abilities, when stated in the “demonstrated abilities” or “major strengths” section, can be nouns—“Supervision,” “Planning”—or verb phrases—“Supervise employees effectively,” “Plan for task completion,” or “Organize shipping procedures.”

Once you have written your résumé, you can begin planning how to prepare multiple copies for distribution to prospective employers. See Figure 13–7 for an additional sample résumé.

FIGURE 13-7 Sample Résumé

Robert C. Ortega

Present Address:
405 Wisconsin Ave
Washington, DC 20016
(202) 555-1234
rcortega@host.net

Permanent Address:
24 Lincoln Dr.
Mason, NJ 08057
(619) 555-5678

Education:
Georgetown University
B.S. Marketing & International Management
G.P.A. in Majors 3.4

Washington, DC
May 2008

Experience:
Marketing Research Assistant
Georgetown University Marketing Department

Washington, DC
Present

Operate PLMS Program for Global Strategy database; supplement publications with research examples; create file of current global strategies.

Research Associate
Georgetown SBA Ethics Project

Washington, DC
Summer 2007

Reviewed curriculum; interviewed professors; researched ethical issues in marketing, accounting, business law, and management science; wrote report to Dean and Board of Directors.

Assistant Area Coordinator
G.U. Office of Summer Housing

Washington, DC
Summer 2006

Supervised staff of 30; created weekly and daily maintenance schedules to provide hospitality services for a 300-room dormitory.

Court Aide
Superior Court of Burlington County

Mt. Holly, NJ
Summers 2004

Directed records retention program; coordinated Bar Paneling program; managed courtroom preparation and communication, pooled juries, and supervised evidence. Recognized for excellent service by County Bar Association and County Clerk's Office.

Leadership Experience:
DELTA SIGMA PI, International Business Fraternity,
• 2006–2008 Vice President Chapter Operations;
• 2007 Chancellor; 2003 Historian.

Honors & Awards:
• Georgetown SBA Invitational Leadership Retreat, 2007
• Varsity Letterman, Georgetown Varsity Track.
• LEAD participant, Darden Graduate School of Business, UVA, 2006

References available upon request.

FOLLOW-UP COMMUNICATIONS: BEFORE AN INTERVIEW

Successful salespeople know the wisdom of the “fourth-call rule”: The sale is usually made on the fourth call or later, not the first. Your success in selling your services to an employer may well depend on follow-up communications—those calls, visits, and letters that politely remind an employer how much you want the job.

Marketing graduate Phyllis Riley recalls:

I saw firsthand why follow-up communications are vital. During my senior year, I worked as an intern for a major advertising firm in New York. Résumés came in every day from job-seekers and were barely glanced at by management before being filed away. The people who eventually got jobs were those who took the time to make contact often, either by calling or by writing.

Let’s say that you mailed out your résumé and cover letter last week. The phone hasn’t rung, and the mailbox is empty. What do you do?

There is no precise number of days or weeks after which you should inquire about an unanswered application. Use your own judgment, being careful not to appear rude or impatient. Companies often appreciate your polite inquiries as a sign that you’re actively interested in the job.

Follow-up Letters

The follow-up letter is a traditional business letter in which you do the following:

- Politely remind your reader of *when* you mailed your résumé. Mention any correspondence you have received from the company since that date.
- Repeat your willingness to be considered for a position, and name it. Ask your reader to let you know whether your application is still being actively reviewed.
- Conclude by expressing appreciation to your reader for his or her efforts on your behalf.

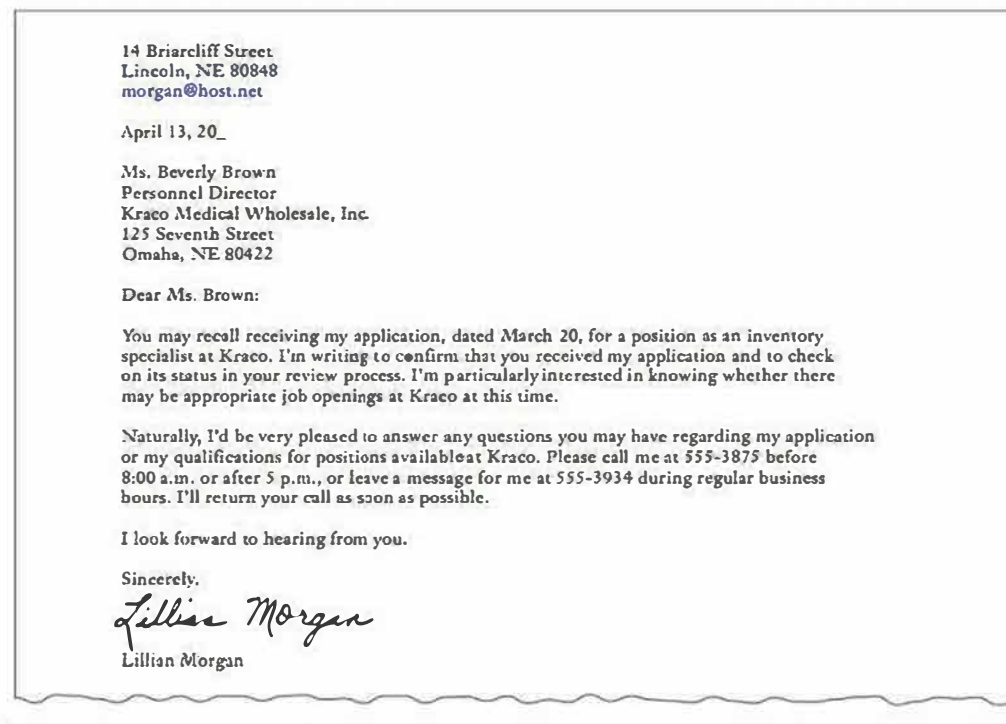
The letter in Figure 13–8 shows an example of follow-up letter.

Sooner or later, your first response will come from your career application. You rip open the envelope to discover one of three words: *yes*, we’ll interview you; *no*, but good luck; or, *maybe* we can find a position for you.

If the answer to your job search is: “Yes, we’ll interview you,” write a letter of response by return mail. If the employer’s letter directs you to, also notify the company by telephone.

Accepting an Invitation to Interview

Write a brief business letter to the person who invited you to visit the company for an interview. Repeat the time and date of the interview, and indicate your pleasure at the

FIGURE 13-8 Follow-up Letter. Same Text for E-mail.

invitation. Offer to bring additional application materials (letters of recommendation, transcripts, college projects, and so forth) with you.

Conclude by thanking your company hosts for the opportunity to pursue your application. Express your eagerness to visit with them. Figure 13-9 shows an example of an acceptance letter.

Responding to “No”

If the answer you receive is “no, but good luck,” you may want to write a “thank-you-and-I’m-still-interested” letter. Express your appreciation for their attention to your application. If appropriate, mention briefly that you felt understandable disappointment at their decision. Express your willingness to be considered for future openings. Ask that your application be kept in an active file. Conclude with thanks and your suggestion that your paths may cross again soon.

THE JOB INTERVIEW

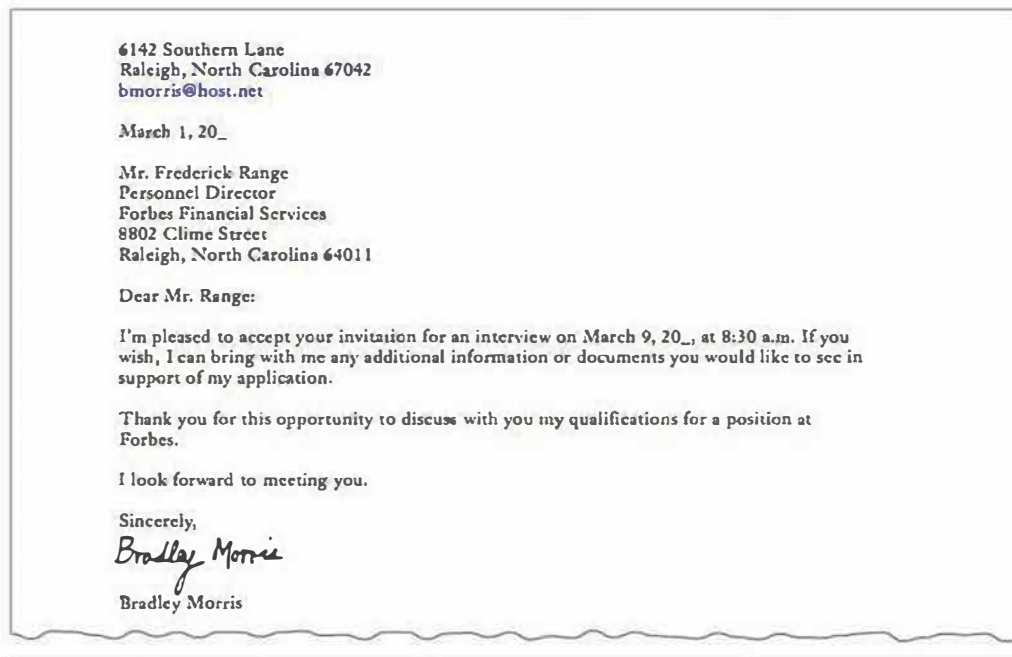
Your résumé, application letter, and followup contacts may eventually open the door to job interviews, which can take place on company premises, at conventions, or elsewhere. The job interview provides an opportunity for both the company and the candidate to get to know more about one another than can be found on the printed information of the company brochure and the applicant's résumé.

Preparing for the Job Interview

You will probably have at least a few days notice before your interview. Use that time to learn as much as possible about the company—its products, locations, workforce, clientele, management, and current developments. Your local or college librarian can help you locate sources such as these for your investigation:

The National Job Bank (Boston: Adams, 2004) [This book lists employers by state, with specific company information and types of positions.]

FIGURE 13-9 Letter Accepting an Invitation to Interview. *Same Text for E-mail.*



The company index in the *Wall Street Journal* [This index may guide you to recent articles about company developments.]

Peterson's Guide to Business and Management Jobs (New York: Peterson's Guide, pub. annually)

In addition to learning about the company, try to contact people who may know about the culture (social patterns and style) of the company and its current needs. These people may include friends or associates who have interviewed with the company or who are now working for the company. Perhaps you can speak with someone in the same industry who knows about the company's reputation and its prospects.

Practice does improve your interviewing skills. If you can, try to arrange some mock-interview sessions, with constructive criticism. You can also set up informal interview practice sessions with friends. After 15 minutes or so of questions, analyze your performance as an "applicant," according to the checklist shown in Figure 13-10, or one of your own design.

The Purposes of an Interview

In an initial job interview, the company wants to see how you handle yourself, especially with words. What can you do to succeed?

- Dress appropriately
- Establish a friendly rapport by your natural smile and comfortable eye contact.
- Be ready to carry the conversation for a moment or two after the first question. Don't answer the interviewer with curt yes/no answers. To prepare for interview openers, consider these typical questions.

Well, Barbara, tell us a little about yourself.

Why in the world did you decide to major in accounting?

FIGURE 13-10 Interview Checklist

-
- ☐ Were answers clear and direct?
 - ☐ Was the pace effective—not too fast or too slow?
 - ☐ Was the volume appropriate—not too loud or too soft?
 - ☐ Was choice of words fitting—not too fancy or too unprofessional?
 - ☐ Were pronunciation and enunciation correct?
 - ☐ Did the applicant understand the questions?
 - ☐ Did the applicant make sense?
 - ☐ Did the applicant provide details and examples?
 - ☐ Did applicant have a good grasp of subject area?
 - ☐ Was the applicant comfortable to be with?
 - ☐ Did the applicant try to relate to each member of the interview group?
 - ☐ Did the applicant demonstrate a sense of humor?
 - ☐ Did the applicant demonstrate maturity in handling difficult or sensitive questions?
 - ☐ Did the applicant make good eye contact?
 - ☐ Did the applicant use face, hand, and body language effectively?
 - ☐ Did the applicant avoid disruptive mannerisms?
 - ☐ Did the applicant appear well groomed and suitably dressed?
-

Why would you like to work here?

You've probably considered a number of careers. Tell us about some of them.

By answering such interview openers in a comfortable, direct way, you establish your confidence to handle any question or comment that comes. Concentrate on speaking clearly and personably.

Interview Situations

We usually think of job interviews as taking place in the personnel office of the company doing the hiring. However, you probably will actually find yourself in at least two of the following three common situations for a job interview:

1. Off-site interviews
2. On-site personnel interviews
3. Supervisory interviews

The first interview situation mentioned here might also be the first interview situation in which you find yourself.

Off-site Interviews

Many companies send representatives to job fairs, industry conventions, and college campuses to accomplish three goals:

1. To give the company exposure among the prospective employees
2. To maintain mutually supportive relationships within the industry or with the university and its faculty
3. To develop lists of prospective employees who might later be asked for on-site interviews with the company.

In some cases, the representative interviewing you off-site will be, in fact, an employee who has little to say or do about hiring decisions. Therefore, you should just relax and do your best in an off-site interview. You are not talking to the chairman of the board. The representative probably cannot offer you a position on the spot. Therefore, look at the representative as a human being, not a judge. Try to imagine his or her day, filled with interviews. Speak comfortably and sincerely.

On-site Interviews

In some instances, your résumé or your off-site interview will earn you an invitation from the company for an on-site visit. At that time, if you haven't already done so, you will be asked to fill out an application for employment. One or more personnel officers usually conduct your first interview. Be prepared to move quickly into a smooth, comfortable conversation, even if the first question is a doozy ("What did you think of our building as you drove up?") Try to avoid one-word answers.

At the on-site interview, expect to talk briefly about your specific field of training. Interviewers commonly get to this topic by asking one of the following questions:

- What aspect of your education and experience seems particularly valuable to you?
- Did you have a special area of interest?
- What one experience seemed of greatest practical value to you?
- What can you tell us about your educational preparation for this job?
- Well, what's going on in [your present college or company] these days?

What if, in the process of answering a question, you make an obvious mistake? Without making much ado over nothing, simply note your mistake and repair it:

When I studied macrosystems interacting spontaneously to factors, well, involving . . .
Let me say this more clearly: I studied the way major markets responded to international inflation.

Your interviewer will be grateful for your clarification and impressed that you could catch and repair a problem so gracefully.

Be prepared at both off-site and on-site interviews to show interest in the affairs of the company. Your librarian can guide you to such publications as *Standard and Poor's* and *ValueLine*, each summarizing the size, product or service line, and financial stability of the company.

Your questions and comments about the company are often invited by these kinds of questions:

- Do you have any questions for us?
- You've seen our operation today. Any questions?
- What's your opinion of our office arrangement here?
- What would you still like to know about the company?

Try not to just grin sheepishly and shyly answer, "Well, nothing, really." Also, don't stall for time by awkwardly asking, "Would you please repeat the question?" Prepare in advance some interesting questions about the company:

- Where is the company headed in the next five years?
- Is a new product line or service now under development?
- What are typical paths of advancement within the company?
- What are typical travel requirements for this position?
- What subsidiaries does the company own?
- What training programs are available to new employees?

Do *not* broach sensitive or self-serving questions such as:

- How many sick days can I take per month?
- How soon do I get a raise?

Conclude the interview by thanking the interviewer and, if appropriate, shake hands. Don't prolong this final moment or make it awkward by last-minute parting shots: "By the way, I forgot to ask whether . . ."

When you return home, write a thank-you letter to the interviewers, as shown in Figure 13-11, described in the next major section of this chapter.

Supervisory Interviews

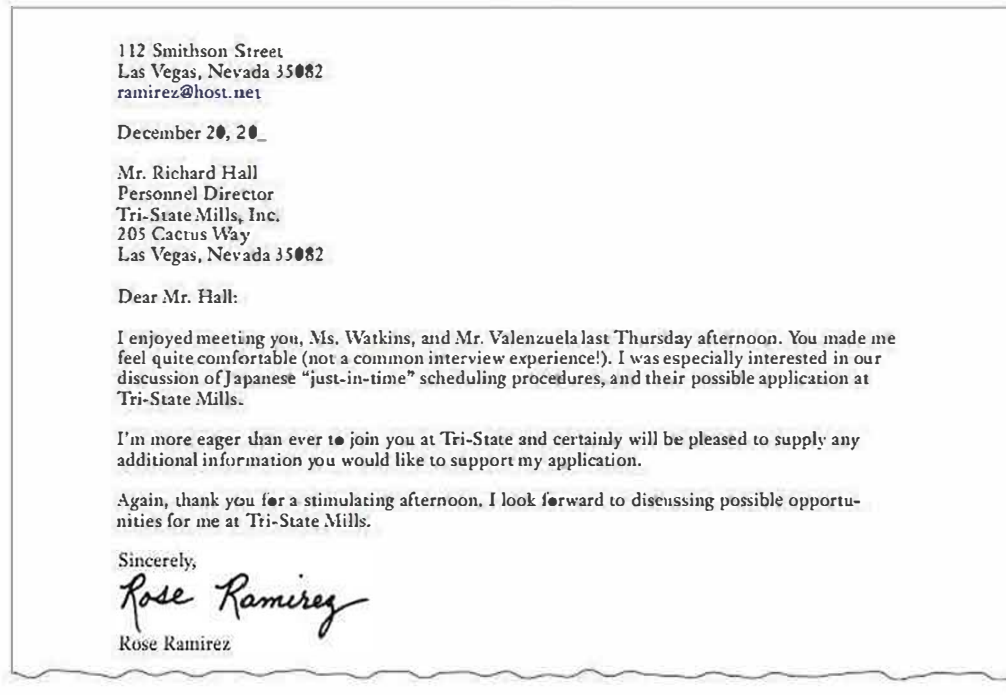
On the same day as your initial on-site interview or at a later time, you may be invited to interview with a division manager or supervisor. Expect this interview to be much less slick than the session conducted by the personnel officers. Long pauses may fall in conversation. The phone may ring, interrupting your discussion for a few minutes. The secretary may pop in from time to time with urgent business.

In all such disturbances, maintain easygoing good spirits, letting the supervisor know that you can cope with the ragged edges of real business activity.

Prepare to answer questions about your field:

- Have you done any work setting up annual reports?
- What accounting procedure would you use in this case?
- How would you structure a decision-making team for this kind of project?

FIGURE 13-11 Thank-You Letter for an Interview. *Same text for E-mail.*



When you don't know an answer, say so—but add that you could find out (name specific ways). No company wants to hire an employee who tries to disguise an area of ignorance and to fake competence.

Prepare specific questions for the supervisor, being specific about your job and its relationship to the company or the department. Ask about specific tasks if you can think of appropriate questions.

- How do you handle a client's personal desires for a certain color or design in an ad?
- Do you use computer-aided graphics?

Writing That Is Requested During the Interview

When you arrive (a little early) for a job interview, you may be surprised to find more crucial writing tasks awaiting you. Many job applications now ask the applicant to fill in more than the blanks. You might also be asked to write a short essay on a topic of the company's choosing. A sample of the candidate's writing can reveal much. A large real estate development firm in Florida, for example, asks interviewees for management positions to write a brief response to this question:

Leaders often must make unpopular decisions. Discuss your own way of handling the social pressure occasioned by an unpopular decision you make.

These kinds of questions sometimes appear in your mailbox as part of an application form to be completed and mailed back to the company prior to your interview. In that case, you have time to plan your response, to work out a rough draft, and to revise your answer until it pleases you.

Other employers, however, also use such questions to test your writing abilities (and thinking abilities) in those nervous fifteen or twenty minutes before the beginning of the interview.

Meet this on-the-spot writing challenge by reading the question over at least three times. Each time, you should find yourself grasping the *content* and *intent* of the question more firmly.

QUESTION	Leaders must make unpopular decisions. Discuss your own way of handling the social pressure occasioned by an unpopular decision you make.
FIRST READING	Does this question require me to list and explain several unpopular decisions made by leaders in the past? No.
SECOND READING	Does the question require me to describe several unpopular decisions I have made as a leader? No.
THIRD READING	Does the question require me to suggest how I handle social pressure arising out of an unpopular decision I've made? Yes.

Once you have located the heart of your question, briefly plan a format, using as few as three major parts, for your response. Here are two patterns that might suit the preceding question.

Alternative One

- The easy way out of social pressure for a leader
- The more difficult way out of social pressure for a leader
- Why the more difficult way proves more successful

Alternative Two

- The effect of social pressure in the short run
- The effect of social pressure in the long run
- How leaders direct attention from the short run to the long run

These patterns are not usually written down at all or at best are simply jotted onto scratch paper as a working outline for the answer. Your two or three minutes spent in such planning are valuable in terms of the eventual outcome of your essay. Although your pen may not move during the planning process, you are directly involved in the process of writing. Your short outline will help provide an organizational framework for your response.

When you find yourself faced with an essay question before an interview, practice the following routine:

- Read the question three times, looking for its central issues.
- Plan a three-part (or more) framework for your response.
- Write in a conversational style.

FOLLOW-UP COMMUNICATIONS: AFTER AN INTERVIEW

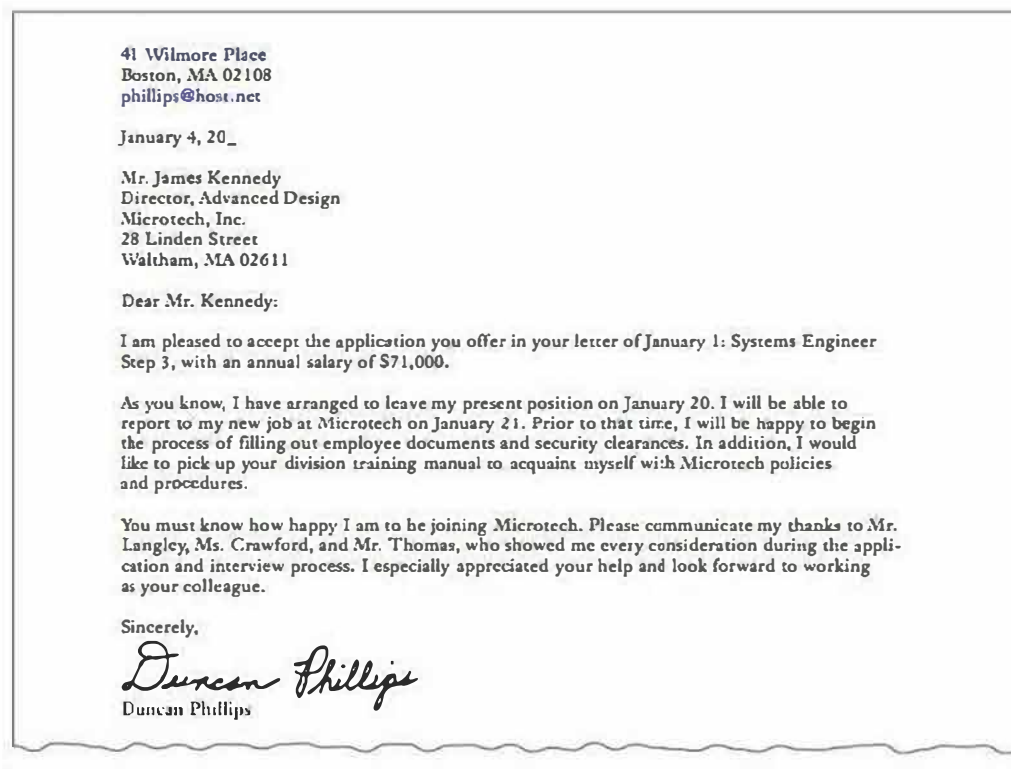
The days immediately following your interview are a period of intense evaluation on the part of the company. Several levels of managerial review will probably be involved in deciding whether you're right for the job. You shouldn't simply sit back waiting for an answer to your application. You can influence this evaluation process in a positive way through tactful and appropriate communication, which may include letters of thanks (Fig. 13-11) and followup.

Later, after you receive a job offer, you'll continue writing to the company: letters of acceptance (Figure 13-12), postponement (Figure 13-13), or refusal (Figure 13-14), and other career communications.

The Letter of Thanks

After the interview, be sure to write a brief letter of thanks. If a company has devoted two hours and three interviewers to the interview, the cost of the time alone may exceed \$200 to the company. Even if the interview did not go well for you, demonstrate your gratitude for the company's interest and expense by writing your thanks.

As shown in Figure 13-11, begin by thanking the interviewers by name, if possible, and focusing on one or two particular aspects of the interview for special comment. Then express your eagerness to work for the company and your willingness to supply

FIGURE 13-12 Letter of Acceptance. Same Text for E-mail.

further information. Conclude in a complimentary way, mentioning the company name if possible.

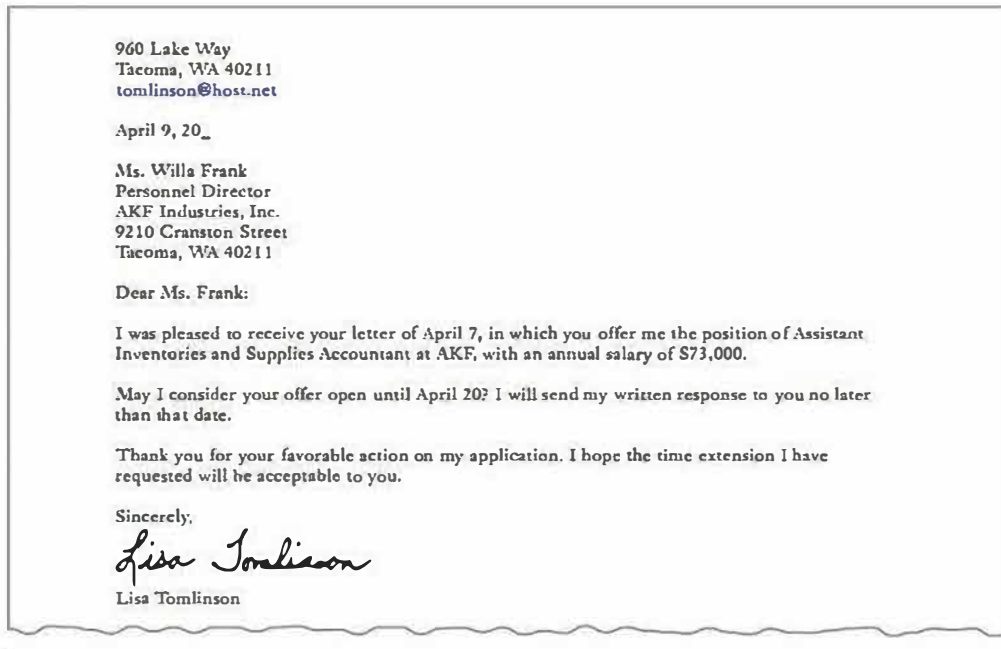
Now the w-a-i-t-i-n-g begins. During this difficult time, be sure that you can be reached by telephone. As personal judgment dictates, decide when the waiting has become excessive, and then write a polite letter of inquiry.

The Letter of Acceptance

If the answer to your job search is "yes," and you decide to accept an offer, write a brief letter of acceptance, as shown in Figure 13-12, covering each of these key points and others that seem important to you:

- Accept the job offer, repeating exactly what you are accepting. This practice helps to prevent misunderstandings on both sides.
- Describe the arrangements you have agreed upon for the position.

FIGURE 13-13 Letter of Postponement. Same Text for E-mail.



- Thank your new employer (by name) for acting favorably on your application. Express your eagerness to begin work and to face new challenges.

The Letter of Postponement

You may find yourself faced with two or more job offers at once—or holding one job in expectation of another. In either case, you can often postpone offers for a short time while you make up your mind.

Do not feel traitorous in requesting an extension of time from a company you seemed so eager to join. Businesses understand that good candidates have many options. Usually, these businesses are willing to cooperate with you.

As shown in Figure 13-13, touch each of these key elements in your letter of postponement.

- Express appreciation at receiving the job offer. Repeat the substance of the offer in this letter.
- Request an extension of time for a specific period while you make your decision.
- Communicate gratitude for favorable action on your application.

FIGURE 13-14 Letter of Refusal. Same Text for E-mail.



The Letter of Refusal

At times, you will have to decline a job offer. Do so in a way that burns no bridges. After all, you may want to find a position with the company again in the future.

As suggested in Figure 13-14, include each of these key elements in the letter of refusal:

- Politely decline the job offer. You don't have to mention its specific details. You can decide whether to explain your decision. Don't try to sound more sorry than, in fact, you are.
- Communicate thanks for the company's interest. Express goodwill for their people and projects.

OTHER CAREER-RELATED LETTERS

Assuming that at least one of these interviews leads to your acceptance of a job offer, you'll eventually end up in a job in your career field. As Chapters 1 through 11 showed, this is certainly not the end of your business writing; it's only the beginning. In addition, if you are like most workers, you will probably also do much more career-related writing, including letters of resignation and letters of recommendation.

The Letter of Resignation

How quickly time passes. You have been on the job for quite a while, and the time has come to resign. Many important points must be covered in this, your final communication with your employer. Include the following:

- Express your intention to resign. Give the effective date of your resignation.
- Reflect upon significant projects and people during your career with the company.
- Decide whether to reveal the new position you are accepting.
- Offer to help provide a smooth transition, if possible, for your successor.
- Express thanks for the professional and personal associations you have enjoyed in your old job.

Tact is especially important in a resignation letter, even when the circumstances of your resignation are less than rosy. Some resignation letters even end up leading to job promotions and raises. A company hates to lose good employees to the competition.

Realize that your letter of resignation may be read as a challenge by upper management—a challenge to offer you new projects and financial rewards to keep you with the company. However, you should never plan on using your resignation letter to get management to give you a raise or promotion. It seldom works more than once per company, and frequently not at all.

Nonetheless, you should keep this possibility in mind. Write a tactful resignation letter that doesn't anger the reader. Notice in Figure 13-15 that the letter subtly suggests how valuable the resigning employee has been to the firm.

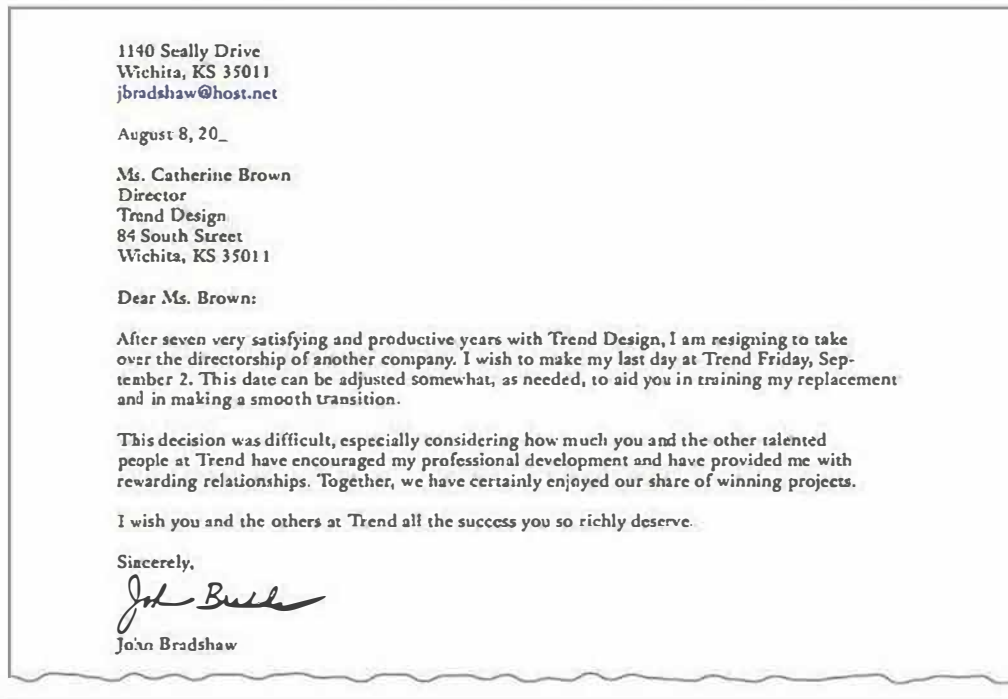
The Letter of Recommendation

You not only leave a letter behind when you leave—the letter of resignation—but you take letters with you to your new employer—letters of recommendation. When you are asked to *write* a letter of recommendation, tell the requester frankly whether you can write a favorable letter. If not, the requester then has the chance to ask someone else.

In writing the letter, you have considerable freedom to treat any aspect of your personal and professional relation with the person you are recommending. In general, do not guess about job requirements in the new position for which you are recommending the person. Rather, focus on the past and the present facts of your relationship. The following Communication Checkpoint may help you.

**Communication
Checkpoint**
*Topics for a Letter
of Recommendation*

- How long and in what capacity have you known the person?
- What can you say about the person's character and personality? Does he or she work well with others? Is he or she responsible? Creative?
- If possible, describe one or more specific occasions on which the person excelled. What did he or she do? How did it turn out?
- How does the person stack up against others you have observed in similar roles?
- What success can you predict for the person? Summarize the factors that make your prediction more than a wild guess.

FIGURE 13-15 Resignation Letter. Same Text for E-mail.

- Conclude with an appropriately warm compliment to the person. Offer to elaborate on your recommendation by letter or phone. Provide your name, title, address, and phone number.

At least 90 percent of all letters of recommendation generally support the person recommended. The key, then, is to write favorable things that provide enough detail so that the reader can come to agree with your high opinion of the person you recommend.

USING THE INTERNET TO FIND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Wouldn't it be splendid if domestic and international employers simply entered their job openings on a computer bulletin board that you could access anytime, anywhere in your job search? Even more, wouldn't it be terrific if you could enter your résumé and career wish-list so that employers could look you over electronically? Finally, it would be the icing on the cake if the computer would simply match up your career desires with available jobs, and send you and potential employers a notice of jobs that seem particularly right for you.

That day, happily, has arrived. As this chapter will make clear, the Internet is the repository of literally hundreds of thousands of current job openings around the world. The Internet is changing the way companies do business and the way they hire. On-line commerce and e-mail connections offer companies and job-seekers instant access to career opportunities.

Searching for Company Job Listings

Thousands of companies now make use of the Internet, by means of their home pages, to provide basic company information, advertise products and services, and post current job listings. To find your target company on the Internet, simply enter its name using one or more search engines such as google.com, lycos.com, and yahoo.com.

There's good reason to use more than one search service: each will turn up somewhat different lists of job sites.

Getting Where You Want to Go Quickly

This chapter will list the brightest and best of the current domestic and international job sites now available on the Internet. Some of these sites are specialized for particular occupations; others are massive collections of job listings of all types. Using the addresses provided here, you'll have to "surf the Net" a bit to discover which domestic or international job sites are most pertinent to your needs.

All search programs will ask you to enter search words or descriptor terms. By entering the name of your target company—Nippon Telephone and Telegraph, for example—you will quickly find dozens of "hits," that is, places to look on the Internet for information about the company, including its employment needs. Charles Schwab, Inc. is among the companies that make a practice of listing all their job openings on the Internet. Schwab feels it has nothing to lose and everything to gain by letting the whole world know about its employment opportunities. Or you can enter more generic search words in combination, such as "international employment" and "investment banking." This entry may bring back literally hundreds of hits, some of which will be just what you're looking for: current job ads for careers.

Certainly, one of the quickest ways to sort through the dozens of job sites to find the most current, complete, and reliable is to use (for free) the services of professionals at career centers at colleges and universities. These job counselors review available job sites on an ongoing basis and list the best as part of their university's home page.

SUMMARY

1. The application cover letter is necessary each time you mail a résumé. It should be brief, tied to your résumé by references to highlights, and appropriately personalized.
2. The résumé is best developed by the job-seeker himself or herself in preparation for job interviews.
3. Chronological résumés often suit recent graduates, who have more educational credits to emphasize than work experience.

4. Functional résumés are more appropriate for those with extensive work experience.
5. Special letters or phone messages are called for in response to an invitation for an interview or a job offer.
6. The thank-you letter after an interview can be an important aid in securing a job.
7. When writing letters of postponement, refusal, or resignation, be tactful, honest, and brief.
8. Letters of recommendation should be descriptive, truthful, and sincere.
9. The Internet provides extensive resources for the job search.

Cases 14 to 17 in Appendix A are intended to accompany this chapter. Each case provides many opportunities for individual writing, group writing, individual speaking, and group speaking activities.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Should you begin the application process with a letter of application accompanied by a résumé or by a phone call? Discuss your choice.
2. Identify the typical parts of a letter of application.
3. What strategies should you use in an uninvited letter of application?
4. Which of the nine guidelines for the résumé seem most important to you? Why?
5. What is meant by the phrase "at-a-glance appeal" when applied to the résumé? What is the importance of such appeal? How can you create it in your résumé?
6. What basic categories should always appear on a résumé?
7. How do the chronological and functional résumés differ? Which pattern will you choose for your own résumé? Why?
8. Is it important to tailor your résumé for each job? How can you do so?
9. Should references be listed at the bottom on your résumé, or simply offered as available? Why?
10. Why should you omit a picture of yourself and similar personal data from your résumé?
11. How important is it that your résumé contain no surface errors in grammar, mechanics, spelling, or printing?
12. Must you account for every month of your working life in the work experience section of the résumé?
13. What items can be included in the education section of the résumé?
14. Why should you take a personal hand in creating your résumé instead of turning the entire project over to someone else?
15. Why should a résumé be mailed with a cover letter to an employer?

16. What are the primary features of the followup letter? When should you write one?
17. What information should be contained in a letter accepting an invitation to interview?
18. Why might you write a polite letter expressing future interest after being rejected for a job opening?
19. What kinds of writing can you expect to do at an interview?
20. If you are asked to write a short essay at an interview, how should you begin your work?
21. What are the main features of the letter of acceptance?
22. What is a letter of postponement?
23. Why is it important to take time to write a letter of refusal for positions you do not accept?
24. What are the main features of a letter of recommendation?
25. Why should you be tactful in a resignation letter?

EXERCISES

1. Start a job-search file by listing companies or businesses with whom you would like to gain employment. Gather the relevant information on these companies, following the guidelines offered elsewhere in this chapter. How many prospective employers have you located? Which seem most appealing?
2. Write a letter asking an employer or professor for a letter of recommendation. Consider your tone and persuasive strategy when making the request. Remember, the way in which you ask for a recommendation might affect the recommendation itself.
3. Write a contact letter to the personnel director at a company with whom you have worked part-time, requesting information about possible full-time employment at a later date. Place the director's response in your job-search file.
4. Visit the personnel offices of a company for whom you would like to work. Assume that you are not under great pressure to find a job at present, so you should be able to greet the office staff without feeling that you must walk out with a job. Simply introduce yourself and leave a résumé for consideration. Make sure that you write down the personnel director's name for inclusion in your job-search file. Later, record the experience and repeat this procedure at several attractive companies. Compare visits.
5. Visit the college placement service office at a local college or university. If the office keeps placement files, start one. Record your impressions and place any relevant information you gather in your job-search file.
6. Familiarize yourself with *The College Placement Annual*, available at a college career development center or library. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this annual?
7. Leaf through the help-wanted ads of the Sunday edition of a major newspaper in your area. Which ads seem like good leads? Which make you skeptical? Why?

8. Interview a friend or family member who holds an attractive job. Find out how difficult the job was to acquire. How long did your subject search for the job? How many applications did he or she send out? How many interviews did he or she carry out?
9. Write a letter of application in response to a job opening described in a newspaper advertisement.
10. Write an uninvited letter of application to a company with which you would like to gain employment. How will your strategy in this application change compared to the strategy you would use in writing an invited letter of application?
11. Create your own résumé. Experiment with several versions and layouts until you find the résumé form that best fits you and your goals.
12. As an experiment in résumé form, rewrite your functional résumé in chronological form, or your chronological résumé in functional form.
13. Find three job advertisements of different types (employer ad, blind ad, agency ad, and so forth), and write a cover letter for each.
14. Assume that you have not heard anything for 10 days since applying for a position. Write a followup letter asking about the status of your application.
15. Write a letter accepting an invitation to interview.
16. Assume that you receive more than one job offer at the same time. Write a letter of postponement asking for a specified amount of time to make your decision.
17. Write a thank-you letter to a company that interviewed you.
18. Use a friend's résumé as the source material for writing a letter of recommendation for that person.
19. Write an essay response to this question, as if it were presented to you at an interview: "What qualities define a superior employee?"
20. Write a letter accepting a job offer. Make sure to specify the terms under which you are accepting the offer.
21. Write a letter declining a job offer. Bear in mind that you may seek employment with this company at some future time in your career.
22. Assume that you have worked in one job for two years. A better opportunity has presented itself with another company. Write a tactful letter of resignation.
23. You receive a letter inviting you to interview. The letter gives several possible dates and times from which you can choose. Write back to the company to arrange the interview.
24. You are offered a job over the telephone. Accept the offer by letter, and confirm in writing the terms described to you.
25. You have been invited to interview on a specific date but can't because of important personal commitments (such as a wedding to attend). Write a letter asking for another interview date.
26. You are offered a job over the telephone. Decline the offer by letter.

WEB ASSIGNMENTS

You've done well in your studies and now it is time to find a fulfilling career. Find sites well-suited to your career search. Choose your favorite three sites and explain in a two to three page document why these sites appear to be best suited to your needs.

Use a search engine to help you locate one of the larger job- and résumé-posting sites on the Internet. Investigate that site thoroughly. Describe in a page or two how a job-seeker can make use of the site. Include specific details about résumé submission guidelines, costs, access to 'help wanted' listings, and other aspects of the site and its services.

A PRACTICAL COMMUNICATION DILEMMA

The apology for someone else. You manage a highly-motivated salesperson who exceeds his quota each year. His only job-related problem is that he has a "short fuse," and sometimes responds temperamentally to tense situations. Take yesterday, for example. You accompanied him on a sales visit to a long-time customer. Toward the end of the visit, the customer launched into a tirade against the salesperson for an order that had arrived late and had caused the customer considerable production problems in his plant. You were embarrassed when your salesperson snapped back, practically yelling at the customer and angrily telling him that the late order wasn't the fault of your company. Once back at the office, you tell the salesperson to phone the customer and apologize for his outburst. The salesperson says, "I have nothing to apologize for," and leaves the office for a three-day business trip out of town. You wonder what to do. On one hand, you know that the apology should come from your salesperson. On the other hand, you know that he will delay giving the apology and perhaps phrase it in a half-hearted way. Should you contact that customer yourself? What should you say?

Guidelines for Interviewees and Interviewers

The tongue is the only instrument that gets sharper with use.

Washington Irving, *American author*

Well over 70 percent of Fortune 500 companies and government agencies are now using a relatively new interviewing technique called behavior-based structured interviewing. But in spite of repeated research data showing this approach to be significantly more likely to distinguish winners from losers in the candidate pool, many companies continue to use the traditional, off-the-cuff approach to developing and delivering interview questions.

“Our interviewers like the unstructured approach to hiring,” one personnel director told us. “It makes their job more interesting. You never know what you’ll end up discussing with an applicant.” He pointed out that experienced interviewers like to trust their intuitions—their “gut feelings”—to come up with the right questions and pick the right candidate. As this personnel director concluded, “it’s an impossible task to plan what should be asked in all the various positions in the company. We have to trust our interviewers to come up with appropriate questions.”

This set of ideas is the general defense for old-fashioned interviewing. In addition to the arguments made by the personnel director, traditional interviewing has the weight of history on its side—it’s “the way we’ve always done it.”

PROBLEMS WITH TRADITIONAL INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES

Put yourself in the place of a job applicant. You and several other candidates sit in a lobby waiting to be called in to separate rooms for traditional interviews conducted by company personnel specialists. Does it matter which of these specialists interviews you? Of course it does. In traditional interviewing, the judgments of individual interviewers (and their

relative clout in the company) can vary widely. If you're lucky, you will get an interviewer who likes you. If not, you're branded as an also-ran.

You are now called into an interview room—almost a closet compared to the more spacious offices being used for some of the other interviews. Does this cramped environment affect the outcome of your interview? Yes.

The interviewer begins his questions. Where do these questions come from, you wonder. Sometimes the interviewer glances at your résumé as a stimulus for a question or two. Sometimes he stares at the ceiling, as if stuck for the next question. Often he asks you to repeat yourself. He doesn't take any notes.

Note that in your unstructured interview, questions come "out of the blue," according to the whim of the interviewer. They are not formulated in advance in close coordination with job requirements. At best, they are conjured up by the interviewer in an attempt to "get an overall impression of the applicant" or to "see how the applicant relates and communicates." At worst, these questions are time wasters for both the company and the applicant—just "talk" that yields little valuable information about the candidate's suitability for the position.

After 30 or 40 minutes, you are dismissed from the interview room. You can't help but notice that some interviews in other rooms are often running much longer and others are much shorter than your interview. You suppose that it all depends on which interviewer an applicant happens to get—the luck of the draw. But you have good reason for concern about the length of interviews; recent research demonstrates that successful candidates invariably are granted longer interviews than unsuccessful candidates.

As you leave the building, you wonder what's going to happen to the answers you gave to the interviewer. Will they be recorded or noted in any way? Will they be conveyed accurately to other decision-makers in the company? Or will it all come down to the interviewer's gut feeling, a crude thumbs-up or thumbs-down based on personal impressions and vague criteria such as "the kind of person we're looking for" and "someone who will be a good fit"?

As you reflect on this interview experience, you feel you've just participated in a lottery of sorts. Your interviewer, the interview site, the length of the interview, the interview questions, and the recording and evaluation of your answers were all a matter of luck, not plan. No wonder that traditional interviewing so often produces the "halo effect" in which an interviewer simply hires the person who seems to be wearing a halo similar to the interviewer's. Given the freedom to make up questions and to evaluate candidate responses as he or she wishes, no wonder an interviewer's prejudices play such a major role in hiring. You can easily imagine an interviewer who consistently blocks the hiring path for women, or middle-aged men, or overweight applicants, or nonathletic types, or whatever other bias the interviewer applies in the hiring process.

THE LEGAL BASIS FOR STRUCTURED INTERVIEWING

To all such matter of chance, gut feeling, and potential bias, the law related to hiring says "Stop!" Specifically, the Uniform Guidelines arising out of Title VII and EEOC legislation insist that the interview be designed on the basis of specific job requirements. Both the content and method of the interview must be developed to reveal accurately and fairly which candidates are best qualified to fulfill the job requirements determined by the company. Employers must be able to show that interview questions are directly related to these job requirements. In addition, employers must afford each candidate equal treatment in the screening process.

WHERE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS COME FROM

In creating interview questions, personnel specialists look to those who know the job best: those who perform it successfully or supervise its performance in the company. These "hands-on" experts list "critical incidents" involved in the successful performance of the job. (A critical incident is a specific problem or challenge presented by the job, together with a description of the behavior that solved the problem or met the challenge.)

Here, for example, is one critical incident from the analysis of a sales position.

Problem: A client delayed placing an order because she had a technical question that the salesperson could not answer on the spot.

Successful behavior: The salesperson validated the client's question, promised to find the answer promptly, and followed through in a timely way. Client proceeded with purchase.

This incident, drawn from actual work life and the job description for a salesperson, is one piece in the process of constructing job-based questions for use in interviews. If an employer knows what behaviors it takes to succeed in a given job, the employer can then develop interview questions and tests to locate people qualified to perform those behaviors. For some assembly-line positions, the job analysis may involve only a dozen or so critical incidents. For more complex positions in sales, management, accounting, and so forth, the number of critical incidents may rise to 50 or more.

These critical incident descriptions, once gathered, form the empirical basis for all the employer's assertions regarding "what it takes" to perform a particular job. By pinpointing the things that matter most, the employer has gone far to remove the element of guesswork from the hiring process.

DEVELOPING THE JOB ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION

A job analysis panel, usually composed of a personnel officer and managers deeply familiar with the job, meets to organize the many critical incident descriptions into a succinct description of job behaviors. The panel also considers

- information sources of particular importance for the job. Must the applicant, for example, be thoroughly familiar with a certain set of state or federal regulations? A flight or operations manual? A computer reference manual?
- abilities in decision making or information processing critical to job performance. Must the applicant be able to perform some mathematical operations in his or her head? Hold several numbers in mind at once? Read charts and graphs quickly?
- physical requirements, including coordination, stress, and dexterity. Must the applicant be able to lift certain weights? Handle volatile materials reliably? Sit or stand for long periods? Adjust to wide temperature variations? Endure sustained periods of unusual job pressure?
- social skills required for the job. Will the job entail the tactful supervision of others? Meeting clients in social contexts? Relating to co-workers as a motivational manager?

- * scheduling and travel requirements of the job. Must the applicant be ready to make scheduling changes and travel plans on short notice? Is the candidate available for overtime and undesirable work shifts?

TURNING THE JOB ANALYSIS INTO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

With the completed job analysis before it, the expert panel begins to formulate interview questions. These should be drawn from several different types of questions to provide variety and to measure an interviewee's ability to respond to different forms of questions, including the following.

DEFINITIONAL QUESTIONS	These are usually posed in a "What is a . . ." or "What does ——— refer to or mean?" format. They require applicants to demonstrate their knowledge of terms, concepts, and tools. Examples: What is a dado blade? What is meant by the pitch of a roof?
CAUSAL QUESTIONS	These are posed in the format of "What happens when . . ." or "What is the result of . . ." Causal questions ask the applicant to specify the consequence of some initial act or procedure. Examples: What happens when foundation concrete contains too much lime? What is the result of connecting iron pipe directly to copper pipe in a water system?
HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS	These questions take the form of "What would you do if . . ." or "What could happen if . . ." Hypothetical questions test the candidate's ability to handle future situations based on past learning and experience. Examples: What would you do if a heavy rainstorm was forecast during a period halfway through the framing stage of a building project? What could happen if wall studs are exposed to hot sunshine for several hours prior to use?
SITUATIONAL QUESTIONS	Related in some ways to hypothetical question, situational questions ask the applicant to put himself or herself into a realistic circumstance described in detail by the interviewer. These questions usually take the form of "Here's the situation . . . What would you do?" Example: You're laying the floor panels on the second story of a residence. Your helper suddenly screams in pain, and you look over to see that he has cut his hand badly with a power saw. Blood is flowing fast from the wound. What action would you take?"
SIMULATIONAL QUESTIONS	In these questions, the circumstance or situation is not described verbally to the applicant. Instead, the applicant is physically presented with some aspects of the job situation. Typically, simulation questions take the form of "To achieve the purposes of ———, you are now holding (facing, supporting, etc.) ———. Show what you would do to achieve your purpose." Example: The candidate is given a container of plumber's putty and asked to show how it would be used in installing a sink.
RELATIONAL QUESTIONS	These ask the applicant to tell, perhaps by role-playing, how he or she would handle interpersonal situations. Example: What would you say or do if a boss unjustly accused you in front of others of loafing on the job?
EXPLANATORY QUESTIONS	These usually take the format of "Why would you . . ." or "How would you explain . . ." Example: Why are cross-braces "let in" to wall studding?

Once questions and their answers have been selected according to the relative importance of job behaviors, the panel must arrange them for uniform delivery to job applicants. Questions are often arranged to follow the course of a typical workday or the work cycle from the beginning to the end of production. Or questions can be arranged in order of increasing

or decreasing importance. In most cases, applicants will respond to questions more clearly and completely if the questions occur in a meaningful arrangement.

TRAINING GOOD INTERVIEWERS

One employment manager recently wrote that “getting honest information from our applicants is not nearly as big a problem as getting our interviewers to ask the questions we want answered.”

Here she is referring to a widespread problem confirmed by recent studies at Duke University. Job interviewers are often reluctant to ask “hard” questions, particularly of applicants for whom they have an initial liking. Often in an effort to “help out” a congenial applicant, an interviewer may glide over such thorny areas as past firings, a succession of short job stays, or poor college performance. This quite human tendency on the part of the interviewer leaves an information gap for the company in its hiring process. The practice also discriminates against other applicants who, for whatever reason, aren’t given special help from the interviewer.

For this reason, all questions developed for a structured interview are asked in order and verbatim for each applicant. In structured interviewing, the interviewer can repeat a question if necessary, but not paraphrase it, coach or prompt the applicant, give hints regarding the intent of or possible answers for the question, or otherwise influence the applicant’s response. Nor does the interviewer indicate by verbal or nonverbal signals the relative success or failure of the candidate’s answer.

SCORING THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Unlike traditional interview results, structured interviewing offers a planned scoring system for each question used in the interview. At the time questions are developed for the interview, job experts (as described earlier) work out a rating scale for a continuum of possible answers, ranging from a great answer to a poor one. Such judgments as “great” and “poor” are tied directly to behavioral objectives in the job analysis, not to the flair or style with which the candidate can schmooze. A great answer is one that reflects probable success in performing the related job task. A marginal answer is one that reflects probable difficulty in performing the job task. A poor answer is one that reflects probable failure in performing the related job task.

But who is to say which answers are great, marginal, or poor? That judgment call is up to the same job experts who know the job best and are familiar with employees’ relative success in accomplishing it. In most cases, rating scales for interview questions are developed in brainstorming sessions by job experts and personnel officers. Great, marginal, and poor responses are specified as “anchors” on a five-point scale. Even though applicants may not hit any of these predicted answers on the nose, their responses can nonetheless be placed meaningfully at some point on the continuum marked by these anchors.

Here are two examples of interview questions with accompanying rating scales. Note that these are not multiple choice questions. Only the interviewers see the suggested responses following the question.

Question 1: "When putting a piece of machinery back together again after repairing it, why would you clean all the parts first?"

5 (good) Particles of dust and dirt can cause wear on moving parts. Must have parts clean to inspect for wear and damage.

3 (marginal) Parts will go together easier. Equipment will run better.

1 (poor) So it will all be clean. I don't know.

Question 2: "Many of the tasks involved in this job require the use of a forklift. Please read this [90-word] forklift checkout procedure aloud."

5 (good) Reads fluently, pronouncing all words correctly.

3 (marginal) Can read most words, but hesitates often.

1 (poor) Reads with great difficulty.

Interviewees are not expected to say the precise words suggested in the anchor responses. Interviewers simply use these benchmarks to determine the appropriate numeric score of the applicant's actual answer. Panel members mark their scorecards for each question and take notes on the content of the applicant's answer. After all applicants have been interviewed, the panel begins the task of comparing, compiling, and reconciling their scores for individual applicants. If scores between raters differ by more than one number (for example, a "5" and a "3"), the panel discusses the applicant's response and seeks to bring the scores closer together. Ratings are then averaged for each question and totaled as a record of the applicant's performance.

This scoring system makes it relatively easy to compare several candidates on the merit of their responses. It goes a long way toward eliminating distortions caused by interviewer bias, differences in questions, and interpersonal factors such as attraction or revulsion.

DOCUMENTING THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Companies and individual managers have good reason to protect themselves against potential charges of discrimination in hiring. Most plaintiffs to date are successful in such suits, and court awards regularly run into the millions of dollars.

If a hiring discrimination suit is brought against a company, the court will insist on knowing the following information. These items are "must-haves" for documentation of the interview process:

1. *Document the job analysis process.* How is the job defined? How did you determine the specific behaviors necessary for performing the job successfully?
2. *Document the process by which questions were created.* Who participated in their creation? Why were these people deemed competent to create the questions? How does each question asked in the interview relate to a behavior necessary for performing the job? In what ways do the number, type, and arrangement of questions reflect the proportionate importance of particular behaviors necessary to perform the job?
3. *Document the system by which applicant responses were scored.* What is the system? Who created anchoring responses? How do these anchoring responses relate to real levels of success among those actually performing the job? How

were raw scores handled statistically? What weighting, if any, was used in the analysis of scores?

4. *Document the process of interviewing candidates.* How did applicants find out about the job? What were the criteria for choosing those applicants who were invited for interviews? Where and when were interviews conducted? Who served as interviewers? What are their qualifications, especially in relation to the job at hand? How were questions delivered? How were responses noted? How long did interviews last? How did different interviews compare in time, content of questions, and method of evaluation?
5. *Document applicant responses and scores.* Notes taken by interviewers must be easily interpretable in reconstructing the approximate content of an applicant's response.
6. *Document the specific process by which one applicant was chosen over others.* What factors were involved? What was the weighting of those factors?
7. *Document the validity of the interview process.* Does the process predict job performance?
8. *Document the presence or absence of adverse impact against EEOC-protected groups participating in the interview process.* Are such groups being hired at a rate at least 80 percent that of nonprotected groups? (Companies will also want to consider recent court standards regarding the ethnic makeup of the surrounding labor pool in determining adverse impact.)

This kind of documentation may seem burdensome to managers and their companies. It compares favorably, however, to the more dangerous course of trying to construct or fabricate a legally defensible hiring procedure once the company faces a discrimination suit.

EXAMPLES OF BEHAVIOR-BASED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What an applicant has *done* is a better indicator of future job success than what the applicant believes, feels, thinks, or knows. The following questions are useful in getting applicants to discuss work realities rather than notions or suppositions.

Tell me how you increased teamwork among a previous group with whom you worked.

Describe what you liked and disliked about how you were managed in previous positions.

Recall a time when you made what you consider a mistake or a bad decision on the job. How did you handle the situation?

In your past worklife, what kind of people rubbed you the wrong way? How did you respond?

Tell me about a time when you set specific work goals for yourself. How did things turn out?

Describe a time when you had to criticize or discipline the performance of someone who worked with you or for you. How did you handle the situation? What was the result?

In the past have you had a preference for working mainly with men or women? Explain your answer.

Tell me about a time when you felt you went beyond the call of duty in helping a customer.

CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

You may feel that you are still many years away from having to conduct an interview of prospective employees, suppliers, and so on. That might not be so. At present, employees in their first years with the company often also participate in hiring interviews. During your first year on the job, you may well be asked to sit in on a job interview, to ask questions of the candidate, and to offer your opinion of his or her qualifications. Your own managerial potential may even be judged in terms of how well you can participate in interviews. In some rapid-growth companies such as computer firms, it isn't uncommon for first- and second-year employees to conduct interviews when selecting their subordinates. In short, it's not too soon for you to learn how to skillfully conduct an interview. You'll be preparing yourself for a common important managerial task. Meanwhile, you'll also become a better interviewee by understanding the interview process from both sides.

The Importance of Interviewing

As an interviewer, you help to determine how your company will grow. Through interviews and hiring, the company replaces lost employees, gains new expertise, and expands its workforce. Because this interviewing serves such important goals, companies devote many key resources to this activity. In 2005, American business spent about \$60 billion preparing for, conducting, and evaluating job interviews. The American Management Association estimates that total hiring costs can go beyond \$50,000 to find and sign up a manager for an \$80,000 job. Even for entry-level positions, many companies in 2005 found themselves spending more than \$10,000 in advertising and interviewing expenses for each new employee they hired.

The Roles of an Interviewer

In addition to asking questions and taking notes, effective interviewing involves

- **Building a relationship**—Through your friendly manner and appropriate small talk, you help the candidate get over being nervous. This helps both you and your candidate present yourselves well. That is, while you help the candidate to form positive impressions about the company and its personnel, you also help her or him to impress you favorably.
- **Collecting information**—Job candidates usually speak at a rate of 250 words per minute or more. The job candidate pours forth all kinds of information about qualifications, experience, attitudes, goals, and preferences. As an interviewer, you must not only hear this information, but also decide which facts to write down for your later reference and evaluation.
- **Probing**—On behalf of the company, you ask the interviewee to clarify facts and to explain feelings, as well as to offer new information.
- **Giving information**—In a sense, the candidate is interviewing the company as well as vice versa. During the interview, you may be expected to briefly describe and explain company history, goals, policies, procedures, and other matters.

Bear in mind that you must do all of these things within the brief period of the hiring interview, usually about 30 to 45 minutes.

Interview Questions: Closed versus Open

When you prepare to lead an interview, you should make up a list of questions based on the company's hiring needs and the candidate's résumé, application letter, and other information. This list will include two types of questions: (1) *closed* questions, which can be answered simply by one or two words, such as "yes" or "no"; and (2) *open* questions, which require more than a "yes" or "no" or other one- or two-word answer. Here are examples of typical closed questions:

- Have you arranged for a health exam at the company health center?
- When will you graduate?
- Will you consider working outside this region?
- How long did you work at ABC Technologies?

Although these questions may be important to you in gaining needed answers, such closed questions tell you little about the candidate's communication, abilities, attitudes, personality, and intelligence.

Therefore, most of the interview questions should be open. These questions require the candidate to express more extensive answers, giving you some insight into how she or he thinks and speaks. Here are ten open questions that often can get a candidate to give you valuable information. Consider these carefully for use when you are an interviewer. You might want to practice answering them yourself in preparation for being interviewed:

- Tell me about the best boss you ever had. Why did you like him or her?
- How do you go about making important decisions?
- What risks did you take in previous jobs, and how did those risks turn out?
- Tell me about frustrations you've felt in your previous work experiences. How did you deal with those frustrations?
- Where would you like to find yourself professionally in three years?
- What did you do in your previous job to make yourself more valuable to your employer?
- How do you think people should be managed in business?
- What strengths would you bring to this job from the very beginning? What strengths would take time to develop?
- What kind of people rub you the wrong way?
- Do you consider yourself a loner or a team player? Explain your answer.

By preparing appropriate closed and open questions, you can use the brief minutes of an interview to maximum advantage in getting to know the candidate's thoughts, attitudes, feelings, and goals.

USEFUL PROBES FOR INTERVIEWING

Although probing for more extensive answers from candidates is not allowed in strictly structured interviewing environments, the practice is still widely used. It can be applied fairly if each candidate is given the advantage of approximately the same degree of probing by interviewers.

Please clarify what you mean by . . .

How did you feel when that happened?

Why do you think you reacted as you did?

Did you consider other options at the time?

Please give me more details about . . .

How do you think others felt about your actions at the time?

Looking back on the experience, how do you see things now?

What was going through your mind when you took that action?

Did the outcome of your action satisfy you?

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR INTERVIEWING

For legal and financial reasons, the movement is definitely toward structured, behavior-based interviewing in American companies. Managers and personnel officers have to be able to defend their hiring decisions in court, if necessary. That defense becomes almost impossible if hiring criteria, methods, and records have been handled in an unplanned and disorganized way. At the same time, companies want to improve the quality and efficiency of their hiring efforts. A structured hiring process can be evaluated and improved through repeated testing of its components; an unstructured process, by contrast, changes according to the interviewer's whims. Those charged with bringing true performers into the company find it exceedingly hard to hit this moving target.

Many of the speaking skills you have developed for use in oral presentations will help you participate successfully in interviews and meetings. You know how to organize your material, express your points briefly, and use your voice and gestures to advantage. In addition to the skills for oral presentations, you must master several other important interpersonal skills for effective interviews and meetings. Most of these are conversational skills that you probably already practice.

SUMMARY

1. A majority of Fortune 500 companies now use behavior-based structured interviewing at some level within their interviewing procedures.
2. Traditional interviewing techniques give companies no better than a random chance in choosing "winners" from "losers" in their hiring.

3. Federal and state legislation mandates fair treatment in the hiring process for protected groups.
4. All interview questions should grow out of the job analysis and job description.
5. Interviews are scored using an anchored scoring guide to ensure that the same criteria are applied to all job applicants.
6. Interviewers must be trained to deliver a behavior-based structured interview. Lacking training, interviewers tend to fall back on traditional interview approaches.

Cases 14 to 17 in Appendix A are intended to accompany this chapter. Each case provides many opportunities for individual writing, group writing, individual speaking, and group speaking activities.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How do you answer the charge that behavior-based structured interviewing inhibits the creativity and spontaneity of the interviewer?
2. Why do you think research has shown behavior-based structured interviewing to be a superior predictor of excellent candidates over traditional interviewing methods?
3. What different roles do you play as an interviewer for the company?
4. Why should you develop some interview questions in advance of an interview?
5. How can the nonverbal signals sent by the interviewer affect the attitudes and performance of the interviewee?
6. What is *probing*? How can this technique be used in interviews?
7. What does it mean to guide the conversation in an interview? Why is this technique often necessary?

EXERCISES

1. Carry out a mock hiring interview with a classmate. First act as interviewer, asking relevant questions of your applicant. Then change roles and play the part of the applicant. After the interviews, compare notes with your classmate. Exchange constructive suggestions on improving interview skills.
2. Interview a meeting leader at your college or in the business world. Record his or her ways to prepare for the meeting, techniques for conducting the meeting, and followup tasks.
3. Interview a classmate or other person who has just come from a job interview. Record the person's impressions of the interviewer, evaluation of her or his own performance, and memory of particularly difficult questions.

4. Interview a manager or other person who interviews job applicants. Determine what the interviewer looks for in a successful applicant, how questions are developed, and how interview results are recorded.
5. From the list of sample interview questions given in this chapter, choose five questions that you would find particularly difficult to answer. For each, write out an answer that is concise, well-reasoned, and well-supported.
6. Write two dialogues between interviewer and interviewee, to show correct and incorrect ways of phrasing interview questions.
7. Write ten open-ended selection interview questions that did not appear in the list of sample questions in this chapter.

WEB ASSIGNMENTS

In your rapidly growing start-up company, you're bringing new employees into your workforce each week. A good portion of your own day as Director of Human Resources is spent in selection interviews. Thanks to your training in HR law and techniques, you feel that you are conducting your part of the interview process legally, fairly, and effectively. But you worry that other managers in the chain of interviews during the day are proceeding on a seat-of-the-pants basis, asking any questions (even illegal ones) that come into their heads.

To provide a learning resource for these company managers/interviewers, find several Internet sites on interviewing. Prepare a short presentation or write a memo addressed to managers/interviewers in the company. In your message, explain the legal and strategic importance of conducting professional job interviews. Describe how your managers can use the Internet sites you have discovered to improve their interviewing effectiveness.

Use a search engine to investigate the phrase "selection interview" or "hiring interview." Make a list of suggestions (for either the interviewer, interviewee, or both) drawn from the sites you explore. Discuss the usefulness of suggestions that seem particularly worthwhile to you.

A PRACTICAL COMMUNICATION DILEMMA

The overheard conversation. In your office, people are not always careful about closing the door when talking about confidential information. This morning you passed by your boss's office and heard him say distinctly to the company's chief financial officer (CFO) that all bonuses would be cancelled this year due to unexpected financial downturns, but that the CFO should keep this "under his hat." Here's the problem: this afternoon you have scheduled a meeting with your employees to help them compute the amount of their annual bonuses. What do you do? Should you proceed with the meeting, pretending that you didn't overhear the boss? Do you confront your boss to confirm information he is not ready to release—and information you were not intended to hear? Do you tell your employees everything you know?

CONSIDERING THE ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE

You are called in for an on-site interview by a company. How do you handle the following events that occur during your interview day?

1. A midlevel manager with whom you interview tells you, "Look, you can really help me out in what you say to my boss, Mr. Briggs. When you talk to him, tell him how impressed you were with the X7 Software package my team has developed. In fact, tell him we ran it for you and you were amazed at how fast it was. We all try to scratch each other's backs around here, and this will really help me out. And it will help you out, too—you can count on my recommendation." (In fact, you know from earlier conversation with this manager that the X7 Software package is running far behind schedule. You never saw it run.)
2. Mr. Briggs, senior manager at the company, tells you, "there's going to be a shake-up here within the next three months. You seem like a smart person I can trust. I want to hire someone who can be my eyes and ears within that X7 group.

You would get the confidence of the workers in that group, and then report to me privately on who's doing what. Of course I have to deny any involvement and we'll figure out a way to keep them from knowing it was you who told me the inside story of that group."

3. Ms. Elliot, the company human resources director, tells you "you're one of our most impressive candidates for this job. Bear in mind that the salary offer you receive isn't the whole story. It's just a way of keeping money off the books and out of the view of our board of directors. They want to see low salaries no matter what, so we show them low salaries. But the reality is that everyone here brings in another 30 percent or so by using company vehicles for personal driving, taking the maximum sick days even when they're not ill, using computers and copiers any way they wish (even taking them home for months at a time), and padding the expense accounts like crazy. Don't worry, your boss will show you how it all works."

SITUATIONAL COMMUNICATION EXERCISE FOR PART IV

The New Graduate and the Big Bad Wolf

Once upon a time in a Midwest business park, a recent graduate, Brent, was employed as a financial analyst for \$104,000.00 per year. Brent loved his salary but hated his job—and especially his boss, Rachel Foster. Here's a transcript of Brent's recent conversation with Linda, co-worker, over an after-work drink:

Brent: "No matter what I do I can't seem to please the boss. For example, I stayed up half the night last night to make sure a report she assigned to me was letter perfect. When I gave it to her this morning, she just put it in her drawer and didn't say a word."

Linda: "That's just like her. Believe me, it isn't you. She's been that way to everyone as long as I've worked here."

Brent: "What's her problem? I purposely get here a little early each day just to show her I'm not slacking off. She doesn't even notice."

Linda: "I know. But she sure notices if you're five minutes late. I got stuck in traffic last week and came in about 9:15. She looked at me like I had broken some kind of law."

Brent: "Did you talk to her about it?"

Linda: "Are you kidding? No one talks to her if they don't have to. She's the dragon lady. You don't ever want to be on her bad side. She never forgets."

Brent: "I don't even go to the coffee machine if she's in the hall. This office reminds me of those Wild West movies where the whole town is afraid of one mean gunslinger. And that's her—the office gunslinger."

What forms of communication are encouraged or discouraged by this situation?

What are some of the deeper reasons why employees like Brent and Linda fear Rachel Foster? How do those forces influence their communication with her?

How would Rachel Foster explain her approach to promoting productivity in her workplace?

What are the business downsides, if any, of Rachel's method of management?

What kind of employees tend to stay on in Rachel's office?

How would you feel about Rachel Foster if you were her boss? (FYI: she always makes her numbers as a manager and never exceeds budget.)

PART FIVE

**COMMUNICATION
ISSUES FOR
MANAGEMENT
SUCCESS**

MEET A MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATOR



Jonathan Littman

Jonathan has been writing bestselling books and articles about business, crime and sport since the mid-1980's. His work has appeared in *Forbes*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Village Voice*. He is also a Contributing Editor for *Playboy*. "I've been fortunate to have been able to combine a love for telling a good story and a knowledge of business, technology and innovation," Jonathan says.

He has co-authored four books with major publishers on innovation, leadership and management. His latest, published by Little Brown, is *I Hate People*, a humorous twist on the challenges people face working in Corporate America. "The idea was simple but deep," says Jonathan. "Most management books make the faulty assumption that co-workers are out to help you achieve your goals. Marc and I (co-author Marc Hershon) set out to explore the harsh, sometimes amusing reality of American business. How do you excel in business and management when people are human – and not always on their best behavior?"

Jonathan and Marc have created a popular blog focusing on the human challenges in management and business, www.ihatepeople.biz.

Jonathan is the co-author of the new *Ten Faces of Innovation*, (Doubleday, November 2005) with Tom Kelley of IDEO, and also co-authored the bestselling business classic, *The Art of Innovation*. Jonathan has been profiled in *Newsweek* and the *New Yorker*. His books have been translated into a dozen languages.

Jonathan has juggled a career in journalism and corporate branding while writing eight books. He co-founded Simmer Branding (www.simmerbranding.com) with Marc Hershon, the Lexicon Branding veteran who coined the brand names BlackBerry, Dasani, and Swiffer, among others. The Simmer Branding Studio is part of the Simmer Think Tank and Tiki Lounge in Sausalito, California. Jonathan is Simmer's resident Storyologist, creating the story behind a breakthrough new product or dynamic new company.

"Our approach is a little different from most branding firms," says Jonathan. "Marc is both a branding expert and a comedy veteran who has worked closely with stars like Jerry Seinfeld and Dana Carvey. He offers both the rigor of 20 years of branding experience and his talents in improvisation. I'm not the typical marketing guy. I've written for top business magazines like *Forbes* and visited hundreds of corporations in my journalism work. I've seen the difference between innovation and same old. I try to draw out what might make a new product or company unique."

Jonathan is also a corporate speaker, (www.brightsightgroup.com), who has given presentations on business and innovation to corporations in the U.S. and Canada before groups as large as one thousand. Jonathan has a bachelor's degree in Rhetoric from the University of California at Berkeley. "My degree has been a huge help in my work," he says. "Rhetoric is all about the art of persuasion and the connection between the written and spoken word."

In the last several years, Jonathan has bolstered his national reputation as a journalist, writing both for *Playboy* and as a columnist for Yahoo Sports. He says the experience has given him the best of both worlds – the old and the new. “*Playboy* has allowed me to write long, narrative articles exploring the Super Bowl, the Masters golf tournament, and even a college killing,” says Jonathan. “Yahoo in contrast is the future. It’s really an online newspaper. The medium is more about creating your own brand and voice. It’s also obviously instantaneous. I’ve learned how to turn on a dime, responding to events and newsbreaks. Corporations are slowly starting to adapt to this changing electronic world. They are beginning to understand that they too need to speed up.”

Jonathan led the nation in the reporting on Barry Bonds and the BALCO steroids scandal. He says he wrote one major breaking story in 27 minutes, and his editors got it up in another 13.

“That was pretty thrilling,” he says. “We beat the Associated Press.”

His last three major pieces for “that magazine” have been set in the worlds of baseball, football and golf, affording him the pleasure of partying at the SuperBowl and giving him an excuse to travel to Augusta to see Tiger and Phil at the Masters. Jonathan has written about business and high-tech for over two decades. He’s the co-author *Ten Faces of Innovation*, (Doubleday, November 2005) with Tom Kelley of IDEO, and also co-authored the bestselling business classic, *The Art of Innovation*. Jonathan’s two non-fiction volumes on famous computer hackers, *The Watchman*, and *The Fugitive Game*, the best-selling story of the legendary hacker Kevin Mitnick, guaranteed that pimply boys broke into and read his e-mail for many years. Jonathan also penned a little book on Churchill that he advises you skim to impress people at cocktail parties.

Jonathan studied how the ancient Greeks and Romans spoke and wrote while earning a degree in Rhetoric at Cal Berkeley, and, as his friends know all too well, he likes to talk as much as he likes to write. A frequent corporate speaker who has written broadly about innovation, design, technology and business, Jonathan has appeared as a commentator and guest on Talk of the Nation, Fresh Air, CNN, Fox & Friends, and many other radio and television programs. Jonathan’s books have been published in thirteen languages, and he has been featured in *Newsweek*, *Time* and *the New Yorker*. Four of Jonathan’s books and articles have been optioned for film, and Showtime is currently turning his *Playboy* piece on the Barry Bonds BALCO drama into a movie (Jonathan is a co-producer.) A two-time winner of the Computer Press awards, Jonathan’s *San Francisco Chronicle* series on murder at the Cabazon Indian reservation was a finalist for a Pulitzer prize.

Access is the centerpiece of Jonathan’s work: access to fascinating businesses, criminal investigations, and great stories. Jonathan wrote the first major piece about Amazon.com for the *Los Angeles Times*, and has managed to get inside some of the most amazing startups and biggest corporations in America. Independence and a novel perspective are his trademarks.

Managing Meetings and Telephone Work

Good communication is as stimulating as black coffee, and just as hard to sleep after.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh, *American author and aviator*

Consider this common complaint about business meetings:

If you want to see my company at its worst, listen in on our meetings. Certain know-it-alls do all the talking; others won't speak at all. The person chairing the meeting loses track of the agenda—if there was an agenda to begin with. Inevitably, personality clashes take over until someone finally moves to adjourn. Mind you, these are good professional people on their own. But together in a meeting, oh my word!

Despite the time they take away from your other work and the poor way in which they are often handled, business meetings are almost always unavoidable. There is no way of conducting business without occasionally participating in or leading meetings. Meetings may be centered on coordinating activities among departments or among the members of a department. Within a company, people must meet at least occasionally to plan how to coordinate their activities.

Business people also have meetings whenever changes arise, such as market changes, internal company changes, or external changes in suppliers. To handle those changes, the company must alter its procedures and its policies. The best way to find out how to handle those changes is to have all the people affected by the changes meet to discuss them. Sometimes, the company personnel even have to meet in order to adjust the company's goals.

Another reason for meetings is to discuss how well everyone in a company or in a department is progressing in meeting the company's existing goals. Different companies have different needs for charting their progress, so these update meetings may occur quarterly, monthly, weekly, or daily.

Some meetings are also conducted with clients or with suppliers. Businesspeople often meet with the clients to tell them why to buy their products or services, how to use their products or services, or how to fix problems that may arise in their products or services. They may have similar meetings with their suppliers.

Because you will inevitably participate in meetings during your business career, you should know how to do so effectively.

THE HIGH COST OF MEETINGS

Recognize that meetings are among the most expensive activities of a company. When 12 managers gather for a two-hour meeting (perhaps on a weekly basis), the company has spent at least \$1,200.00 for that session in salaried time alone ($12 \text{ managers} \times (\$50/\text{hr} \times 2 \text{ hr}) = \$1,200.00$). In such circumstances, a company must make sure that the \$1,200.00 meeting is not about whether to spend \$600.00 for a new copier.

Larger meetings, of course, entail even greater expense. In the case of a meeting involving 100 managers for an all-day session ($100 \text{ managers} \times (\$50/\text{hr} \times 8)$), you can picture a new BMW 5-series automobile driving out and away from the company budget.

Such expenditures are worthwhile, of course, if valuable work is accomplished. But many managers are cynical about the real value of most of the meetings they attend. As management guru Peter Drucker has written, "We can meet or we can work. We can't do both at the same time." A similarly cynical remark from another author describes a meeting as "a cul de sac into which ideas are lured to be quietly strangled." Even humorist John Cleese (who stars in a well-known training film, *Meetings, Bloody Meetings*) has an opinion as he considers sleepy-eyed attendees at meetings: "A yawn is a silent scream."

Why Managers Dislike Meetings

It goes without saying that people don't do well what they hate to do. Hours spent in meetings may be among the least productive hours in a manager's professional life if the manager approaches such occasions with dread. What precisely do managers dislike about meetings? We gathered responses to that question from 100 West Coast managers across more than a dozen industries to compile the following list of dislikes. You may want to mark these items on a 1 to 5 scale, as described in the directions, to locate your own "hot spots" regarding meetings.

Directions: What are your major complaints about meetings you have attended? Give points: 1–5 (5 = big complaint, 1 = little or no complaint). Try to add at least one "other" at the bottom of this list.

- ___ same people do all the talking
- ___ meeting leader exercises too little control
- ___ meeting leader dominates discussion
- ___ no agenda or poor agenda
- ___ feeling that nothing much was accomplished
- ___ meeting time given to matters that could have been handled individually
- ___ some people just sit there without contributing
- ___ too little advance notice of the meeting
- ___ meeting time interferes with getting the real job done

- ___ discussion rambles on without a clear point or purpose
- ___ wrong people or unnecessary people invited to the meeting
- ___ side conversations among people who aren't paying attention
- ___ no notice or too little notice about what participants are supposed to bring to the meeting (specific data, files, reports, etc.)
- ___ no effort to assign specific responsibility to **DO SOMETHING** about decisions
- ___ unnecessary meetings held only because of the calendar, not the work flow
- ___ meetings always held in the same uninspiring room or location
- ___ participants who interrupt the meeting with irrelevant questions and comments
- ___ cliques and factions among participants who sit together and support one another no matter what the issue
- ___ meetings that start late, with participants sitting around waiting for the rest to arrive
- ___ meetings that run longer than they are supposed to, often for no good reason
- ___ failure of the meeting leader to bring issues to a vote or group decision
- ___ haste on the part of the meeting leader in forcing a quick vote before participants have had a full opportunity to discuss the issues
- ___ participants talking on and on regarding something they know very little about
- ___ meeting leader playing favorites by calling on some people and ignoring others
- ___ interruptions of the meeting by "urgent" phone calls, messages brought in by secretaries, and people unexpectedly called out of the meeting
- ___ participants who spend their meeting time doing text messaging, reading non-meeting materials, or doing other activities at their laptops as if taking notes
- ___ poor records or minutes of the meeting, so that no one is sure what was done at previous meeting
- ___ meetings that are just too long
- ___ complicated handouts that no human being could digest while also paying attention and contributing to the meeting
- ___ too few handouts, with complicated information put out verbally when it could have been conveyed more efficiently in writing
- ___ meetings at the wrong time of the day (perhaps too early in the morning, too late in the afternoon, etc.).
- ___ poor human ergonomic factors at the meeting (perhaps uncomfortable seating, bad light, uncomfortable temperature control, external noise, etc.)
- ___ heated arguments, sarcasm, ridicule of certain people, and general nastiness as the mode of discussion in meetings
- ___ slow, droning talk that goes on and on as the mode of discussion in meetings
- ___ sudden surprises announced at a meeting by the boss when he or she should have told impacted individuals about the surprise prior to the meeting
- ___ one or two particular individuals who just won't shut up to let others contribute
- ___ participants brought into the meeting by speaker phone or computer link, with poor results
- ___ (other) _____
- ___ (other) _____

Reasons Why Company Leaders Perpetuate Bad Meetings

Bad meetings do not simply appear out of thin air. Consider at least nine reasons why organizations of all sizes and descriptions find themselves stuck in the doldrums of unproductive meetings:

- ☐ **Habit.** “It’s what company leaders do. What else would leaders do if they didn’t call meetings?”
- ☐ **Modeling.** “It’s the way we’ve always run meetings here. New managers tend to run meetings the way old managers ran them.”
- ☐ **Display.** “How else will the leader get to the front of the parade? A meeting is a venue for leadership display. A dog show, by comparison, is a place for dog display. How else would we distinguish the winners from the losers?”
- ☐ **Trauma.** “What better time to call particular people onto the carpet. A meeting is the modern equivalent to the village stocks in Puritan times.”
- ☐ **Drama.** “You can’t have a good soap opera without supporting actors and an audience. Meetings are a place where we all get to play our roles. You can’t have human drama in the workplace just by staying in your office.”
- ☐ **Evaluation.** “A meeting is a place to observe the performance of rising managers. The company rockets of the future all began on the launching pad of meetings.”
- ☐ **Update.** “A meeting is an occasion for shared information. How else will the boss get up to speed with what’s happening?”
- ☐ **Sociability.** “A meeting can be justified solely for its role in building morale. It’s the way we all get to know one another.”
- ☐ **Accountability.** “A meeting is a way of putting many people on notice at the same time. The boss wants everyone in one room so no one can say they didn’t know.”

Participating in Meetings

Several suggestions may help you to participate effectively in the meetings you must attend:

- Contribute information
- Show that you listen to others
- Notice nonverbal reactions
- When appropriate, suggest positive alternatives
- Praise whenever possible
- Use your social skills

Contribute Information

It isn’t enough only to contribute or only to give information. Don’t say something just to be able to say that you participated in the meeting, and don’t provide information that really doesn’t contribute to the overall purposes of the meeting. If the meeting’s *agenda* (its stated purpose or its list of topics for discussion) is to discuss sales figures, information on a production process doesn’t contribute to the meeting’s purpose. On the other hand,

don't keep silent when you have an idea or some information that might be valuable to the meeting.

The information needed in meetings isn't always just facts. Sometimes your ideas or opinions are the information needed in a meeting. For example, if the purpose of the meeting is to get everyone's opinion regarding how to respond to a change in your business's market, *do* contribute your opinion. Your opinion is exactly the information needed.

Show That You Listen to Others

In addition to speaking up and contributing to the value of the meeting, listen carefully to what others are saying. Write yourself notes about key ideas, hints, comments, or recommendations brought up in the meeting. Use your notes as a guide when you're deciding how to contribute to the meeting. Try to relate your ideas or comments to the information already given by others. You may also want to follow some of the other suggestions in Chapter 13, on listening.

Suggest Positive Alternatives

When you have listened carefully, you may hear something that you disagree with or that you question. If you aren't sure of something, try to word your question positively, avoiding criticism of the person whom you're questioning. If you disagree with something, try to suggest a positive alternative instead of focusing on how bad the original idea was. At all costs, avoid personally attacking the person whose idea seems wrong or questionable to you. Focus on how to improve the idea or how to achieve the same goal in another way.

Notice Nonverbal Reactions

While you are listening or speaking during a meeting, notice the faces and gestures of the other people in the meeting. Are they agreeing or disagreeing with the ideas? Are they worried about or delighted with the news of changes? Are they confused about what is going on, or do they understand what's being said? Are they enjoying the company of the people in the meeting or are they getting irritated that this meeting is taking too long? Use this nonverbal information to help determine how to contribute to the meeting's goals. In addition, watch your own nonverbal reactions, to make sure that you show support when you feel it.

Praise Appropriately

When someone says something particularly insightful or helpful, sincerely praise the person who did so—either during the meeting or afterward. Some of the things you might praise are things that you might wish you had done yourself, such as when someone

- Summarizes an idea particularly well
- Comes up with a compromise or a synthesis (integration) of several people's viewpoints
- Offers special expertise that gives everyone a new perspective on a problem
- Suggests a solution to a problem

Naturally, if you are the person who can do any of these things, do so.

Use Your Social Skills

As with many other communication experiences in business, your social skills greatly influence how effective you will be. If you show courtesy, cooperation, and appreciation of your co-workers during meetings, you'll probably do very well.

A Participant's Guide to Better Meetings

- ☐ Clear your work calendar for the entire meeting.
- ☐ Read the agenda carefully to determine your possible contribution.
- ☐ Use the "contact person" information on the agenda to resolve any questions and make suggestions.
- ☐ Get your act together for any particular presentation/briefing the chair has asked you to handle.
- ☐ Assemble whatever you need to take with you to the meeting.
- ☐ Arrive a bit early in hopes of starting and ending on time.
- ☐ Sit strategically, not out of habit.
- ☐ Speak up, with eye contact to participants as well as the meeting leader.
- ☐ Listen up, with nonverbal signs that you are interested in what others are saying.
- ☐ Get out of your usual discussion roles (see the following page) to extend your meeting influence.
- ☐ Be aware of talking too much or too little.
- ☐ Avoid distracting side games that demean the attentiveness of others.
- ☐ Keep an eye on the time as a measure of meeting progress.
- ☐ Thank the chairperson if it was a good meeting.
- ☐ Follow up with our assigned responsibilities.
- ☐ Read the meeting minutes carefully as preparation for future meetings.

Leading Meetings

One reward for participating well in business meetings may be that you'll move up in your organization. If so, you may be asked to lead meetings. Consider the following hints and guidelines for conducting effective meetings.

- *Notify all participants about the meeting.* Include, if possible, an agenda—even a tentative one—so that participants can begin to gather their thoughts and notes for the meeting.
- *At the beginning of the meeting, if you have fewer than 20 people attending, ask all participants to introduce themselves.* These introductions not only let people meet one another by name, but also encourage free discussion. Simply by saying his or her name and company position, a participant has broken the ice. Speaking up later in discussion may then be easier.
- *State the purpose of the meeting clearly, but not in a bossy way.* For example, "This afternoon we'll discuss the sales commission structure now used in the company, and any other related matters that seem important to you."

- *State an estimated time for adjournment.* Try to stick to that ending time. "We'll adjourn promptly at 4:00 so that several of you can keep other appointments."
- *Use informal rules of order.* Overly formal controls may discourage discussion in smaller meetings. Because many participants fear "being out of order," they stay silent.
- *Conduct the meeting by using commonsense methods:* Call on a variety of speakers, with fairness to each. Don't let one member of the group dominate discussion ("Let me stop you for a moment, Frank. Does anyone want to respond to the point Frank is making?"). If the discussion turns into a free-for-all, take control of it to reestablish order. ("Just a minute, please. Please. Frances, you had the floor, and Bill after you.")
- *Use a whiteboard, a blackboard, or a flipchart to show everyone the major ideas discussed thus far.*
- *Keep the meeting moving toward its goals.* Do this by providing occasional brief summaries, followed by a question. ("So far, we seem to agree that Wilford Advertising has been too conservative in its representation of our line of clothing. I suppose the next logical question is whether Wilford can come up with more creative approaches. Any comments?")
- *Work toward consensus, not confrontation and early votes.* Try to prevent narrow majorities from dominating vocal and large minorities. Because the company usually has to move ahead with one voice, the meeting should proceed with discussion until compromises and understandings have been worked out that suit almost all members. When this meeting of minds is not possible, allow some outlet for minority opinion—a minority report, for example, or a later meeting to reconsider the issues.
- *Thank all participants for attending the meeting.* As soon as possible, distribute summary notes of the meeting, organized to highlight decisions made and actions recommended.
- *For your own growth as a chair, tape-record several meetings.* (Be sure to ask for the group's permission.) Listen to the tapes. Do you speak too much in the meeting? Are your decisions fair to all members? Can you be heard? Do you keep the meeting on course by occasional brief summaries?

Chairing meetings makes you more visible to upper management. Use this spotlight to showcase your ability, without self-consciousness.

A Leader's Guide to Better Meetings

- ☐ Decide what the meeting is for.
- ☐ Pick the right people for the meeting.
- ☐ Let participants know why the meeting will be held, along with time/date/location/contact person.
- ☐ Organize your time to achieve your results.
- ☐ Create and pass out an agenda that tells who, what, when, why, how, and how much well in advance of the meeting.
- ☐ Distribute stardom to others (in advance of the meeting).
- ☐ Tell others what to bring to the meeting.

- ☐ Pick the right place for the meeting.
- ☐ Start on time.
- ☐ Sit or stand where you will do the most good.
- ☐ Calm (quiet) the overzealous by thanks.
- ☐ Awaken the dead by questions.
- ☐ Abolish side conversations by silence ("Let's wait until George and Alice are back.")
- ☐ Treat even the "jerks" with respect; use good humor to co-opt them.
- ☐ Keep discussion on track by summaries and probes ("So you're saying . . .").
- ☐ Test the waters for decision making.
- ☐ Reach consensus when possible.
- ☐ When consensus is impossible, reach an understanding about how you will move forward.
- ☐ Remind the group about time.
- ☐ Sum up the achievements of the meeting, including specific assignment of tasks and deadlines.
- ☐ Thank participants for what they have achieved.
- ☐ End on time or a bit early (the single masterstroke to popular meeting leadership).
- ☐ Distribute meeting minutes within a day or two after the meeting.

Escaping Our Accustomed Roles in Meetings

By the time we have entered our college or graduate school classes, we have each probably attended hundreds of meetings of one kind or another. Based on our individual social styles and the force of habit, we have settled into a few roles—perhaps four or five at most—that we play over and over as meeting participants and leaders (You may have observed that meetings become somewhat predictable, based on your knowledge of who will attend.)

The dangers, of course, of enacting these habitual roles throughout our business lives are that (a) meetings become boring, since we and others rarely depart from our expected behaviors; (b) our contributions become limited by our roles; and (c) our influence in meetings and our relationships with others in meetings are restricted by our self-chosen constraints.

It is quite possible that we may not recognize the roles we play in meetings unless these behaviors are called to our attention. Take a moment to review the following list of common roles in meetings. Follow the directions to mark each behavior according to the frequency with which you use it.

Directions: Mark blanks below with A = always; S = sometimes; or N = never. Then circle items from your S and N marks that you may want to try in future meetings to extend your influence and keep people from stereotyping (and being able to predict) your meeting behavior.

____ **Questioner:** "Why are we considering this issue . . ."

- ___ *Idea Person*: "Here's one way to handle the problem . . ."
- ___ *Objector*: "I disagree. We ought to be . . ."
- ___ *Bridge-builder*: "John, your point supports what Alice was saying . . ."
- ___ *Motivator*: "Come on, guys, we can solve this problem . . ."
- ___ *Blamer*: "We wouldn't be in this position if the boss hadn't . . ."
- ___ *Clockwatcher*: "We only have fifteen minutes left. Shouldn't we . . ."
- ___ *Agree-er*: "I agree with Ralph. We should . . ."
- ___ *Consensus seeker*: "We all seem to be saying basically the same thing . . ."
- ___ *Consensus delayer*: "Let's not rush to judgment. We still ought to consider . . ."
- ___ *Complimenter*: "I think Susan is making an excellent point . . ."
- ___ *Accuser*: "You're just saying that because your own budget will go up . . ."
- ___ *Derailer*: "How about those 49ers?"
- ___ *Authoritarian* (to the chairperson): "What do you think? Make a call . . ."
- ___ *Cynic*: "We've been over and over this issue. Let's just decide . . ."
- ___ *Divider*: "We've got a majority point of view and a minority point of view . . ."
- ___ *Prober*: "So tell me more about why you think . . ."
- ___ *Judge*: "I think we've done a good job with item one, but a poor job on items two and three."
- ___ *Organizer*: "Let's get all the data out on the table in an orderly way before we start speculating about causes."
- ___ *Emotionizer*: "I've got a bad feeling about this next item. Everyone I talk to seems so negative about it. How do you feel?"
- ___ *Philosophizer*: "Before we spend all our time discussing specific issues, we need to figure out why this item on the agenda even matters to us or anyone else."
- ___ *Energizer*: "It's great to have a chance to kick these ideas around together. I'm so glad Linda called us together for this meeting."
- ___ *Quibbler*: "But take a minute to look at the fourth footnote on page 93 of the report."
- ___ *Closer*: "Yeah, yeah, yeah. Let's vote."
- ___ *Researcher*: "Before we go any further with discussion, we need to go back to reliable sources to find out if . . ."
- ___ *Process Monitor*: "So far three people have been doing all the talking in this meeting. I would like to hear what everyone thinks."
- ___ *Lecturer*: "I'll begin by giving some necessary background and history for this issue. Save any questions for when I'm done."
- ___ *Helper*: "Another point, Bob, that helps to make your case is . . ."
- ___ *Comic*: "That's like the cowboy who met a priest and a rabbi at the Pearly Gates."

**Communication
Checkpoint**
*C-H-E-E-R-S Six
Qualities of an
Effective
Interpersonal
Speaker*

1. *Compliment your listener.* Find something in his or her accomplishments, attitudes, or goals to say a kind word about.
2. *Headline your own points.* Don't leave listeners in the dark about what you're trying to say. Begin by briefly stating your main idea.

I'm concerned about the methods for handling layoffs in the company. [Your listener then knows the purpose of your other points.]
3. *Exemplify your points.* Don't ask your listeners to accept your point of view on faith alone. Point out supporting examples and details. For example:

Our current personnel document makes no reference to length of employment when layoff decisions have to be made.
4. *Enumerate your points for clarity.* For example:

I favor a three-part plan. First, layoffs would occur mainly according to length of employment. Second, sectors of the company with low-profit or with loss records would be subject to layoff first. Third, at least one executive earning over \$45,000 would have to be laid off for every ten regular employees laid off. (Your listener can keep track of your idea.)
5. *Read your listener's face and eyes.* When a question or comment starts to appear, create a break in your own speaking, and welcome the listener's contribution.
6. *Speak sincerely.* This advice goes far beyond rules for communication to include ethics. To be *sincere* means not to lie to your listener, even in small ways. To be sincere means to show genuine emotions, not to fake an emotion to manipulate your listener.

COMMUNICATING VIA THE TELEPHONE

Depending on your position, you may find that many of your interpersonal conversations take place on the telephone. These telephone conversations include interviews of job candidates, meetings by conference call, contacts with clients and co-workers, and many other communications. For that reason, we should consider the special conversational skills required for the business use of the telephone.

Notice, first, how many advantages the telephone holds for business use. You can reach people inexpensively. You can break into a client's busy day without an appointment. You can argue or deliver bad news without the pain of seeing the client's face (or fist). You can get right to the point without the social preliminaries that we attach to in-person visits.

The phone also has limitations. Notice, for example, that you can't pause to think on the telephone. A pause of even a second or two produces the inquiry, "Are you still there?" All decisions made on the telephone are necessarily oral and often are later denied or reinterpreted.

As travel costs continue to rise, however, electronic communication must replace at least some physical contact. We can expect the telephone to play an even larger role in

business life in the future. Already, some million-dollar-a-year firms can use an 800 number and an answering service for orders from national ads. All other work is conducted literally out of a warehouse or storage room.

The BLESS Guidelines

What do you sound like on the phone? One way to find out is to record your end of several conversations over a period of days. (Most answering machines offer this recording feature.) Play back the tape, and when you listen to it, ask yourself whether you sound pushy, monotone, long-winded, or confused. Figure out which qualities you would like to change. Then consider the guidelines summarized in this *B-L-E-S-S* (the telephone) list:

- B—Be likable.
- L—Lead the conversation.
- E—Explain your key points.
- S—Sum up.
- S—Say thanks.

B—Be likable

Because the person on the other end of the line cannot see your facial expressions, you must communicate through your tone of voice. Avoid being abrupt when you begin phone conversations. For business use, practice a smooth, friendly introduction to phone conversations. Greet the person you're calling, giving your own name as soon as possible.

Hello, Mr. Wilkins? This is Sally Jensen at the *Daily News*.

Consciously try to say the "hello" with a smile on your face. The smile will come through in your voice. Right from the beginning, the person you call will know that this will be a friendly call, not another hassle in the business day.

L—Lead the conversation

If you make a phone call, be prepared to lead the conversation to your important topics. In the case of important business calls, you may want to prepare a brief set of notes to which you can refer early in the conversation. Telephone conversation is much like dancing: It takes two, but one must establish the lead. Don't lose your listener by speaking too fast, but don't dawdle either. In most business conversations, you may want to lead until the listener comfortably starts to respond. Don't ask your listener to promise anything or agree to anything before you have stated all the key facts.

E—Explain your key points

In the five to seven minutes of an effective phone conversation, provide explanations and examples of your key points. Occasionally ask the listener, "Do you have any questions?" Ask whether your information or proposal suits the needs of your listener. Try to get your listener to take over the lead, mentioning concerns that you can answer.

S—Sum up

To make sure that you can briefly sum up your points for a conclusion, you should practice midconversation and end-of-conversation summary statements. These brief summaries pull together all the words that have been passing back and forth.

Well, just to sum up: You're willing to back Tracy for the position if she can demonstrate some track record of financial management. Have I understood you correctly?"

The last question "Have I understood you?" gives the listener the chance to answer. It also avoids one-sided decisions about the outcome of the conversation.

S—Say thanks

Appreciation can hardly be overdone. If you are grateful to your listener, say so as specifically as possible. Try to avoid clichés and implied thanks.

Not: "Well, I guess you know how I feel. Bye."

Better: "I want to express my appreciation for your help. Goodbye."

Best: "Thanks, John, for supporting Tracy. It means a great deal to me. I'll talk to you again in a few days. Goodbye."

For many businesses, the telephone is the primary means of getting and keeping business clients. With good reason, employees "BLESS" the telephone when it rings or when they pick it up to call a client.

Eight Hints for Speaking and Listening on the Telephone

1. *Don't shout or whisper.* The amplification equipment in the average telephone has a limited audio range. Extreme volumes will either not be carried at all or will be transmitted in distorted, harsh tones.
2. *Call back to fix a bad connection.* Business calls are too important to risk not understanding what a client is saying. Instead, explain that you have a bad connection (such as one filled with static) and will call back.
3. *Don't talk while the person you're speaking with is still speaking.* If you can't seem to fit a word in edgewise, create pauses by approval statements. Your caller pauses to think about your approval, and you take the opportunity to begin speaking. Approval phrases: "I certainly agree," "You're right," "Good point."
4. *Provide support cues.* Your client will find it unnerving to speak for an extended period into the void of silence. Provide reassurance by occasionally murmuring "yes," "right," "OK," and "uh-huh." These supportive cues encourage your client to tell you more, and to trust that your response will be favorable and accepting.
5. *Vary the tone of your voice.* Telephone equipment tends to make monotones of us all. Counteract this by speaking with expression.
6. *Keep telephone conversations short and to the point.* Clients often hesitate to get too deeply involved in subject matter over the telephone, especially because there is no written record of the conversation. Therefore, use telephone conversation to establish general understandings and to make arrangements for more definitive meetings in person or in writing. Teleconferencing may greatly widen the use of

VOICE MAIL: LEARNING TO TALK TO A CHIP

For all its convenience, voice mail has created a few problems for callers to some companies. "Now that our corporate headquarters has voice mail," complains a southern California training director, "I can't get through to anyone. Managers simply turn on their voice mail and check it from time to time throughout the day. Voice mail has turned out to be a way to avoid taking calls and to screen [the] calls received."

For this reason, when using the telephone, you should prepare yourself for the strong possibility that you will be talking to voice mail, not directly to the person you're trying to call. This preparation takes three forms:

1. *Prepare a clear, concise message.* In a person-to-person telephone call, your business message may come out a bit at a time in the give-and-take of conversation. However, when voice mail answers, you must be prepared to record your message without rambling or awkward pauses. To do so, think through or even jot down key points of your message before you call.
2. *Specify followup information.* After you have recorded your central message, be sure to tell the message receiver exactly what to do next. Do you want a return call? Where and when can you be reached? Are deadlines looming? Is the matter urgent or routine?
3. *Be courteous.* When you reach voice mail, you may feel somewhat disappointed at having to talk to a machine instead of a person. This is actually slightly misleading: You are talking *through* a machine, not to one. Therefore, include in your message all the signs of courtesy and personal warmth that you would use in a live conversation. These human touches can strongly motivate the person listening to your message, who is deciding how to respond to your call.

the telephone for making decisions. This increases the likelihood that final details of negotiations can be made by phone.

7. *Avoid letting your office's background noise limit or hurt the effectiveness of either listener or speaker.* If you suspect that your client cannot hear you well, ask early in the conversation.
8. *Always set the telephone receiver down gently.* Don't let an abrupt crash of the telephone receiver ruin the pleasant ending to your business call. From your client's point of view, a loud crash may prompt the nagging question of why the receiver was banged down. "Did I say something wrong?"

Most telephone companies have business representatives who will be happy to provide your co-workers and employees with telephone-effectiveness materials and seminars. As telephones and televideo equipment and computers become more important, successful businesspeople will use these free services more often.

SUMMARY

1. Meetings at their best are an opportunity to contribute information, show interest, gather information, and nurture relationships.
2. Meetings at their worst are a waste of company money, an opportunity for ego display on the part of the leader and those who dominate discussion, and a public forum for placing blame and delivering punishment.

3. Bad meetings continue to take place in companies due to the forces of habit, tradition, and lack of expectations for productive sessions.
4. Meetings change for the better when both leaders and participants understand their roles and duties in the meeting process.
5. We tend to settle with a few meeting roles and stick with them throughout our professional lives. We can become more influential in meetings if we learn to expand and vary the roles we play.
6. Telephone communication occupies a substantial portion of communication at all levels of business.
7. The BLESS acronym sums up key behaviors to practice for successful telephone interaction.

Cases 18 to 25 in Appendix A are intended to accompany this chapter. Each case provides many opportunities for individual writing, group writing, individual speaking, and group speaking activities.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are some of the benefits and limitations of communicating by telephone?
2. Summarize the guidelines suggested by the acronym, BLESS (the telephone).
3. How might it help to jot down an outline of the points you expect to cover in a telephone conversation?
4. Why is it a good idea to lead business conversation over the phone?
5. Why is it useful to occasionally summarize the points you've covered in a phone conversation?
6. What are some ways to ensure that others participate in and support one another at business meetings?
7. What responsibilities must meeting leaders accept? If you had to choose between leading a meeting and participating, which role would you prefer? Explain your choice.
8. Why is reaching consensus an important ingredient of a successful business meeting?

EXERCISES

1. Do your own survey of attitudes toward business meetings among your classmates. Specifically, what do they like and dislike about meetings in which they have been involved?
2. Create a short "Guide for Better Meetings" addressed to meeting participants. Show what they can do to ensure more efficient, effective meetings.

3. Add a section called "Meeting Leadership" to the "Guide" in Exercise 2. Give step-by-step guidance to the meeting leader who is new to his or her role.
4. Take careful notes of the meeting process in the next extended business or club meeting you attend. What went well or poorly—and why?
5. Before making your next extended phone call, jot down an outline of the points you intend to cover. After the phone call, evaluate it: writing or orally whether this technique helped you achieve your goals in the conversation.
6. Recall a bad experience you've had carrying out a business conversation over the phone. If you could begin that conversation again, how would you prepare for it to ensure that it went more successfully?
7. Recall a positive experience you've had carrying out a business conversation over the phone. Evaluate the factors that made this experience successful.

WEB ASSIGNMENTS

In your rapidly growing start-up company, you're bringing new employees into your workforce each week. A good portion of your own day as Director of Human Resources is spent in selection interviews. Thanks to your training in HR law and techniques, you feel that you are conducting your part of the interview process legally, fairly, and effectively. But you worry that other managers in the chain of interviews during the day are proceeding on a seat-of-the-pants basis, asking any questions (even illegal ones) that come into their heads.

To provide a learning resource for these company managers/interviewers, find several Internet sites on interviewing. Prepare a short presentation or write a memo addressed to managers/interviewers in the company. In your message, explain the legal and strategic importance of conducting professional job interviews. Describe how your managers can use the Internet sites you have discovered to improve their interviewing effectiveness.

You're new in your position as an entry-level associate with a major consulting firm. Typically, the company provides a period of 90 days for orientation and training before you are assigned to projects as a member of a team with experienced senior consultants. Your mentor in the company, Susan Williams, asks you to spend a few hours exploring management communication resources on the Web, then to write up a one-page memo to her in which you

- give your evaluation of the usefulness of Web materials for the kind of training you are now undergoing in the company
- select five websites on different aspects of management communication (Ms. Williams will look at these personally. She wants you to comment on why you think they deserve her special interest.)

After conducting the Internet exploration described above, write the memo addressed to Susan Williams, Director of Management Training.

Use a search engine to investigate the phrase "better meetings." Write a memo (as if to the entire staff of your small company) in which you describe at least three techniques you want your employees to try in order to achieve more productive meetings. Be sure to give credit to your sources.

A PRACTICAL COMMUNICATION DILEMMA

The misuse of company communications. You manage a group of 20 people. The previous manager had the reputation of being a "micromanager," obsessing over such trivia as the number of pencils and pens used by employees and the length of fifteen-minute coffee breaks down to the minute. You have a very different management style, which has been welcomed by your employees and rewarded by their increased productivity. But in this more relaxed, trusting work environment, you have also become aware that company communications are being abused. Some employees openly spend their computer time on ebay or game sites; others don't hide the fact that they are calling relatives, often long distance, on company phones. You imagine that email is being similarly abused. What should you do about this misuse of company communications and company time? How can you enforce policies without falling into the negative role of the previous manager?

CONSIDERING THE ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE

You work for a large national insurance company that contacts potential customers by direct telephone solicitation. A group of 50 callers does nothing all day long but page through telephone books and other lists looking for possible customers to call. An ideal customer for the current marketing campaign is an elderly person living alone, with some savings. A typical script, you learn, goes like this: "Hello, this is Large City Life Insurance calling. We believe you have \$762.00 coming as a result of an insurance settlement. Would you spell your last name for me? No, I'm sorry I can't provide details over the phone due to federal privacy laws that insurance companies have to obey. But our representative, Mr. Franklin, will be in your area tomorrow evening. What would be a good time for him to call on you? It will just take a few minutes to complete the claim form."

You know that this script, read thousands of times each day by your company's telephone solicitors, is just a trick to get a salesperson's foot in the door with a potential customer for insurance (if not for themselves, as a gift for their children or grandchildren). In fact, there is no insurance settlement and no customer will receive \$762.00. But this approach has worked remarkably well in producing "lead-lists"

for salespeople, who through their personal charm and fast talk can usually sell one or more insurance policies at these in-home visits with the elderly.

How would you handle the following developments?

1. Your boss assigns you the task of reviewing the telephone script now being used by your company's telephone solicitors. The boss tells you to recommend changes that will bring even more leads for follow-up calls.
2. As a supervising manager within the company, you must respond to a letter from a customer. He complains that a sales agent from your company called on him under the guise of helping him claim \$762.00, but only wanted to sell life insurance once he got inside the door. Your boss tells you to copy him with the letter you send back to this man.
3. You express your concern to your boss that the company's image will be tarnished by the lies that are being told as part of the telephone solicitation campaign. The boss responds by telling you that all insurance companies have to play upon greed or fear to get their foot in the door with customers. How do you respond?

Ethics and Law for Management Communication

The fantastic advances in the field of electronic communication constitute a greater danger to the privacy of the individual.

Earl Warren, *Supreme Court Justice*

PERSONAL ETHICS: TOUGH DECISIONS

Each of us has personal moral beliefs, and those beliefs differ somewhat from person to person. It is not our purpose here to discover *where* moral beliefs come from, nor to decide *which* moral beliefs are superior to others. Instead, we focus our discussion on the most common ethical dilemma facing business communicators: the tension between being true to personal moral beliefs and remaining loyal to company goals, procedures, policies, and leadership. We then consider a more limited set of public ethics, as reflected in laws pertaining to business communication.

Let's take a case in point. As a midlevel manager, you are told by your boss that a drastic staff reduction in the company is coming within a matter of months. Most of your subordinates, in fact, will be laid off. Your boss specifically tells you "not to breathe a word" about the coming layoffs to your employees, for fear they will desert the company and accept work elsewhere. They're needed, your boss reminds you, to finish up work on a major contract having to do with safe waste disposal for toxic chemicals.

What would you do in this situation? On one hand, your subordinates trust you not to conceal information crucial to their professional and personal well-being. Many of your people could relocate successfully if they knew a staff reduction was coming. If they don't know, they will be among the masses of the unemployed on termination day. Many will lose their homes and medical insurance.

On the other hand, the company trusts you as a manager to support company goals. The company needs a full roster of workers right up to layoff day in order to finish the major contract. Company profits depend on your silence—even your pretense—to your employees regarding firings and layoffs.

Finally, there's the matter of the contract itself—production of a device that safely disposes of toxic waste. Thousands of citizens will benefit directly and indirectly from the manufacture of this treatment machine. Shouldn't their interests be considered?

CONFLICTING VALUES

Review some of the factors you should consider in making ethical choices. Notice that each of these factors has value, which makes the conflict that much harder.

1. *Should you simply obey authority?* Your boss has told you what to do.
2. *What loyalty do you owe to the company and its goals?* You accepted the job, after all, as a manager of company projects.
3. *What loyalty do you owe to your subordinates?* They trust you.
4. *What do you owe to yourself and your own family?* If you act contrary to company goals, you may very well be terminating yourself.
5. *What do you owe to society?* The waste disposal project, if completed, will improve the life of the community.

This situation can become increasingly complex as other factors affect the decisions you make. Can you, for example, participate in interviews for a new engineer—knowing that she's selling her home in California to travel across country to join your company, all (unbeknownst to her) for only a few months of employment before the layoffs? How do you respond in writing to an employee's various requests for promotion or educational support, knowing full well that the employee soon won't have a job? How do you speak on behalf of the company to a group of recently graduated college students looking for employment with your division?

On the other hand, what if you did protest the unfairness of the silence policy to your boss? Does your protest itself relieve you of the responsibility for further ethical decisions and actions? More generally, does your protest get you off the hook for the mistakes of a group? What if you filed a written protest and then still took part in the group's actions?

Choosing a Moral Response

Faced with such ethical dilemmas, an employee can choose to do nothing, quit, work within the system to change things, or blow the whistle on the company's actions. First, by choosing to do nothing (unfortunately, a common choice), the employee passes moral decision making to others. In some cases, unethical business actions have taken place simply because all employees choose to do nothing. Second, the employee can simply quit. This option, while emphatic and attention-getting for a moment, often does little to change the moral mistakes of an organization. Third, an employee can work within company structures to change unethical situations. This process can involve establishing committees, bringing in consultants, and talking to individuals. Finally, an employee can *blow the whistle* on unethical company practices by alerting the press, regulatory agencies, and the general public.

The Process of Making Ethical Decisions

"I'll certainly know right from wrong when the choice comes." Don't let this naive confidence get you into trouble in the hard world of complex decisions. The result all too often is that you may do nothing instead of actively making a decision.

There are no easy answers for many real-world business dilemmas, and no textbook can define precisely the nature or limits of your loyalty to your company, subordinates, or family. However, it is possible to describe the *process* that many businesspeople use when reaching difficult ethical decisions. The following questions suggest the kind of internal dialogue that you might consider during your decision-making process:

1. *How does the decision affect me?* Assess what you have to gain or lose and how you feel about the situation.
2. *How does the decision affect others?* Review as objectively and accurately as possible the impact of your decision on other people, including society at large.
3. *Is there a compelling reason to put the welfare of others ahead of my own welfare?* No one of us is entirely altruistic. What in the situation may lead you either to prefer or to put aside your own interest?
4. *If my decision were repeated by others in comparable situations, what kind of world would emerge?* Picture your decision as one spark touching off other sparks that eventually lead to a bonfire. What kind of society or business climate is eventually created or destroyed by your decision?

The answers that you find in such soul-searching are deeply personal and often can't be rationally defended to someone who does not share your personal system of values. They are nonetheless *your own* ethical conclusions and should form the basis of your communications and other actions.

In the termination case, for example, you might decide to obey your boss's command not to tell the workforce of the coming staff reduction. You might reason (and feel) that your employees are adults who have entered into the management-labor arrangement of the company by their own choice and without coercion. While the disruptions to their lives brought about by the staff reduction are regrettable, you feel that there is no obligation on the part of the company or its managers (including yourself) to give up company projects for the sake of the workers' welfare. Besides, you decide, the nature of the project—a waste disposal system—is itself important for social improvement. The life disruptions of dozens of employees should not stand in the way of safe living conditions for thousands of community members.

On the other hand, you might decide to warn your employees (privately, perhaps) of the coming terminations. You may be willing to take the risk that your boss might find out about your disclosure, particularly as your employees begin to leave the company for other work, but that's a risk you're willing to take.

You might even take a bolder stand, confronting your boss with what you call "deception" being practiced on employees who have been loyal to the company. You insist that you won't use others in this way, even if it means giving up your job. Your boss fires you on the spot, creating hardship for your own family, though your subordinates are now warned about the coming layoffs. As you stand in the unemployment line with your former subordinates, you decide that at least you've had the moral satisfaction of having acted according to your beliefs.

TYPICAL MORAL DILEMMAS CONFRONTING BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS

Sooner or later, you'll probably communicate (through speaking or writing) what you decide to do in an ethically problematic situation. Here are five arenas in which business communicators often have to make ethical decisions:

Cosmetic Half-truths

Through the power of words, a shred of truth can be made to seem larger and more attractive than it really is. A job opening, for example, can be dishonestly described to a candidate as a "sure stepping-stone to promotion," when in fact only two of the six people to hold the position in the past were promoted.

Outright Lies

Managers often feel pressure to tell clients and colleagues blatant lies—usually with the purpose of "buying time" until more favorable results or action is possible. A company with sagging sales, for example, might tell potential investors that business is great, with the goal of gaining the investors' money and producing the promised sales levels. A manager may look his or her boss in the eye and declare that a report is "almost ready for final printing," when the manager really hasn't even started writing the report.

Unethical Company Practices

Employees at all levels may find the actions of their company morally objectionable. The company, for example, may be selling lethal weapons both to an insurgent group fighting dictatorship and to the dictator's forces as well. The company may covertly be gaining unfair advantage over competitors by using industrial espionage and payoffs.

Harmful or Potentially Harmful Actions by the Company

At times, employees may object on ethical grounds to the impact of company products or services on society. Perhaps a corporation markets "Tastes Good!" foodstuffs that have little nutritional value to impoverished, undereducated countries whose citizens don't know what they're buying. Or, as in the case of recent automobile recalls, the manufacturer may save a few dollars per car by leaving off a safety feature crucial to the welfare of the consumer.

Company Allegiances

Employees may also have moral reservations about the causes, regimes, and political or social movements supported by the company. Millions of corporate dollars flow to candidates, organizations, and political action groups from companies each year. It is unlikely that each and every employee in the corporation morally agrees with all of the company's affiliations and allegiances.

ETHICS: MORAL VERSUS LEGAL ISSUES

Most of your ethical decisions in these and other situations will be influenced by the moral choices you make. Note that these are *ethical* decisions, not legal matters. In the case of the unexpected layoffs, no law dictates that senior management must tell its future staffing plans, including layoffs, far in advance to the workforce. Unfortunately, this doesn't make the issues any less urgent: Even to decide *not* to face moral questions is itself an ethical choice.

Some moral decisions do become legal issues. When society reaches consensus about what a person should do, society establishes laws that dictate the behaviors each member of society should follow. Laws are said to be *reactive* because they respond to the presence of undesirable behavior; morals are *proactive* because they attempt to prevent undesirable behavior.

In addition, when evaluating the moral implications of a company's or individual's actions, it is often helpful to distinguish between moral duties and moral ideals. *Moral duties* are rules necessary for the ordinary functioning of society. "Don't steal" and "don't molest," for example, are rules to be followed by all citizens who wish to live in a normal community. By contrast, *moral ideals* are goals that we may strive to reach, but they are seldom reached entirely. "Be understanding" and "be completely truthful" are moral ideals that we may approach but never fully achieve in all situations.

Unfortunately, when you are acting on behalf of a company, your ethical choices and your actions are even more complicated. Your moral choices as a representative (an *agent*) of your company reflect on the integrity and image of your company. What's more, what you say and do on behalf of your company may legally obligate your company in ways that your company wouldn't appreciate. In fact, everything you communicate as a representative agent of your company may have some legal consequences.

THE LEGAL CONSEQUENCES OF GIVING YOUR WORD

Since the signing of the Magna Carta, business law in all Western nations has placed substantial weight on the *giving of one's word*, in oral or written form. Instead of shedding blood or piling up stones, we finalize business transactions and understandings in three ways.

1. *Words of commitment*: we will, we agree to, we promise
2. *Acts of commitment*: the use of signatures and seals
3. *Documents of commitment*: deeds, notes, letters, and contracts

Therefore, businesspeople must take their words seriously, not only as vehicles for communication, but also as significant legal instruments. In a memo, letter, or proposal, your words influence the affairs of others. Sometimes that influence proves negative: you must deny a promotion, file a claim, demand payment, or turn down a proposal. How do people respond? Often, they fight you, sometimes in court. They may cite your words as evidence against you.

If, for example, you call a competitor a "thief" or "liar" in the presence of others, your words can return to haunt you as evidence in a slander suit. At other times, your words may arouse expectations in others. Clients may trust your evaluation of a home for

sale as “\$20,000 under market price.” Buyers may rely on a piece of paper assuring the serviceability of a washing machine. When these expectations are dashed, people return to your words as evidence that they have been misled.

These scenarios of blame, anger, and disappointment are not intended to say that every client wants to sue. The great majority of your words—even those written in haste and poor judgment—will not face legal review or challenge, but some will. Unfortunately, not everyone wins in the real world of business. When your company wins a major contract, several other companies have lost the competition. When you as a salesperson capture 50 percent of your sales territory, other salespersons are falling behind.

People and companies fight for financial survival with every means at their disposal, including legal suit. If your success acts detrimentally upon their survival, they will review the means by which you achieved your success. If they find (or think they find) questionable business practices, they may seek legal actions. Primary evidence in such suits, of course, will be your words, as found in memos, letters, advertisements, contracts, reports, and so forth.

The purpose of this chapter is not to offer specific legal advice for such moments, but instead to suggest areas of legal vulnerability for the business communicator. Learn to avoid these areas of legal hazard through becoming aware and alert to their existence.

The stakes are high. Misspoken and miswritten communications each year cost people their careers and cost companies their profits. Court-awarded damages stemming from ill-chosen words easily run to more than \$1 million per day in American courts.

To become more aware of areas of legal vulnerability, we can assess the major laws pertinent to six key areas of interest for every business communicator:

1. You and your employer
2. You and your files
3. You and your customer
4. You and your employees
5. You and the government
6. You and your product or service

In each of these areas, business communicators should weigh the legal implications of their words with care.

You and Your Employer

As an employee, the chances are good that you function as a legal agent for the company. Your status as an agent for the company is implied by your employment. Being a company's *agent* means, simply, that the company is responsible for your work-related actions and words. Your words, especially on paper, are as binding for the company as if they had been penned by the chairperson of the board.

When writing on company letterhead or when identifying yourself by your job title, you probably cannot escape your role as agent even if you use such disclaimers as “speaking unofficially” or “off the record.” Nor can the company escape responsibility by claiming that your words did not reflect the will of the management or board of directors. Your employment itself marks the company's implicit obligation to supervise your activities and pronouncements.

For the sake of the company as well as for your career, exercise judgment, discretion, and a high degree of legal awareness when you write memos, letters, proposals, and reports involving any of the following:

- Personnel hiring and firing
- Claims
- Warranties, commitments, assurances
- Contracts
- Labor negotiations
- Tax planning
- Pricing policies
- Interstate trade
- Formal charges, complaints
- Legal questions
- Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity matters
- Reference letters
- Sales letters representing products and services
- Any topic over which tempers might run high

This long cautionary list is not intended to discourage you from writing entirely. Instead, it is intended to remind you to exercise care in the words you choose. Often, you may decide to seek legal counsel before *publishing* your words (in the legal sense, publishing means to make them known to another party).

Few companies, however, can afford to place a lawyer at the side of each of their business communicators. Therefore, many companies provide their writers with guide letters, to suggest legally approved wording for problematic letters. In the case of a termination guide letter, for example, the legal staff of a company takes time to weigh the legal ramifications of each word in the letter before recommending its use. In Figure 16-1, notice how the guide letter prevents potential legal entanglements when compared to an original letter on the same topic, Figure 16-2. Guide letters and form letters, which restrict the writer's freedom, can prevent disastrous legal complications.

When employers do not provide guide letters for legally hazardous areas of communication, the burden falls on the business writer to check out the legal risks involved in his or her words. By the way, simply typing "Personal" or "Confidential" on the envelope or letter in no way shields your words from legal review.

In business dealings for your employer, remember that oral agreements are vastly more difficult to enforce than written agreements. When transacting business, therefore, insist on a written and signed statement describing the terms of the agreement at hand. If the other party is unwilling to give written commitment, you have reason to beware of deception and dishonesty.

In Communispond's survey of 200 executives, managers expressed an almost unanimous desire that business communications be brief. In the light of the legalities of business language, concise business communications have less chance of straying into legally hazardous territory. In Figure 16-3, notice how the longer version of the "no" letter sets the company up for future legal trouble when compared to the shorter letter in Figure 16-4.

FIGURE 16-1 Guide Letter Suggested by Legal Staff

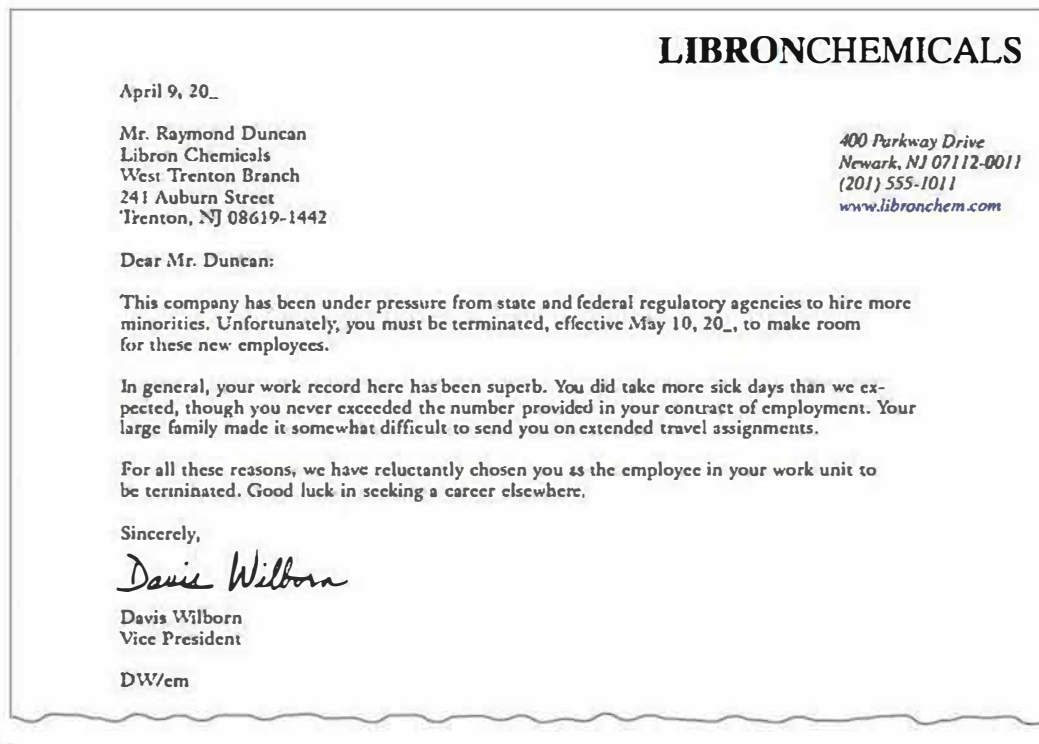
LIBRONCHEMICALS	
April 9, 2005 Mr. Raymond Duncan Libron Chemicals West Trenton Branch 241 Auburn Street Trenton, NJ 08619-1442	400 Parkway Drive Newark, NJ 07112-0011 (201) 555-1011 www.libronchem.com
Dear Mr. Duncan:	
I must inform you that your employment with Libron Chemicals will be terminated, effective May 10, 20_.	
This action has been taken in compliance with company personnel policies and applicable state, federal, and union regulations. Copies of these policy documents may be obtained at the company personnel office.	
If you have questions regarding this action, please contact Marion Hart at 555-2953.	
Sincerely,	
	
Davis Wilborn Vice President	
DW/em	

Many companies sponsor regular legal seminars in which lawyers discuss current danger areas with business writers. A number of excellent books and articles also deal with the legal aspects of business communications.

You and Your Files

When your company faces suit in court, attorneys for the *plaintiff* (the party pressing charges) will make an effort to gather supporting evidence and documentation, both by *subpoena* and by *deposition* (legal mechanisms to draw pertinent information into the open). Your files may contain letters, notes, memos, and other communications which, though written in good faith, can be turned against you and your company.

Be careful not only about what you write, but what you save. Many companies have purge policies, requiring managers to shred business documents more than three years old (the time expiration for most tax matters). Other companies establish and enforce strict photocopy rules. Some documents absolutely may not be photocopied and hence are marked "For Eyes Only" or "Do Not Copy." These documents frequently contain details of future product planning, marketing strategies, or personnel decisions. Almost all companies take precautions in disposing of documents. Trash bins are hunting grounds for a variety of interested parties: activists, seeking to build a case against a company;

FIGURE 16-2 Original Letter, Flawed by Obvious Legal Snares

industrial spies, looking for product details; and even government agents, trying to establish tax or regulatory violations.

You and Your Customer

Not only good business practice but also the law dictate that you communicate with the customer in a truthful, timely, and unambiguous way.

Warranties and Guarantees

The Consumer Product Warranty Act and Federal Trade Commission Improvement Act of 1975 specifically prohibit companies from using difficult, ambiguous language to hide information or contingencies that a customer needs to know. In the following garble, can you spot the hidden disclaimer in favor of the company?

... furthermore, the party of the first part does warrant said product for a period of time not to exceed ninety days, during which time said party shall repair or replace a product proven defective by independent examination, if the putative defect proves, in said party's judgment, not to stem from user-induced causes.

FIGURE 16-3 Longer Letters Can Stray into Illegal Areas



In other words, the company will decide whether or not you abused your wiggit. If so, the company will not repair or replace it.

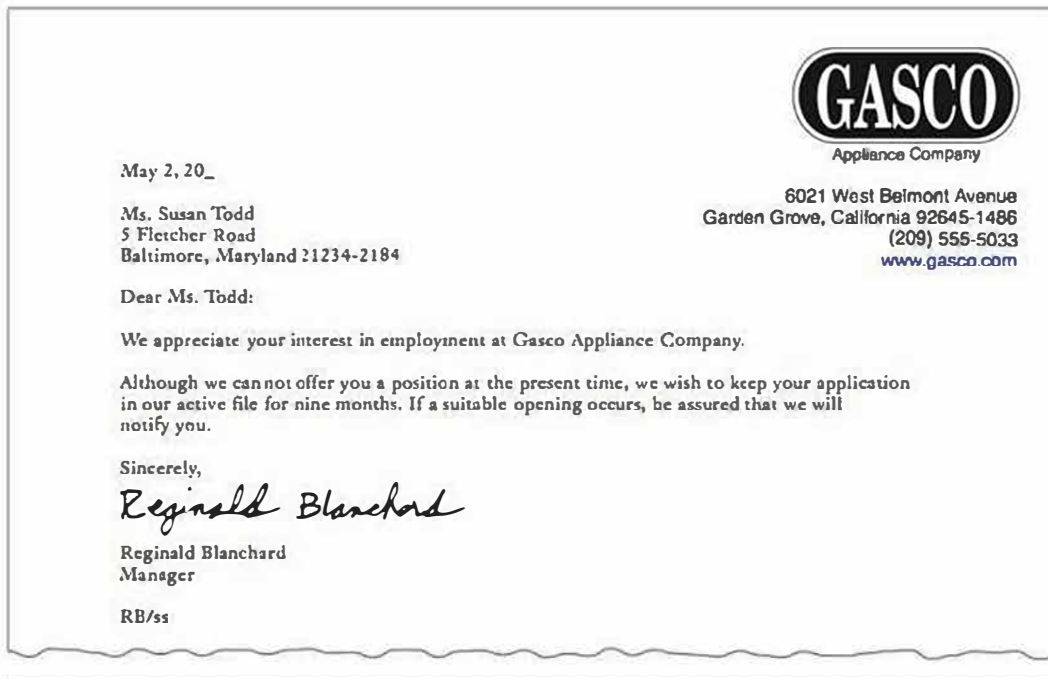
In plain English (and legal English since the 1975 legislation), this warranty speaks clearly:

Acme Industries will stand behind this product for 90 days from the date of purchase. If the product fails to perform properly during this time, return it to Acme Industries. We will promptly repair or replace the product, at our option, and return it to you without charge.

Credit

Since the passage of the Fair Credit Billing Act of 1974, managers have had to exercise extreme care in how they determine creditworthiness and what they put into writing once they make their determination.

As we would expect, prejudices against color, race, religion, and national origin are strictly prohibited by the legislation. In addition, managers must avoid considering a credit applicant's age (hence, future years of high earning potential) or marital status. Nor may

FIGURE 16-4 Short Letters Can Avoid Illegal Areas

they inquire about future plans for a family. Managers may not ask a married woman to obtain the signature of her husband on the application, if it is her desire to establish credit in her own name.

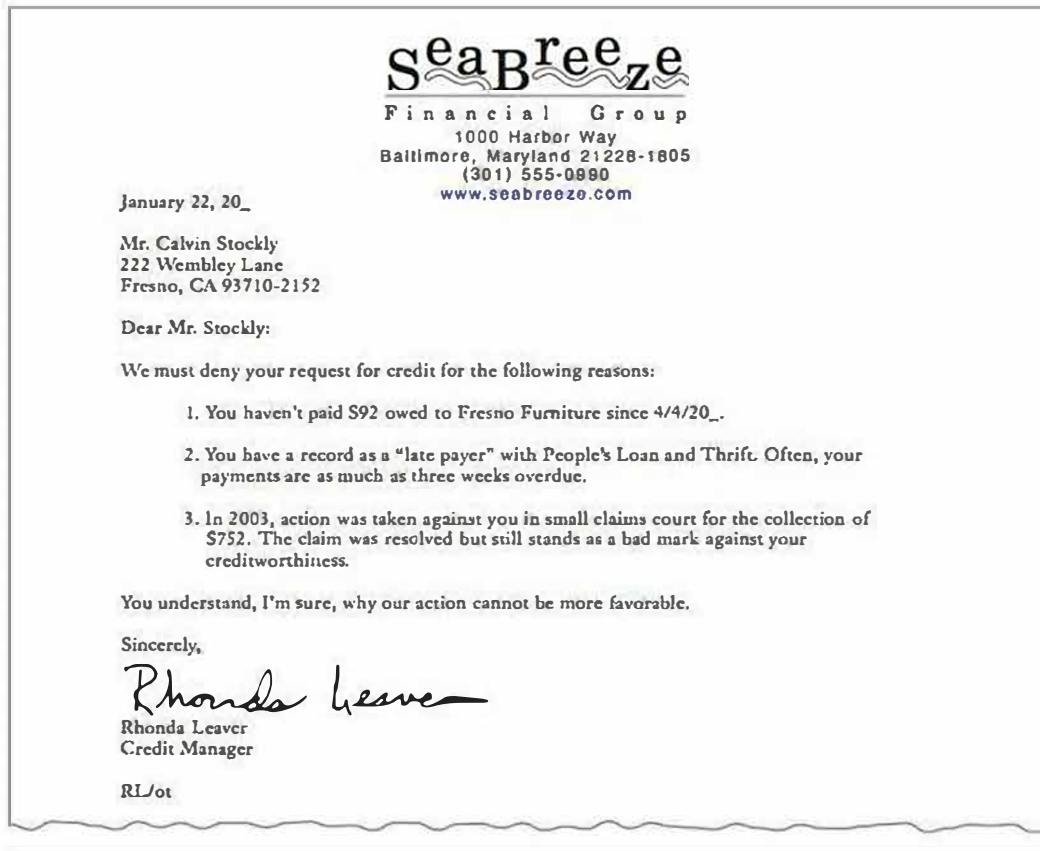
Credit refusals, according to the law, must be written to the applicant. Here managers do well to state the refusal without detailed explanations and evaluations. Compare the two letters of refusal shown in Figures 16-5 and 16-6.

Collections

In 1978, the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act placed strict limits on collection procedures.

- When you can contact someone who owes you money
- How many times you may call
- To whom you may write (not employers or relatives)
- What you may say
 - No false impressions (a collection letter marked "Tax Information")
 - No threats ("... or you'll regret it.")
 - No slanderous language

FIGURE 16-5 Wordy Credit Refusal that May Be Legally Hazardous



- What you must provide
 - Timely responses
 - Accurate records
 - Understandable documents

Because collection practices have such a marred history, legislation is strict—with potent financial and criminal penalties for violators. Any business writer drawing up collection letters should read the pertinent legislation and also seek legal review for letters before they are mailed out.

You and Your Employees

As a manager, you will communicate often with and about your employees. In many cases, what you say and how you say it are prescribed in federal and state legislation.

FIGURE 16-6 Effective Credit Refusal



Privacy

Inevitably as an employer, you will hold in your possession employee documents containing personal information—age, marital status, health history, employment performance records, reference letters, and security clearances. Since the passage in 1974 of the Federal Privacy Act and subsequent state legislation, strict regulations guide how you can use this information and to whom you may show it.

Most companies develop personnel policy documents to set forth, both for managers and employees, the ground rules by which confidential information is to be handled. If your company has such policies, follow them. If not, exercise caution when revealing to a third party any fact, opinion, or assumption based on confidential knowledge. When in doubt, seek legal advice. Many managers make a practice of asking the employee in question to grant signed permission before revealing confidential information.

Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action

A massive body of law now surrounds the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972. Managers are constrained by law not to

consider race, religion, age, sex, land of birth, or physical impairments in making hiring and firing decisions. None of these items, therefore, should appear even by innuendo in any business document relating to employment.

Probably the most visible result of these laws has been the establishment of Affirmative Action programs in companies large and small. Contrary to the oversimplifications we sometimes hear, Affirmative Action programs do not hire minorities at all costs. Instead, these programs try to evaluate the hiring and firing policies of the company. Have certain groups been omitted from consideration or been treated unequally once hired? If so, why? The result of this evaluation leads many companies

- To advertise job openings more widely
- To adjust pay and position inequities within the company
- To plan for the inclusion of slighted groups

These goals may seem hopelessly idealistic, but federal and state legislation has put teeth into Affirmative Action reforms by awarding government contracts contingent upon solid progress in bringing minority groups into the company.

People with Disabilities

The Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1995 started a flood of legislation protecting people with disabilities against discrimination in the workplace. Private and public foundations have made extensive use of radio and television time to remind employers how valuable—in dollar-and-cents terms—people with disabilities can be as employees. Some federal grant and tax programs now provide incentives for employers who hire and train these individuals. The question is now, Can he or she do the job? and no longer, Do I want to hire a person with disabilities?

Labor Relations

In all matters related to communication with workers, managers should be guided by the Labor-Management Relations Act as interpreted in the many publications of the National Labor Relations Board. Communications during periods of unionization and strikes are particularly subject to close regulation. Managers, for example, cannot threaten or bribe employees in matters related to labor movements and negotiations. Even subtle suggestions (“You won’t ever regret voting ‘no’ . . .”) are strictly prohibited. Before making public statements on labor matters, managers do well to seek legal advice.

Recommendations

Prior to 1974 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, managers wrote letters of recommendation on the assumption that they would never be seen by the person being evaluated. Too often, falsehoods and half-truths contained in such “carte blanche” letters went uncorrected. Sometimes these negative comments dogged the steps of an employee for years, a secret and unexpungable ledger in his or her employment file.

Legislation now permits virtually all students and many employees to review their own letters of recommendation, unless they have signed a waiver to that right. Therefore, managers writing reference letters must choose words that in no way can be interpreted

as libelous (defamation in writing). While no absolute measurement can be taken, letters of recommendation have taken a definite turn away from negative comments since 1974. Some say this development has been less than helpful to employers seeking accurate recommendations. Others welcome the new emphasis on what a prospective employee *can* do rather than what he or she *can't* do. Many managers who feel they must include negative judgments in a letter of recommendation simply turn down the request to write a letter.

You and the Government

Over your business career, you will send hundreds of pages of written commitments to governmental agencies. These pages will include tax documents, regulatory forms, incorporation papers, and a host of other filings. In drawing up these documents, take into account the special challenges posed by the Freedom of Information Act of 1966.

Businesses routinely send product, process, and service descriptions to governmental agencies. These documents are now available for public view—including the close inspection of competitors eager to discover trade secrets, formulas, assembly details, and so forth. The business writer faces the challenge of satisfying government requirements for information without divulging valuable company secrets.

A second set of strict government laws involves the use of the mails. The purpose of the dozens of laws pertaining to the mails is to eliminate fraud in its various guises.

The following opening of a come-on letter, for example, defrauds the public by deceitfully and cruelly offering what it cannot deliver:

Dear Health-Conscious Reader,

Has cancer touched your family? If so, rush \$39.50 for a six month supply of Vaccitabs—the only tablet guaranteed to drive cancer out of a diseased body and away from a healthy body . . .

Legislators have felt that this kind of communication lures the most vulnerable members of society. When the pills turn out to be mere flour and sugar, the buyer has little recourse. For all practical purposes, he or she cannot sue for \$39.50, especially if the company is out of state. Hence, legislation makes it illegal to promote fraud by means of the mail.

While you undoubtedly have no intention of hawking false cures by mail, you may plan to use the post for direct sales or prospect letters. Obtain and read postal regulations that apply to such sales. If you are unsure whether your words match your product in a fair way, seek legal advice.

You and Your Product or Service

With the passage of the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act of 1966 came new standards, particularly for the words that accompany products and services on labels, packages, and instructions. Claims made in these forms may express the manufacturer's enthusiasm for the product ("New! Incredible!"). Labels cannot deceive the consumer by falsehoods, exaggerations, misleading comparisons, and inaccurate specifications. Lined leather gloves,

for example, may be advertised to be “as warm as toast,” but not as having “rabbit fur lining” when, in fact, synthetic material was used.

To abide by such laws and the wider demands of integrity, managers must often exert a restraining influence on the enthusiasms of ad writers and marketing specialists. What may seem innocent and mild overstatement regarding a product can too easily mushroom into a legally inappropriate deception in court.

Equal care must be taken not to infringe copyright laws. When a document is published, it bears a copyright designation identifying the person or company owning rights to the work. Extended passages from the copyrighted document cannot be reproduced for commercial purposes by others. Your professor, for example, cannot legally mimeograph 30 copies of a good grammar worksheet he or she finds in a copyrighted workbook.

When you need to borrow sections of a copyrighted work, write to the publisher or holder of the copyright for permission to use the passages.

SUMMARY

1. Ethical dilemmas common in business include half-truths, outright lies, unethical practices, harmful actions, and unsavory company allegiances.
2. Responses to ethical dilemmas include tolerance, resignation, and attempts to work within the system for change.
3. Your employer can be held liable for words you write on company stationery or as an agent for the company.
4. Communications involving employment are constrained by many laws and regulations. Business communicators should know these legal provisions before writing employment-related documents.
5. The language of warranties and guarantees must meet legal guidelines.
6. Communications involving credit and collection are especially vulnerable to legal actions. They should be reviewed by an attorney familiar with business law.
7. Language used in letters or documents to federal, state, or city agencies must be evaluated with care for potential legal hazards.

Cases 18 to 25 in Appendix A are intended to accompany this chapter. Each case provides many opportunities for individual writing, group writing, individual speaking, and group speaking activities.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why is it important for business communicators to take their words seriously as legal instruments?
2. Daily, how much money do American courts award in damages stemming from ill-chosen words? What does this figure suggest to you about the legal ramifications of your business communications?

3. Is it possible to escape your role as a legal agent of your company when working on company time?
4. What general topics or writing assignments in particular pose legal hazards for the business writer?
5. What is a *guide letter*?
6. In what way does being brief help to avoid legally hazardous territory?
7. Why should you be especially cautious when writing memos that will be stored in company files?
8. What guidelines did the Consumer Product Warranty Act and Federal Trade Commission Improvement Act of 1975 establish for business communications?
9. How does the Fair Credit Billing Act of 1974 affect managers' decisions about their customers' creditworthiness?
10. What limitations does the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act of 1978 place on writers of collection letters?
11. Why is it important for employers to keep their employees' personnel files private?
12. What effects have Affirmative Action programs had on businesses' hiring and firing policies?
13. What should employers keep in mind when writing letters of recommendation?
14. What is the Freedom of Information Act, and how does it affect the business writer?
15. What guidelines are set forth in the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act of 1966?

EXERCISES

1. Research slander and libel cases in a local law library. Bring a case to class and share it with your classmates. How could litigation have been avoided?
2. Ted Benson, a lathe operator with CDC, Inc., has applied for a newly opened management position with the company. He seems qualified to do the job. The only spots on his work record are a few late arrivals to work and an unwillingness to work overtime. He also has no college degree. The real problem, however, is his personality. The two managers with whom he'd be working closely, Sandra Samuelson and Don Starman, have told you that he's an "obnoxious twit." You are assigned to write a letter to Ted turning down his application for advancement in the company. Consider the legal ramifications of the message.
3. Carla Bonoff has applied for credit with your wholesale supply company. However, a quick check with TRW reveals that Ms. Bonoff never pays her bills on time and is delinquent on several accounts. You think it would be unwise to take a chance. Write a letter turning down her application for credit.
4. When Henry Collier worked as plant manager for RanTech Corporation, he contacted your architectural firm, asking you to design a new employee lounge to be added to

the company's main building near the cafeteria. Three weeks later, when you called to set up an appointment to present the plans to Mr. Collier, you discovered that he had left RanTech for greener pastures. The Vice President of Operations currently fulfilling Collier's old duties said he knows nothing about the plans, and denied that RanTech owed you any money for your work, since Collier had not gone through the proper channels before contracting you. You argue that Collier was acting as a legal agent for RanTech when he hired you. Write a letter to RanTech asking for your payment.

5. Joel Kincaid has been a valuable employee with your company for more than two years. Recently, you were saddened to discover that he had contracted AIDS. While the disease has certainly affected his usually cheerful personality, his work seems to be up to par. However, his fellow employees don't want to work near him. They fear that they might contract the disease and have written a petition to you asking that Joel be fired. The company has a responsibility to all its employees, and in this case, the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few, they argue. Consult with the company physician and make a decision. Then write one letter to Joel and another addressed to the petitioners, presenting your decision. What are your legal responsibilities in this situation?
6. Elizabeth Pope is seriously delinquent on her student loan payments. She owes eight months of payments and contact letters have produced no results. It's time for a stronger collection letter. Write one, but consider your legal responsibilities under the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act of 1978.
7. In today's mail, you received a letter from Peter Bagdasarian, a recent job applicant to your company. Apparently Peter has a friend at DataTron; the friend told him that an African American woman had been hired instead of him because of the company's Affirmative Action policy. Bagdasarian's tone in the letter was angry. He feels qualified for the job and is threatening to bring reverse discrimination charges against DataTron. Write him a letter before he takes this unnecessary troublesome action.
8. Leo Musgrove was recently let go from DataTron because of his abuse of sick leave time. Oddly enough, he has asked you, his department manager, to write a letter of recommendation for him. You explain that it would be difficult to recommend him for the exact reason that he was let go. He says that he must have a letter, even if you have to tell the truth. His work for the company was adequate—he just wasn't around to do it often enough. Additionally, you like Leo, so you want to help him out. Write a letter of recommendation, but be honest to your reader, as well as helpful to Leo.
9. Interview a manager or other businessperson about the importance of ethics in work. Ask your interviewee to recount stories of unethical behavior he or she has heard of in business and the results of that behavior. Summarize the interview in writing.
10. Interview a law student or a lawyer about the difference between ethics and laws. Based on your conversation, describe the difference in writing.
11. Does your company or any organization to which you belong publish a recommended code of ethics for students? If so, evaluate that code in writing. If not, try to create a sample code. Explain each of the points you include in this code.
12. Write a dialogue between two businesspeople with differing ethical perspectives. One believes in survival ethics—"I do whatever is necessary to get ahead." The other

believes in more altruistic values—"I base my actions on what's good for the whole community."

13. Working together in a writing team with several classmates, create a general ethical code for business. You may want to consult similar codes already in existence for physicians, accountants, and others. In creating this code, note areas of disagreement among team members. Were disagreements resolved by consensus? By vote? Can ethical disagreements be resolved by majority vote?

WEB ASSIGNMENTS

Managing a major retail auto sales company has proven to be an exciting and profitable career for you. Each day you get to meet new people, solve a wide range of customer problems, and develop better ways to sell the line of cars and trucks you represent.

To date, your company has no code of ethics to guide the actions and conversations of your salespeople with their customers. See what other companies have done in this area and find guidelines for setting and enforcing ethical and legal standards within your company. Compile a list of sites particularly helpful to you in writing a code of ethics to be taught to each salesperson in your organization and placed in a frame in each salesperson's office. Make up whatever business details you require to complete this assignment.

Imagine that your boss has given you the task of writing a first draft of a company code of professional conduct. Use a search engine to investigate phrases such as "code of conduct" and "corporate ethics" to locate and review what other companies have developed. Make your draft statement no longer than half a page. On a separate sheet, record the URLs where several other company codes of conduct or ethics can be found.

A PRACTICAL COMMUNICATION DILEMMA

Preparing to Terminate an Employee. You manage a group of twelve. One worker, Felice, has been a member of your group for a year but has not worked out well. You have not decided to terminate her, but you are considering that action. Her productivity is well below those of her co-workers. Every few weeks she seems to come up with a new "emergency" necessitating several days away from work. She does not relate well with her co-workers. Her attitude is sullen. She does exactly what she is told and takes no initiative to perform tasks that are obviously required but not specifically spelled out in her work instructions. You want to communicate your difficulties with Felice to your immediate supervisor. You struggle, however, to decide whether to commit these matters to writing to your supervisor (where they become part of a formal record) or to talk them out. You worry about talking to your boss about the problem. She tends to jump to immediate conclusions—"Fire her right away!"—rather than listening to all the circumstances. Describe which communication channels you would use—and why—to communicate the full story regarding Felice's performance to your boss.

A MASTERCASE FOR COMMUNICATION ETHICS

Assume that, at Lands' End, 40 percent of your business comes through college bookstores and university-related retail outlets. How will you respond to this crisis? What specific communication channels and approaches will you use to address the crisis? What ethical issues seem most important to you in this situation?

Read the following article from *The Hoya* (Georgetown University's student newspaper).

Georgetown has decided to indefinitely suspend its contract with Lands' End, the clothing manufacturer that produced licensed Georgetown apparel, because of its alleged failure to comply with the university's Code of Conduct.

Questions about Lands' End's compliance with the code were raised last year by an independent monitoring group that investigates worker complaints.

Georgetown licensees agree to comply with the code, which calls for fair and just business practices consistent with the university's Jesuit tradition and mission of social responsibility. It states that Georgetown "will only do business with licensees whose workers are present at work voluntarily, not at undue risk or physical harm, fairly compensated and not exploited in any way."

In a January 22 letter to Lands' End, Daniel Porterfield, vice president for public affairs and strategic development, cited the company's failure to uphold the code and to "recognize and respect the right of employees to freedom of association and collective bargaining."

Georgetown has been communicating with Lands' End since March 2003, when the independent monitoring group, Worker Right Consortium, questioned the company's practices.

Their inquiry was prompted by a worker who complained that he had been denied employment by a factory that produced Lands' End goods. He said the factory in Primo, El Salvador, had blacklisted him and other suspected trade unionists.

In response to Georgetown's decision, Lands' End has asserted its work with another independent monitoring organization, the Fair Labor Association.

"Lands' End is working actively with [FLA], Primo and other organizations to immediately develop and implement a corrective action plan to remedy any discrimination that may have been experienced at the factory in El Salvador . . . We will work to ensure that discrimination does not occur at this factory and to ensure that all other factories that supply Lands' End respect workers' rights," said Chris Mordi of Lands' End Corporate Communications.

Georgetown's decision comes at a time of increased campus activity nationwide, said Emil Totonchi (School of Foreign Service, '06), a member of Georgetown's Licensing Oversight Committee (LOC). In the past two months, colleges across the country have staged protests and sit-ins against Lands' End's practices at Primo.

Over 100 American universities—including Yale, Princeton, and Harvard—have contracts with Lands' End, according to United Students Against Sweatshops.

"It's ironic that as students we wear these emblems that represent an institution we're proud of, yet they're made in conditions that contradict the values we try to uphold," LOC member Megan Murphy said.

This isn't the first time Georgetown has delayed renewing a licensee contract. In December 2001, the LOC suspended its agreement with New Era Cap Company, which produced Georgetown hats, when similar concerns arose over the company's failure to comply with the Code of Conduct.

The university reinstated its contract months later, however, when it said noticeable improvements had been made.

"The assumption is that if [they] change and better their practices, we will do business with [them]," Murphy said.

Lands' End's contract is formally up for renewal January 31. Until then, Totonchi said, Georgetown will maintain communication with the WRC and Lands' End with the intent of improving conditions and alleviating worker complaints.

Meanwhile, Totonchi said that the LOC has been successful in effecting positive change.

"It's amazing that Georgetown has this organization. Most of the time it doesn't happen this way at other universities . . . students, faculty and administration working together," Totonchi said.

Only a handful of schools, including Duke University and the University of Michigan, have oversight committees.

Georgetown's LOC formed in 1998 after a sit-in by the Solidarity Committee at then-President Leo J. O'Donovan, S.J.'s office. The result was the LOC—a group composed of students, faculty, and administrators that ensures licensee compliance with Georgetown's Code of Conduct.

"Lands' End Loses Contract," by Arianne Aryanpur, Hoya Staff Writer, *The Hoya: Georgetown University's Newspaper of Record Since 1920*, Jan. 27, 2004. Reprinted by permission.

Gender Communication

Communication is a continual balancing act, juggling the conflicting needs for intimacy and independence.

Deborah Tannen, *American author and linguist*

In the last decade, several influential books (including Deborah Tannen's *You Just Don't Understand Me* (New York: Ballantine, 1991) and *Talking from 9 to 5* (New York: Avon, 1995) and Kathleen Kelly Reardon's *They Just Don't Get It, Do They?* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1996)) have argued that many aspects of women's verbal and nonverbal communication in business are distinctly different from those of men. Moreover, these authors assert, women's communication habits sometimes put them at a disadvantage for leadership roles, promotion, recognition, and full participation in decision making in corporate life.

In an oversimplified view, these arguments have sometimes been reduced to a latter-day version of Henry Higgins's complaint of Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*: "If only a woman could be more like a man!" But Tannen, Reardon, and others are making a much more substantial and sophisticated point: Women's communication habits in business exist for *reasons*; to understand those reasons is to put ourselves, both men and women, in a better position to choose mutually advantageous communication behaviors. In short, women and men must learn to listen to themselves and to one another, then make adjustments in communication styles to achieve fairness, make best use of human resources, and attain the organization's mission.

Some communication patterns used by women have been labeled "dysfunctional" (that is, disadvantageous to a woman's business welfare) because they apparently do not work well in a male-dominated, traditional business environment. That judgment, however, must be qualified and even refuted in many sectors of the rapidly changing business world of the twenty-first century. In the following specific descriptions of language patterns used by women, rather than simply dismissing women as dysfunctional for the business environments of the past, in each case we note the positive ways in which the patterns of

women's communication may be useful to emerging business environments now and in the future.

HOW WOMEN TEND TO COMMUNICATE IN BUSINESS

Let us state at the outset that the following research observations are by no means applicable to all women in all business environments. No researcher of women's communication behaviors has claimed universality for results of quite limited studies.

At the same time, the science involved in this increasing body of research must be taken seriously. A number of studies have been carefully designed and critically analyzed. From such work we draw the conclusion that all businesspeople, men and women alike, should reevaluate their own communication styles and habits in the light of tentative findings from dozens of prominent linguists and social scientists.

Simply put, women do appear to communicate differently from men. Often, because of this difference, women have been judged negatively and have been instructed to "talk the talk" (i.e., the male talk) if they want to rise to positions of power in modern organizations. This effort to re-create women's communication patterns after men's image ignores the real contributions women bring to the organization through their ways of communicating. As a counterbalance, then, to the pervasive argument that women should learn to speak more like men, we offer brief interpretations of the first 20 gender communication differences in the following pages. These interpretations seek to point out the value of women's communication patterns *sans* alteration or repair for progressive organizations. We leave the last 10 gender communication differences in this list for the reader's own analysis, discussion, and interpretation.

Characteristics Associated with Gender Communication Patterns

1. Men may be less likely to ask for information or directions in a public situation that would reveal their lack of knowledge.

Man: I don't need to stop at the gas station for directions. I can find the right street.

Woman: Why not stop and ask? It will save us time.

This aspect of women's communication patterns can prove useful to what Peter Senge has called "the learning organization." The reluctance, out of pride or embarrassment, of "lone wolves" in organizations to seek assistance is counterproductive. The language habits of one gender can be extended throughout a company's culture as a way of encouraging openness to new information, reliance on team members as resources, and a constant readiness to ask questions and learn.

2. Women may perceive the question "What would you like to do?" as an invitation for discussion and negotiation. Men may perceive the same question as the stimulus to a direct answer.

Woman: We have to arrange a holiday party. What would you like to do? [expecting conversation about past holiday parties, anecdotes, personal memories, and possibility thinking]

Man: We have to arrange a holiday party. What would you like to do? [expecting places and times to be named]

Women's willingness to delay decision making pending a multidimensional review of background information and influences is sometimes portrayed as a deficit, especially for would-be leaders in an organization. But that same communication tendency can be valued as an antidote to a company's tendency to rush to judgment or to ignore relevant input. In modern organizations, leaders are cast less and less in the role of quick-draw decision-maker and more in the role of seer, with wisdom and patience implied. The gender communication approach of women in this case fits well with the requirements of leadership in complex organizations, where instant answers and quick decisions are often impossible or foolhardy.

3. Women may misunderstand men's ultimatums as serious threats rather than one more negotiation strategy.

Man: This is nonnegotiable. [a bluff]

Woman: Fine, then. Have it your way. [doesn't recognize the bluff but accepts it as reality]

This may be a way of saying that women tend to attach meanings to words and assume that male speakers do as well. In the case above, the woman speaker believes that the man knows what "nonnegotiable" means and chooses the word to describe his position. If the man knows that his position is negotiable but chooses to dissemble by his choice of language, are we to praise his strategy and recommend it to both genders? In George Orwell's fine phrase, "The great enemy of language is insincerity." Women have much to teach about integrity in saying what you mean and meaning what you say.

4. In decision making, women may be more likely to downplay their certainty; men may be more likely to downplay their doubts.

Woman: In making this recommendation, I think I've covered every base—at least the ones I'm aware of.

Man: I make this recommendation with complete confidence.

Women's language tendency is sometimes portrayed as an inability to "stand strong" as a confident decision-maker. It can just as easily be regarded, and valued, as a reluctance to bluff the audience or to assume a posture of confidence that is neither felt by the speaker nor supported by the facts. The world may be seeking totems in which to believe, and men by their communication style may play into and even manipulate that need to believe in the all-confident, single-minded leader. Women, through their language of qualification and demurral, may be providing a necessary caution against the common need for simple answers and our leaders' proclivities for overclaim and totemism. In effect, women are telling it like it is: "I'm not entirely sure about my conclusions and I'm not going to pretend that I am, simply for the sake of your feelings of security. To do so would be to lie to you and, ultimately, to empower myself at your expense."

5. Women may tend to lead by making suggestions and explaining those suggestions in terms of the good of the group. Men may be more likely to lead by giving orders, with explanations (if any) based on rationales related to project goals.

Woman: Let's proceed by dividing into teams. I think we can make the most of our individual talents by working with one another in smaller groups.

Man: We're going to break into teams to divide up the workload and meet our deadlines.

Obviously, modern organizations require both approaches to planning and decision making as a way of dealing with rapidly changing business conditions. For every occasion when the team must be nourished and encouraged there is also a circumstance when someone has to call the shots without consensus (or relying on a trust bond that already exists with the group). The important point is that neither style is dysfunctional; both can be useful to serve different, though complementary, goals within the organization.

6. Women may tend to apologize even when they have done nothing wrong. Men may tend to avoid apologies as a sign of weakness or concession.

Woman: I'm sorry, but I have to read you all this e-mail that just arrived from the boss.

Man: Listen up. The boss just sent this e-mail . . .

In this case, only the most rigid literalist would interpret the phrase "I'm sorry" as an apology for a mistake of some kind. Instead, these words reveal a recognition that the listener's feelings may be bruised by the ensuing message and that the speaker is not unaware of or unresponsive to those probable feelings. In this way, women's communication patterns tend to insert emotional buffers into the push and shove of business life. What may on the surface appear to be unjustified apologizing is at a deeper level an effort to humanize the organization and its processes.

7. Women may tend to accept blame as a way of smoothing awkward situations. Men may tend to ignore blame or place it elsewhere.

Woman: I probably didn't welcome our Japanese visitors exactly as I should have, but I tried to be gracious and sincere.

Man: I met the Japanese visitors at the airport. Next time someone should tell me how and when to bow.

Business makes much of the need for "accountability" except when it comes to the language patterns illustrated here. The woman is clearly accepting responsibility for both what went right and what went wrong in her efforts to greet the Japanese visitors. The male, by contrast, seeks to avoid personal accountability and instead wants to pass it on to a vague "someone" in the organization. When less-than-ideal situations in business occur, the language habits of women in this case may be more likely to depict the accountability involved rather than the language of denial men more typically use.

8. Women may tend to temper criticism with positive buffers. Men may tend to give criticism directly.

Woman: You're doing a great job on this report, but you may want to look at page eight one more time. At least see what you think.

Man: Fix page eight, then let me reread your report one final time before we send it upstairs.

As observed in number 6, an awareness of the listener's feelings is not a bad thing in business relationships. In the woman's example above, the speaker tries to preserve the relationship while changing the behavior. The man seems more willing to sacrifice relationship for the sake of behavior. In many organizations, that choice leads directly to low morale and excessive turnover.

9. Women may tend to insert unnecessary and unwarranted "thank-you's" in conversations. Men may avoid thanks altogether as a sign of weakness.

Woman: Thanks anyway, but I don't think I want to trade my parking place with Jack.

Man: No, I don't want to trade for Jack's spot.

The facade of thanks is only part of a complex architecture of courtesy and civility that women may tend to prefer as their work environment. By contrast, the apparent tone of the male response here portrays the workplace as an arena for confrontation, victory, and defeat.

10. Women may tend to ask "What do you think?" as a means of building consensus. Men may often perceive that question to be a sign of incompetence and lack of confidence.

Woman: What do you think about dividing my office into a work area and a waiting room?

Man (thinks): It's her office. Can't she decide what she wants to do?

Let's assume that the woman in this example knows full well what she wants to do with her office. Her question is not a solicitation of permission (although the man takes it as such), nor is it a sign that she cannot make her own decisions. Instead, it is another demonstration of the tendency in women's language patterns to gather input and weigh opinions before acting.

11. Women may tend to mix business talk with talk about their personal lives, and expect other women to do so as well. Men may mix business talk with banter about sports, politics, or jokes (many of them sexually oriented).

Woman: I don't mind traveling to Cincinnati, but it will mean finding overnight day care for our baby . . .

Man: If I do go to Cincinnati, I'm taking an afternoon off to see a ballgame. That's the least they can do!

This question is worth asking: which gender is expressing most truthfully and accurately the impact of business responsibilities on personal life? Let's assume that the man in this case is a father and that he, no less than the working woman, has family matters to consider in arranging his business trip. He, too, must make provision for children, pets, and so forth. The point is that the woman tends to discuss with others how business duties influence her personal life, whereas the man is reluctant to do so. Businesses probably operate best in the daylight of knowing what problems, obstacles, and burdens their employees face. By knowing an employee's circumstances, the business can often adapt for "win-win" solutions.

12. Women may feel that men aren't direct enough in telling them what they (women) are doing right. Men may feel that women aren't direct enough in telling them what they (men) are doing wrong.

Woman: I don't know how you feel about my work. [a request for more feedback]

Man: Just tell me right out if you don't like what I'm doing. [a request to avoid mixed signals]

"Feedback" is a business buzzword that refuses to fade, perhaps because of its importance to employee motivation and quality management. Both genders in the example here are asking for feedback, but the woman's way of asking is more in line with the "360 degree feedback" systems currently in vogue for performance evaluations at all levels of organizations. The woman's communication pattern holds open the possibility that feedback may include both positive and negative aspects—that is, the full range of evaluation. The man's communication pattern closes the door to praise almost entirely and solicits only "trouble" feedback.

13. Women may bring up complaints and troubles with one another as a means of arousing sympathy and building rapport. Men may bring up problems only when they want to hear solutions.

Woman: Our problem at home is just not enough time with each other. I get home just as Bob is leaving for his job . . .

Man: We haven't been out to a show for months. Where do you find babysitters?

Sharing problems is not just an effort to build rapport and arouse sympathy. Perhaps more crucially, it is an effort to understand pain and thereby alleviate it. The woman's communication pattern in this example assumes that the group may have insights and experiences that will enlighten the nature of the pain or frustration at hand. The man's communication pattern is more cynical about the surrounding group's ability to provide in-depth perspectives or resonant ideas. The woman wants help in understanding the problem; the man wants help in postponing the problem.

14. Women's humor may tend to be self-mocking. Men's humor may tend to be razzing, teasing, and mock-hostile attacks.

Woman: So I said in my charming way, "You forgot to plug it in."

Man: So I said, "Do you notice anything strange about that cord lying on the floor?"

Freud wrote at length about “tendency humor”—our effort to disguise in humor what we really want to communicate. The tendency of the male communication pattern in this example is to emphasize the person’s stupidity or foolishness. By contrast, the teller of the story is seen as smarter, less foolish, and more powerful. The woman defuses this potential power play in her softened version of the verbal transaction. She recognizes that the person will be placed “one down” by the incident, and so she consciously lowers her own status by self-mocking humor to avoid a breakdown in the relationship.

15. Women may tend to give directions in indirect ways, a technique that men may perceive as confusing, unsure, or manipulative.

Woman: You can handle this account any way you want, but taking him out to lunch might be a possibility. Or meet in his office. Whatever you think. Lunch, though, might be the way to go.

Man (thinks): Is she telling me to take him to lunch or not? Is she setting me up for an “I-told-you-so” if I don’t do it her way?

Organizations make much of “empowerment,” which can take place only when the decision-maker-in-training has some options left open. In this case, the woman’s communication pattern is conducive to empowerment because it leaves the decision-maker free to choose, learn, and grow within a range of options. The man’s apparent preference for a “command” style of management may bring short-term efficiencies but does not encourage empowerment, with its allied benefits of creativity, motivation, and loyalty.

16. When women and men gather in a group, women may tend to change their communication styles to adapt to the presence of the men. Women may also practice “silent applause” by smiling more often, agreeing with others more often, and giving more nonverbal signals of attentiveness than men do.

Audience adaptation is highly recommended in virtually all communication guides and textbooks, including this one. The apparent fact that women change their communication behaviors based on their audience is not a sign of uncertainty, deceit, or weakness. Instead, it is an effort to relate successfully.

17. Women in positions of authority may tend to be less accustomed to dealing with conflict and attack than are men.

Woman: Why is everyone mad at me?

Man: This is an unpopular decision, but I’ve got to make it.

As consensus builders, women respond quickly and vocally to signs that consensus is failing and that relationships are threatened. For generations, this behavior has been interpreted negatively—“If you can’t stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.” It can just as well be interpreted positively for the purposes of modern organizations. Women are no less “tough” for recognizing and responding to conflict and attack. It can be argued that they are all the more tough for their willingness to confront and deal with those forces rather than stoically ignoring them.

18. Women may more often be referred to by their first name than are men, sometimes as a sign of less respect for women and sometimes as a sign of presumed familiarity or intimacy.

Man: Get Smith, Underwood, Connors, and Jill to go along with you on the sales call.

The use of the woman's first name in this example can also be interpreted as the male speaker's recognition that "Jill" is different from the gray functionaries Smith, Underwood, and Connors. Perhaps because Jill has expressed herself in more disclosing and honest communication patterns, she has risen to personhood and personality in the eyes of the speaker. He works with Smith et al., but he feels that he knows Jill. This is all said not to justify the unwarranted use of women's first names in an otherwise formal business environment, but to point out one additional reason why men so frequently opt to use women's first names and men's last names. Traditional notions of politeness may also explain men's reticence to use a woman's last name.

19. Men may tend to be uncomfortable with female peers, particularly those who may threaten their power.

"Working for a woman" is uncomfortable for many men primarily because they misunderstand the communication patterns explained throughout this chapter. The male employee may complain about the woman boss's seeming lack of direct supervision and mixed messages, while the woman boss may simultaneously complain about the male employee's unwillingness to discuss problems openly, to work well with others, and to share ideas.

20. Men may tend to perceive a group of women in conversation as wasting time or hatching a plot of some kind. Women may tend to perceive a group of men in conversation as doing business or working out power relations through bonding and joking.

These at-a-distance impressions of gender-exclusive groups speak volumes about the core misunderstandings between male and female co-workers. Interestingly, women credit men with more positive activities (doing business, working out relations even in the midst of joking) than is the reverse case (wasting time, hatching a plot). Are women more sanguine about their co-workers generally than are men? Do women tend to see the corporate glass half full and men to see it as half empty? These questions grow directly out of research into women's communication patterns but cannot be answered by such linguistic research alone.

We offer the remaining 10 gender communication patterns without interpretative commentary to allow breathing room for your own analysis, discussion, and insight.

21. Women may tend to avoid direct confrontation about offensive behavior. Men may tend to take stronger, more immediate stands in relation to stimuli they dislike.

Woman: (shocked) I . . . guess that's one way to look at it.

Man: (shocked) Wait a minute. You're way off base.

22. Women may tend to react to disappointment by describing personal feelings. Men may tend to react to disappointment by appealing to standards of fair play or by placing blame.

Woman: I felt absolutely sick when I found out I wasn't promoted.

Man: It's a raw deal. I deserved that promotion.

23. Women may tend to express self-doubt and to seek affirmation after exhibiting assertive behavior. Men may tend to repeat and reinforce their assertive behavior.

Woman: I don't want to make a big deal out of this, but you've got to get here right when the office opens. Are we OK on this?

Man: We open at 8:30 and that's when you have to arrive. Not 8:35 or 8:40. I don't want to have this conversation again.

24. Men may tend to interrupt women much more often than women interrupt men.
 25. Men may tend to usurp ideas stated by women and claim them as their own. Women may tend to allow this process to take place without protest.
 26. Men may tend to be more fearful of losing to a woman than to another man. Women may tend to be more fearful of losing to another woman than to a man.

Woman: I was up against Frank and Barbara for the two new job openings. I half expected to lose to Frank, but it killed me when they chose Barbara over me!

Man: I was up against Frank and Barbara for the two new job openings. I understand why they chose Frank, but Barbara? What an insult to me!

27. Men may tend to adopt patronizing behaviors in the presence of women. Women, in turn, may respond by finding father figures, knights, big brothers, and confessors in men.

Man: I appreciate your interest in this project, Susan, but you've got enough on your plate. We'll let you know if we need more input.

Woman (as if to a father): If that's the way you want it, it's fine with me. I've really enjoyed the times we've worked together.

28. Men may value conversation primarily for information. Women may value talk primarily for interaction.

Man: What do you have going tomorrow? [seeks a point-by-point list of items]

Woman: What do you have going tomorrow? [seeks conversation about job pressures, personalities, exciting or problematic situations]

29. Women may appear to seek permission or validation by the addition of "tag questions" to their assertions. Men may omit such tag questions or rephrase them as assertive challenges.

Woman: Let's hold the executive committee meeting in Conference Room A. OK?

Man: Conference Room C is obviously the best place for the executive committee meeting.

30. Women may use softer voice volume to encourage persuasion and approval. Men may use louder voice volume to attract attention and maintain control.

Woman: (softly) I've read the files on the Henderson account and I'm wondering if . . .

Man: (loudly) But have you read the files? I have! Here's what we need to do . . .

In this chapter we have not labeled women's communication patterns as dysfunctional. Instead, we have endeavored to show how women's communication patterns align well with a new order of organizations in a new century, even though those patterns may not have served women well in previous centuries.

SUMMARY

1. Differences in communication patterns exist between genders.
2. Women in business have too often been counseled to "talk more like men" to get ahead.
3. Women's communication patterns have much to offer modern organizations, especially in the areas of leadership, team-building, employee motivation, and conflict resolution.
4. By recognizing their own and one another's communication patterns, men and women can equip themselves to use those communication patterns purposely and strategically to achieve business goals.

Cases 18 to 25 in Appendix A are intended to accompany this chapter. Each case provides many opportunities for individual writing, group writing, individual speaking, and group speaking activities.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Which communication patterns do you observe in yourself that accord with the list of gender differences in this chapter? Which do you observe that are at odds with the list?
2. Speculate about why communication patterns appear to differ between genders.
3. What is gained and what is lost by giving women the advice to change their communication patterns to a male orientation in order to get ahead in their careers?
4. How would one go about proving that the gender communication patterns listed in this chapter are shared by a vast majority of either women or men?
5. Are gender differences more or less pronounced in written communications, including e-mail? Explain your answer.
6. What differences in gender communication patterns have you observed beyond those listed in the chapter?
7. Do you believe gender communication patterns are in evidence during childhood years, or are they developed later?
8. To what extent do traditional power relationships in business help to explain differences in gender communication patterns? Would those patterns change in a business environment traditionally dominated by women?

EXERCISES

1. Take careful notes of gender communication differences at the next meeting (business or club) you attend. Report on your findings.
2. Read several articles in a magazine targeted to women readers. Then read several articles in a magazine targeted to male readers. What differences in style do you note between these sets of articles? How do you account for the differences you observe? Report on your findings.
3. Locate at least three gender-based communication patterns in your own communicating. Make a conscious effort to change those patterns over a period of days. Write or present a narrative of what you attempted to change, the difficulties involved in making the change, and the results of the change in terms of reactions you experienced from others.
4. Interview several classmates who have not seen the list of gender communication patterns listed in this chapter. Ask each interviewee if he or she believes differences in communication patterns do exist between genders. If so, ask the interviewee for specific examples. Report on your findings.
5. Of what practical business value is a knowledge of gender communication differences? Write or present your thoughtful response to this question.

WEB ASSIGNMENTS

You supervise 26 men and women in a growing financial services organization. Your company's Board of Directors has mandated training for each employee in issues related to gender diversity and sexual harassment. Today you receive notice from your company president that such training will begin with your group as a pilot experiment. The president wants you to put together an effective but affordable training program for your people. To do so, you bring aboard a well-known consultant in the area. She admits that her one-day session with your employees will probably not be enough training to affect long-term behaviors. You and she discuss possible carryover activities that your employees can pursue to extend and reinforce the day of training provided by the consultant. In particular, the consultant refers you to the Internet to discover possible sites your employees can use to learn more about gender relations and productive inter-gender relationships. Investigate sites on gender communication differences. Write a memo or prepare a short presentation addressed to your employees. In your message, explain why and how to use the sites you have selected to enrich the training provided by the consultant.

Use a search engine to explore the phrase "gender communication" with an eye toward locating gender communication differences not covered in this chapter. Write down at least three such differences and discuss their importance to effective management and workplace relations.

A PRACTICAL COMMUNICATION DILEMMA

The Office Romance. You manage a group of twenty-five. Two of your workers are obviously "involved." They make every effort to be together during the work day and can often be seen making quiet small talk that doesn't seem to have anything to do with work. Their productivity to date has not suffered. Your company has no formal policy on romantic relations between co-workers when no supervisory relationship is involved (as in boss-subordinate dating). Because you organize your workers into small teams, you are concerned about the future. What if your two lovebirds experience a "bad breakup"? Will you still be able to put them on the same team? You ask the advice of your supervisor, but he simply recommends that you talk to the people involved. Describe how you would handle this communication, including the communication channel(s) you would use.

Crisis Communication and Media Relations

A good listener tries to understand thoroughly what the other person is saying. In the end he may disagree sharply, but before he disagrees, he wants to know exactly what it is he is disagreeing with.

Kenneth A. Wells, *American author*

When your company finds itself in the spotlight by choice or circumstance, every word spoken or written by company spokespeople has great significance for the corporate image, public confidence, employee morale, and perhaps company survival. This chapter shows you how to plan for moments of crisis and for media relations before the cameras begin to whirr and the hard questions start to fly. Ralph Waldo Emerson remarked, "We tend to study geology the morning after the earthquake." By considering likely crisis scenarios and rehearsing possible media situations, we can help our companies prepare to handle the "real thing" professionally and responsibly.

LEARNING TO PREDICT THE UNPREDICTABLE

Company crises are often portrayed in newspapers, magazines, television, and radio as events that come as a complete surprise to those affected. In fact, most crisis situations can be foreseen to a remarkable degree by analyzing the range of disasters or business interruptions most likely to occur for a given company or industry. Among others, four categories of crisis origination must be considered:

1. **Natural disasters.** If your company or organization is located in an area prone to hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, forest fires, floods, or other natural disasters, you would be short-sighted not to develop detailed plans in advance (as described later in this chapter) for employee safety, damage control, security, customer relations, and many other matters. Any corporation headquartered along the eastern Florida

coastline, for example, should have a plan in place for dealing with the severe tropical storms and hurricanes that plague that region almost every year.

2. **Product or service vulnerability.** Before the moment of crisis arrives, you have a chance to determine the most likely problems you may face with regard to your company's product or service line. For example, a food manufacturer should prepare a crisis plan for actual or alleged food poisoning. A drug company should decide in advance how to deal with product tampering. An airplane or automobile manufacturer should develop plans for crises involving equipment failure (such as exploding gas tanks, faulty engine mounts, unreliable guidance systems, and the many other equipment problems that have made headlines in recent years). Similarly, service companies should prepare to answer public and regulatory criticism when crises occur owing to apparent employee negligence or other malfeasance. Intel's problems with the Pentium chip, Johnson & Johnson's Tylenol-tampering case, and Jack-in-the-Box's *E-coli* food poisoning dilemma are all examples of foreseeable company crises.
3. **Personnel problems.** These problems can range from workplace violence to union strikes to embezzlement to sexual harassment. No matter what the specifics, a company can decide in advance how to determine the facts of the matter, what outside agencies (detectives?, counselors?, security guards?) to involve, who will speak for the company, and how the company will act to protect its people, customers, and interests. The United Way, for example, could have developed a crisis plan to deal with negative press caused by the misdeeds of its senior leadership.
4. **Political or social upheaval.** If the company thinks it stands in harm's way owing to possible political or social problems, it should work out thorough plans for protecting resources, relocating personnel, setting up temporary business headquarters, and other logical plans. More than a year before the Gulf War, for example, Shell Oil assembled executives to play out a scenario for how the company would respond if the tense relations between these countries erupted into actual warfare.

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR COMPANY FOR CRISIS

Begin by allocating time, money, and people to the important work of crisis planning. This vital activity requires financial and human resource commitment on the part of the organization.

Next, assemble a crisis coordination team (we'll call it the Crisis Task Force) made up of individuals from each major constituency within the company. You might, for example, assemble a group with representatives from finance, administration, new product development, production, marketing, and company security.

This group meets to study various forms of crises that have already struck the company, its competitors, its industry, or similar companies in other industries. The Crisis Task Force attempts to understand why these crises occurred, how the companies involved responded, and with what result. The team takes special note of strategies that could be put to use or altered in some way to help the company deal with future crises.

After studying what has happened to other companies, the Crisis Task Force develops a thorough list of crises, ordered according to probability, that foreseeably could

impact the company. For at least the top four or five crises on this list, the group develops a narrative scenario—a story-like description—of the specific circumstances of a given crisis. A written document, the Crisis Communication Plan, is developed. (A sample outline appears later in the chapter.)

One or more disaster scenarios become the basis of a mock crisis response. Using its Crisis Communication Plan, the team meets to treat the scenario as if it were actually happening. Responsibilities are assigned, decisions are made, and action is taken.

After the Crisis Task Force has played through the scenario, it evaluates its success. What went right or wrong? What unexpected developments emerged? What could be done better next time? How might “the real thing” differ from the scenario? These and other questions form the basis of self-evaluation and revision for the Crisis Communication Plan and for the organization and actions of the Crisis Task Force. The mock scenario is then reenacted to test the validity of the revised planning measures.

It’s hardly sufficient, of course, for one group of employees to know what to do in the event of company crisis. The learning that takes place in the Crisis Task Force must be disseminated to all company employees, so that everyone knows his or her role in the event of crisis. Such training can be facilitated by group meetings, videotape sessions, and employee access to crisis preparation Web sites on the Internet or company intranet.

DIVIDING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CRISIS PREPARATION

At a minimum, the following categories must be considered in shaping a successful company response to crisis:

External Communications with Wholesalers and Retailers

Whom will you contact in the event of a company crisis? By what channels? What typical messages should you “think through”? What can you expect retailers and wholesalers to do to help your company during crisis? What steps should you take now to prepare for rapid emergency contact with retailers and wholesalers?

Internal Communications with Employees

Which employees do you plan to contact in the event of company crisis? By what means? What are some typical messages you should prepare or at least think about in advance? How can employees be expected to react to various situations? Who should make first contact with employees? Who should handle followup questions and concerns?

Communication with Company Stakeholders, Including Shareholders

What kinds of communications should be issued to stakeholders? What typical messages might you prepare (or at least think through) in advance? What channels should you use? Who should handle followup questions and concerns? Who in the company should make first contact with these people?

Communication from the CEO's Office

What role(s) should the CEO play during the crisis? What typical messages should the CEO think through? By what channels will the CEO probably be communicating? How should the CEO prepare? Who should assist the CEO in preparation? Practice? With what groups will the CEO probably be communicating?

Coordination with Legal Counsel

How does the company intend to make use of its lawyers during crisis? With whom will lawyers communicate? What kinds of communications should be routed through legal counsel? What general kinds of crisis should you think through with an eye toward legal implications? Should employees and others be given legal counsel regarding what they should or shouldn't say during a time of company crisis?

Communication with the Public

How does the company intend to contact the general public? What potential crisis messages may have to be sent? By what means? By what people? In what areas? With what degree of saturation? At what expense?

Communication with Media Representatives

What media can you expect to contact you during company crisis? What will they want from you? Can you pre-package or practice your messages to them? Can you nurture relationships with media now that will pay dividends later? Can you plan now for damage control in terms of company image, market share, and so on? Who should speak to the media in a time of crisis?

Communication with Impacted Parties

What communication should be initiated with those who have been injured, disadvantaged, or otherwise impacted by a company crisis? Who should make the contact? Can you pre-plan how these matters can best be handled? How should legal counsel be involved? What sorts of somewhat predictable impacts can you discuss in advance?

Communication with External Expertise

What kinds of external expertise do you want "ready to go" in times of company crisis? Will trauma counselors be required? Security experts? Medical expertise? How can you acquaint external experts with the company and its needs? What should they prepare for the company in advance of a crisis?

Communication with Key People

At the first moment of crisis, which key people should be notified immediately? What plan can be put in place so that those key people can be contacted? What plans can you make now so that each key person knows what to do at the outset of a crisis?

SAMPLE OUTLINE FOR A CRISIS COMMUNICATION PLAN

The specific contents of a crisis communication plan will vary according to company needs and circumstances. The following categories, however, are standard in most such plans:

- I. Introduction (explanation of the purpose and importance of the plan)
- II. Contacts (names and access information for assigned crisis leaders and external consultants)
- III. Potential Disasters (descriptions and rationales for foreseeable disaster or crisis situations that could impact the company)
- IV. Action Priorities (detailed instructions on who should do what during the company crisis)
- V. Media Relations (plans for interaction with the media, including designated spokespersons, responsibility for press releases, and advice concerning admissions of liability)
- VI. Physical and Organizational Provisions (location of crisis command center within the company, map of resources and supplies, names of responsible individuals)
- VII. Post-Crisis Planning and Evaluation (provision for cleanup, counseling, damage control, and organizational learning for future crises)

Perhaps because disasters and crises are not pleasant to contemplate, they are often put out of mind or downplayed until they actually occur. In that chaotic moment, unprepared companies inevitably make mistakes that threaten the welfare of their employees, their stockholders, their customers, and even their future business viability (as, for example, in Dow Corning's bankruptcy over the product disaster involving its silicon breast implants). The moral of the story is clear: crisis planning, though difficult, is crucial for companies that want to act in the best interest of all their stakeholders in times of crisis. In fact, the greatest risk most companies face lies in failing to prepare for the risks they can predict.

MEDIA RELATIONS

Related to crisis communication but far more extensive in its scope is the topic of how companies relate to the full range of media sources, including television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and the Internet. Virtually everything the public knows about a company comes from one of two sources: direct experience with the company and its product line, or information and impressions gleaned from media coverage of the company and its products.

Media Relations can be divided into three categories:

1. **Paid advertisements.** In this common form of media exposure, the company has almost complete control over what it wishes to reveal about itself and its products. For example, a company may pay hundreds of thousands of dollars to an advertising agency to develop a single television commercial targeted to a carefully determined audience. The company controls what product to advertise, what aspects of the product to emphasize, and what audience to target. These forms of media relations can be categorized as high-control, low-risk for the company.

2. **Unpaid notices, references, and appearances.** Companies devote substantial amounts each year to information dissemination, often by means of press releases, video news releases, information services provided by the company's media relations employees, and appearances for speeches and interviews by company leaders. An example of an unpaid notice is, for example, a journalist working on an article for a computer magazine. He or she gathers the latest product information from computer manufacturers. When the journalist mentions Apple or IBM or Compaq in the article, he or she is obviously not paid by these companies for the reference. Nevertheless, the company has used media to its advantage, in this case by making relevant information available. This form of media relation can be categorized as medium control, medium risk. The company is not in full control of how reporters and journalists will use its information; therefore, the company runs some risk of negative media coverage.
3. **Investigative or confrontational media relations.** These, the most uncomfortable for most businesses, involve "60 Minutes" or "20/20"-type probing into company actions, motives, or problems. Companies that choose the "no comment" response to investigative inquiries from the media do not avoid negative media exposure; reporters will broadcast a company door being slammed in their faces, and journalists will report that "the company would not respond to our questions." Furthermore, such stonewalling by the company can quickly lead to adversarial relations with media representatives. If thwarted, reporters' passion to get information can turn to less noble motives of "getting" the company.

Companies that do comply with media requests for information are not assured of favorable or even fair treatment. Interviews with company spokespersons are often edited by the media to minimal "sound-bites" that sensationalize the story while obscuring the facts. These media investigations and confrontations, of the sort faced by Exxon after the Valdez disaster and Odwalla after contamination of its fruit juice, are definitely low-control, high-risk for the company. Information, once released by the company, is almost entirely out of its control. The stakes are high, as the company finds itself in the headlines for better or worse.

GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL MEDIA RELATIONS

When appearing on television (as in a CNBC, CNN, or other network business news interview), four nonverbal behaviors should be practiced:

- Maintain eye contact with the interviewer if you are responding to a question.
- Maintain eye contact with the camera if you are making a statement to the public. Insofar as possible, do not let your eyes wander or drop to your notes, especially at the conclusion of your statement.
- Keep your head and upper body relatively still (as compared to public speaking, where you would show more physical animation).
- Keep your hands in view at all times. Hold them still in a comfortable position or, at the most, use a few conservative gestures to emphasize your points. (Hidden

hands arouse subconscious suspicion for the viewer, and overly active gestures are much less effective on television than they are in a live speaking situation.)

On the verbal level (whether speaking on television or radio), maintain a pace that keeps your listeners' interest. Too slow a pace can sound hesitant or boring on the "hot" media of TV and radio; too fast a pace can sound hucksterish and insincere. Whether answering questions or making statements, get to your main point right away. Reporters may interrupt you after a few seconds; you want to make sure that your central point gets heard.

Handle friendly and less-than-friendly media questions with these techniques in mind:

- Discover and use the reporter's name. (Notice the effectiveness of this technique in news conferences conducted by U.S. presidents.)
- Avoid a defensive attitude by reminding yourself that the reporter or journalist is a channel through which you can get your message to the public. Appreciate the media representative as a vital link in this process.
- Make your replies concise but not abrupt. Get to your point, provide quick supporting information if possible, then stop.
- Come prepared to cite up-to-date statistics, examples, or expert testimony on your topic. Media representatives are eager to quote what they perceive as factual material.
- Do not repeat inaccurate information or accusations. Begin by disputing the assertion ("That is incorrect . . .") and proceed to give your side of the story.
- Use "topic bridges" to move from a difficult area of questioning to a more positive area. Let's say, for example, that a reporter asks you to explain why your company has not hired more minority workers in recent months. You answer, "My company is committed to maintaining a diverse workforce. [Bridge] Here are the facts about our hiring practices for the last three years. . . ." [Notice in this case that you bridged to the record you knew you could defend—the three-year hiring record—instead of restricting yourself to the reporter's specified time period of "recent months."]

Above all, maintain sincerity, credibility, and a caring attitude. These qualities go far to dispelling even the most unfavorable company news and easing the tension with even the most hostile media representative.

SUMMARY

1. Planning for crisis communication begins by identifying likely crises for the organization.
2. Crisis communication must be designed and practiced well before the crisis occurs.
3. All stakeholders in an organization, including clients and community members, must be considered in an effective crisis communication plan.
4. Businessmen and -women can achieve good working relations with media representatives by understanding and responding to the needs of media.

5. Verbal and nonverbal skills necessary for effective media appearances by business representatives must usually be learned. These skills differ to some degree from public speaking skills.

Cases 18 to 25 in Appendix A are intended to accompany this chapter. Each case provides many opportunities for individual writing, group writing, individual speaking, and group speaking activities.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why do companies so often resist crisis communication planning?
2. What likely crises may occur in your academic environment? What provision, if any, has been made for those crises?
3. Recall a social or business crisis that, in your opinion, was handled poorly. What went amiss? What could have been done to improve the crisis communication?
4. Recall a social or business crisis that, in your opinion, was handled well. What did people do right in this situation?
5. What does a company or other organization risk by not planning for likely crises?
6. Why do you think media representatives seem to be "on the attack" when interviewing business leaders?
7. What aspects of a media interview are under the interviewee's control? Which are not?
8. How can a media representative influence the way a businessperson is perceived by viewers or listeners in a television or radio interview? In a newspaper or magazine article?

EXERCISES

1. Working together with a small group of classmates, describe three likely crises in your academic environment. For each, prepare a one-page summary of planning steps that should be taken to ensure effective communication should the crisis occur.
2. Contact a company to learn whether it has a crisis communication plan. (Such plans are often not available to the public because they include sensitive internal data.) Determine from the company how it prepares its employees to use the plan in the event of crisis. Report or present your findings.
3. Read several press accounts of a recent company crisis. From that media record, decide how well the company handled the crisis. Write or present your findings as a case study.
4. Watch a television interview of a business leader. Take careful note of obvious and subtle ways by which the interviewer and interviewee influence the course of the interview. What dominant impressions are left at the conclusion of the interview? What created those impressions? Write or present your findings.

5. Working together with classmates, create a short “Guide to Media Appearances” for use by students in your academic program. What media skills should they learn to prepare for radio, television, teleconference, and print appearances?

WEB ASSIGNMENTS

You received a distressing e-mail this morning from a former classmate who took an upper-level management position with a food services company. Yesterday a bad batch of chicken salad caused a food-poisoning incident at a prominent meeting of business executives. The story is front page news today. Although none of the executives has died, many have been admitted to hospitals for observation and recovery. The reputation of your friend's company, of course, has sunk like a stone.

Even though such a crisis has not struck your company, you resolve to prepare for likely crisis situations and media confrontations before such moments actually occur. Choose an area of business, then discover sites that tell you how to construct a crisis communication plan. List the sites that have proven most useful to you, then make a detailed outline of the proposed contents of a crisis communication plan for your company.

Imagine that your boss has given you the task of developing a one-day media workshop for managers. The goal of this workshop is to prepare managers for print, television, and radio interviews and appearances. Use a search engine to investigate such phrases as “media training” and “media preparation.” Write a one-page outline showing the topics you decide to cover in your workshop.

A PRACTICAL COMMUNICATION DILEMMA

The New Price List. Your company supplies computer parts for major manufacturers. One of these clients, located about two hours' driving time from your facility, has indicated through trade newspaper advertisements that it will be seeking bids on a broad array of small parts for its new computer line. The contact is specified as Ray Ortiz, Purchasing Agent; his phone, e-mail, fax, physical office address, and regular mail address are specified in the ad. The deadline is tight: you have only five days to get in your bid. For the record, you have never met Mr. Ortiz and know nothing about him. You will be offering to sell him several hundred different parts, each with its own specifications and price. Decide how you will contact Mr. Ortiz. For each communication channel (such as e-mail) you decide to reject, explain your reasons. For each communication channel you decide to use, explain the possible risks involved in terms of winning the deal.

Communication for Intercultural Management

We shall never be able to remove suspicion and fear as potential causes of war until communication is permitted to flow, free and open, across international boundaries.

Harry S. Truman, 33rd President of the United States

AN EVER-MORE-GLOBAL BUSINESS WORLD

Discussions of intercultural communication used to be intended for the few business graduates who would actually visit another country on business. In today's economy, however, *every* business communicator needs to know how to interact successfully with members of different cultures. As many as one-third of current business school graduates may have extended foreign business experience within the first five years of their careers. Virtually everyone in business will have business relations with a foreign company at some time. In addition, most businesspeople, during their careers, will be employed in multicultural workforces.

The opportunity for intercultural interaction may be right at hand in your own city. Urban areas such as Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and New York City celebrate their cultural diversity. They can be viewed as cultural quilts, with enclaves of different ethnic groups set side by side. To do business in Miami, for example, you will want to know as much as possible about Cuban-American culture, for people of Cuban ancestry make up a major Florida market and represent an influential social force. In Los Angeles, many service industries and food-related businesses are dominated by Southeast Asian and Hispanic Americans. In New York, a day's walking tour will take you through a half dozen or more distinctive cultural neighborhoods.

You may find yourself working for an American company or a multinational corporation that employs people from several cultural groups in different locations in the world. Major business schools in the United States are already gearing up for what *Fortune* called a "global vision": "Students will have to master a foreign language and culture as well as the usual tough material on marketing and finance." In 2005, more than one-fifth

of all agricultural and manufactured goods produced in the United States were exported abroad. That same year, we imported even more than we exported. That level of trade spells thousands of jobs abroad for Americans each year.

Note at the outset that *intercultural* communication involves more than *international* communication. *Intercultural communication* involves making connections between different views of the world, whether between countries or between cultural groups within one country. By contrast, international communication may involve parties of the same culture, as when an American businesswoman in San Francisco contacts her American colleague based in Paris.

This chapter is intended to help you prepare for communicating effectively with members of other cultures. Such preparation involves knowing your audience and knowing yourself.

THE MEETING OF CULTURES

When you and your own cultural background come into contact with persons of another culture, something new emerges—a middle ground, called a “transaction culture.” In this new middle ground, sensitive and often unstated rules and understandings guide behavior. That is, if a member of Culture A interacts with a member of Culture B, neither the cultural rules of A nor those of B are the sole guide for behavior. Instead, a mixed set of rules—middle Culture C—develops for the purposes of the interaction.

For example, consider the cultural rules that would guide a business conversation between you and a manager from Japan. You would not speak and act entirely as you would when conversing with American co-workers, nor would the Japanese manager hold fast to Japanese conversational rules and behaviors. Both of you would consciously and subconsciously bend your own cultural habits and assumptions to accommodate the communication needs of the other.

In short, learning to be an effective intercultural communicator does not mean *becoming* Japanese, Russian, or African. In fact, it would be a big mistake to pretend to know more about someone else’s culture than you really know. Nor should you pretend to understand or believe what you really don’t understand or believe. For example, you should not pretend to understand or believe in the religion of a business associate. Instead, you should show your respect for the religion and try to understand it if it would help in your business interactions. To communicate with other cultural groups, you must be willing and able to adapt—but not discard—your own patterns of thought and behavior to meet the communication needs of your audience. That process begins with a sincere effort to understand another culture on its own terms.

RECOGNIZING CULTURAL MISCONCEPTIONS

Many forces can interfere with the desire to meet other cultures in a productive, mutually satisfying way. The most influential of these are internal beliefs and assumptions about other cultures—the *misconceptions* that may prevent successful intercultural communication. The following seven misconceptions frequently get in the way of successful intercultural communication:

1. *Everyone is essentially like me.* We too easily assume that others think as we think, feel as we feel, and therefore should act as we act. This egocentricity can blind us to very real differences in the way people of other cultures think and behave.
2. *Others lack my advantages.* Many people believe the reason that some people aren't like them is that there's something wrong with the people who are different. They explain away cultural differences as deficiencies. They call other cultures "disadvantaged" or "underdeveloped" when in fact they are simply advantaged or developed in other ways. A materialistic culture may judge a deeply spiritual culture as backward—and vice versa.
3. *All we have to do is just get together, and our differences won't matter.* Putting different cultures into contact will not automatically lead to mutual understanding and respect. The many examples of feuds between bordering cultures throughout the world shows that more is needed than shared spaces.
4. *Don't worry, I speak the language.* Unfortunately, the formal language training provided in typical academic settings does not guarantee successful intercultural communication. To know how to speak and write a language does not necessarily guarantee that you know the culture. However, knowing the language is a great way to start learning about a culture.
5. *They'll see that I'm sincere.* In our culture, sincerity can forgive a multitude of blunders; we like to see that a person's "heart is in the right place." Some other cultures, however, pay more attention to what you do than to what you intend. An old Greek saying, for example, advises us to "know a good man by the way he lives."
6. *They have to respect my knowledge.* Not so. Many cultures place more importance on mutual trust than on technical know-how. Your competence or knowledge may not even be considered in such cultures until a trust relation has been formed.
7. *We're all interested in the bottom line.* Americans are used to doing away with formalities and procedures when they threaten profits or efficiency. In some other cultures, however, you may never violate the established *process* of doing business—including working through a rigid hierarchy, observing customary waiting periods, and completing elaborate paperwork.

To expose these beliefs as misconceptions is not to say that American cultural assumptions are wrong or that other cultural assumptions are right. Instead, the message is that cultural assumptions can differ.

Examples of Intercultural Misunderstandings

In each of the following situations, observe the unfortunate interference of one or more of the preceding cultural myths. Notice also the sometimes devastating effect of crossed signals based on a misunderstanding of gestures, expressions, and innocent actions.

Five examples may help to show the consequences of intercultural misunderstandings.



Eleven Common Areas of Intercultural Misunderstanding

Each of these American businesspeople initially reacted with shock: "Well, bow was I supposed to know?" Avoid asking yourself the same question. Don't attempt to interact in a new culture before becoming aware of your own assumptions and blind spots. The following 11 questions relate to areas of cultural sensitivity around the world. The more you know about another culture, the harder you may find it to answer each of these questions. That's as it should be. Simple answers to complex questions can lead to stereotypes, the enemy of intercultural awareness.

The 11 areas of sensitivity are male-female interactions, respect, time and space, taboos, commitments, nonverbal cues, language and translation, dress, methods of persuasion, religious and political issues, and prejudices.

1. How do *men* relate to *women*, and women to men? Though you may not agree on the fairness of relations between the sexes in other cultures, knowing their ground rules helps you avoid disastrous social and business pitfalls.
2. How does the culture indicate *respect*? Consider the roles of silence, direct questions, seating arrangements (such as the infamous seating struggles before the Vietnamese peace talks), eye contact, gestures, gifts, compliments, and invitations. Also, find out whether specific categories of people (e.g., older persons, religious figures, more-senior staff) always receive some of these specific signs of respect.
3. How does the culture view human *time and space*? Does an appointment at 7 P.M. mean "7 sharp" or "sevenish" or, as in some Latin countries, around 8? Is one business day, once passed, gone forever (the American notion of linear time), or does the same circumstance repeat itself over and over (the Eastern cyclical view of time)? What of space? Should you stand a bit closer to Frenchmen than you are used to standing to Americans?
4. What are strict *taboos* in the culture? Is alcohol, for example, accepted, winked at, or absolutely unthinkable? Is your host's off-color joke an invitation for uproarious laughter or a subtle test of your own mores?
5. How are business *commitments* made in the culture? By oral approval? By a handshake? By signing of documents? Often, American businesspeople believe that a verbal agreement shows that the listener agrees to the proposal and is committed to it. When they discover that their hosts are merely being pleasant and agreeable, they feel deeply disappointed and may even feel cheated. Try to establish in advance the words and actions in the culture that will let you know that your deal is moving forward to commitment. Try also to find out how people say "no" or avoid saying "no" in the particular culture.
6. What *nonverbal cues* are used in the culture to pass information to you or to pass private understandings between members of the culture? How should you interpret the "V" sign in England? (Sometimes an obscene gesture.) How are you to understand an apology delivered with a big smile in Japan? (Utter sincerity, not a charade.) What does the eye pull mean in Italy and Spain? (Careful, I'm on to you.) Why does your host in India grimace when, in crossing your legs, you point your soles toward him or her? (An insult.)
7. How should you handle the whole matter of *language and translation*? It bears looking into before entering upon business relations in another culture. What

words can you learn to indicate your interest in another culture? Should you supply your own translator? Will he or she be trusted? What should you conclude if your host insists on providing his or her own translator for you?

8. How should you *dress* for business and social occasions in the host country? Before “going native” in dress, consider the risks of losing your identity as a foreign visitor and hence your immunity to some forms of criticism. In our own country, no one expects the visitor wearing Tibetan ceremonial gowns to cope well with cabs, train schedules, and all the other hassles of urban life. We bend to help. However, the same visitor in typical American street clothes may be treated with irritation and impatience. Similarly, your clear identification as an American abroad may bring a modicum of helpfulness from the host country.
9. How do your foreign hosts handle *persuasion*? Do your hosts favor direct propositions supported by evidence? Do they wish to consider your reputation, your family roots, your personal success, your age, your sex, your educational attainments? Do they want to hear your arguments or merely to share your friendship? Do they base a business relation on rational analysis or on trust?
10. What aspects of the host country’s *religious or political life* must be understood for effective business relations? Are certain times of the day set aside for worship, not work? Is work automatically canceled on some holidays, or is it optional? Must certain work groups be separated due to political differences? Are some jobs’ tasks disliked for religious or political reasons?
11. What *prejudices* against you as an American must you overcome in the culture? Do your hosts automatically assume that you throw money around in a careless and tasteless way? Do they assume that your appetites for food, alcohol, and sex are out of control? Do they look upon you as a steamroller who believes that might makes right? In all these matters, you may have to exert your imagination and energies to show yourself as you are, not as you are thought to be.

EXAMINE YOUR OWN LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL HABITS

While you investigate your host country’s customs and language, remember to examine your own ways of speaking and writing. You can aid your hosts in understanding your business communications in three key ways:

1. Avoid slang and idioms
2. Slow down your speech
3. Check your listener’s understanding of what you’re saying or writing.

Avoid Slang and Idioms

Learn to cut out slang and idioms (including local or regional colloquial expressions) from the words you use for international business. Robert Bell, a magnetic resonance specialist, comments:

When I travel to business meetings abroad, I have to remember that my ordinary mode of friendly conversation contains many idioms (such as “right on the money”) that foreign

colleagues will find strange and uninterpretable. I remind myself to speak "plain vanilla" English around those who don't know the language well.

An American manager wrote the following sentence to a foreign businessman with limited English skills. "By the way, I've shipped the computer order we discussed last week." The American manager was shocked to receive a telex from his foreign client: "What is 'the way' you refer to? Urgent to know."

The English language is rich in such innocent idioms and Americanisms. For the sake of clear business dealings abroad, try to become aware of words and phrases that might be misunderstood.

Slow Down Your Speech

Adjust the pace of your speaking to match the rate of comprehension of your foreign host. You will often do business with men and women abroad who have, through hard work, acquired quite a bit of English. If you rush ahead at the same speaking pace you would use with a native speaker, you unintentionally dash these people's efforts to communicate with you. Before leaving for an international trip, practice slowing down your speech without sounding patronizing. Look directly at the person to whom you are speaking, so that he or she can see the words as they form on your lips and notice your facial and hand gestures.

Check for Comprehension

Some Americans, in speaking to foreign persons, frown quizzically as a visual way of asking, "Are you following me?" Try not to use the frown in this way. Unfortunately, this puzzled frown will often be misinterpreted as anger, criticism, or impatience.

Instead, when you want to check for comprehension, raise your eyebrows and give an inquiring smile. That visual gesture will produce either a nod of comprehension from your foreign friend or an indication that he or she has not understood. Learn to check often (in polite ways) to see whether your listener is comprehending. In a telephone conversation, for example, pause to ask "Am I being clear?" or "Do you understand?" or simply "OK.?"

In face-to-face conversations, do not mistake a courteous smile on your listener's face or a nod as a sign of complete comprehension. Particularly in Asian and Latin American cultures, your listener will give you a smile simply as a polite gesture. Asian listeners may even nod and say "yes" (*hai*) repeatedly, all in an effort to show respect to you. All the while, they may almost entirely misunderstand what you are saying. Good barometers of such misunderstanding are the eyes. Watch to see whether your listener's eyes respond to your words. If you notice a glazed, lost look, back up and begin again in a simpler fashion. Another helpful technique is to politely ask the other party to say back (or write back) what he or she understood you to say. In working with a translator, this process is called "back translation."

WHERE TO LEARN ABOUT OTHER CULTURES

From the preceding discussion, it's clear that no businessperson can afford to learn about other cultures through personal blunders and insults. There are many ways to learn about other cultures before you step into your first intercultural business meeting or send off an

important report to an international office. These techniques include visiting a country's embassy or consulate, participating in cultural training, asking people who have lived in or visited the country of interest, and studying the language.

Visit the Country's Embassy or Consulate

Most trade-seeking nations maintain experienced ambassadors and consuls with extended staffs in major U.S. cities, particularly New York, Washington, DC, and Los Angeles. You can make an appointment with the commerce secretary at the embassy to learn how to approach businesses—and often whom to approach—when you visit the foreign country. If you cannot visit the person, write a letter describing your business interests. Solicit the help of the embassy in making your venture mutually profitable.

Seek out Cultural Training

Many schools, clubs, and organizations provide cultural awareness training. The following groups will provide you with information about their services and general advice about cultural preparation.

Overseas Briefing Associates
201 East 36th Street
New York, NY 10016

The Business Council for International Understanding
The American University
Washington, DC 20016

The Intercultural Communications Network
1860 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20009

A benefit of such organizations is that they can acquaint you with such universal business conventions abroad as *name cards*. Similar in size and format to business cards used in this country, name cards contain not only your name, title, and company in English, but also on the reverse side the same information translated into the language of your host country. Especially important in such a translation is the statement of your title. Corporate “president,” for example, in English does not signify the same thing in Japan. There, a “president” is an honored, retired, and relatively powerless former leader of industry. Probably your title as “president” would be rendered “senior director” to communicate your status clearly in your host country.

Such name cards are given and taken freely in your business dealings. You may easily dispense a hundred such cards in your first week in a foreign country and take in twice that number. Many countries publish name card collection books, complete with hierarchical interior divisions so you can store your collected name cards in a pecking order of sorts. Without such cards of your own, you may have difficulty establishing your credentials in business contacts that come your way through the day.

Ask People Who Have Been There

Except for your own personal experience, the most valuable information you can get is the helpful hints from someone whose background is similar to your own. Find out whether anyone in your company or another company has visited the country in question. Find time to listen to stories of his or her experiences. The ultimate authorities on a different culture are, of course, the people of that culture. Seek out their advice for how best to handle written and oral communications.

Also, ask questions and seek guidance from secondary resources, such as the country's national airline serving your city (Swiss Air, British Airways, and so forth). At such places, you probably will meet someone here who knows someone over there—and that someone can prove invaluable to you as an initial cultural contact.

American banks that do business abroad and foreign banks in this country can often prove helpful to you. Also, draw on the considerable resources of the United States Chamber of Commerce. It publishes a number of booklets on trade relations. Each foreign country seeking trade will probably also have a chamber of commerce anxious to serve you. In most cases, you can reach this office by writing to the Office or Ministry of International Trade in the capital city of the country that interests you.

Study the Language

Above all, begin *language training* in the tongue of the culture you intend to visit. If you don't at least try to learn the language, you'll be totally dependent on a translator or virtually isolated from the friendly conversations. Don't be concerned that you haven't mastered the language. Your hosts will take it as a compliment that you are at least trying to learn their language at all and will help you at every turn.

WRITING FOR INTERCULTURAL BUSINESS

Business documents in different countries differ not only in form but also in pattern of organization, tone, and level of detail. German documents, for example, are terse and heavily detailed, whereas Latin American documents emphasize a polite style and generalized concepts. Reports for Japanese associates must be prepared with formal, honorific openings. Casual analogies and other non-business-related information get cut from the reports and proposals sent to British colleagues.

Even when you try to follow the style and tone of the documents written by native businesspeople in Latin America, Asia, and Europe, your Americanness will still show. Some of that is fine. Intercultural readers, whether located inside the U.S. or abroad, expect American communications to show the features of American document conventions.

Nonetheless, shrewd intercultural communicators still try hard to *bend* their writing habits and assumptions toward the communication needs and expectations of their readers. As a case in point, many European cultures expect significant business correspondence to end with two signatures—the signatures of both the letter writer and his or her superior. Therefore, to get a more positive reaction from a European reader, the American letter writer may decide to use two signatures.

An American writer may even have to learn when not to write at all. As reported in separate studies by Michael Yoshino and William Ouchi, Japanese companies don't use written communication for routine business matters as much as American companies do. If an American writer communicates solely by memo, a Japanese reader may tend to treat the message as being inappropriately serious or important—calling a meeting, for example, to discuss the implications of the memo. Instead, alternate channels of communication should be chosen: a conference telephone call, perhaps, or a face-to-face meeting with selected decision-makers.

A final example involves the use of first names. In American correspondence, it is common after the first two or three business contacts to begin addressing the reader by his or her first name. This practice is generally taken in our culture to be a sign of friendliness and trust. In Germany, however, business readers look upon the use of first names ("Dear Helmut") as a sign of inappropriate chumminess bordering on disrespect. For Germans, friendliness, trust, and respect in correspondence is demonstrated by the writer's willingness to use titles and last names: "Dear Director Schmidt." Figures 19-1 through 19-9 show some examples of international memos and responses.

The memo in Figure 19-1, written by a Mitsubishi manager, and its English translation in Figure 19-2 shows how the American "To/From/Subject/Date" material has been redistributed at the top of the memo page. An official seal—the personal trademark of a Japanese manager—appears beside the name. By Japanese business tradition and Mitsubishi practice, this memo begins with standard language of respect. Following this traditional expression of respect and well-wishing, the memo turns to its specific business—in this case, the hiring of two secretaries. Note that the requested qualifications of these secretaries are appended to the memo in the form of "supplements," a common Japanese way of handling lists and details. The memo ends by turning again to traditional, expected language. No signature appears after the phrase "with our best regards."

Figure 19-3 shows an American response to a Japanese manager's memo. The American memo endeavors to catch the form and spirit of the Japanese memo form without mimicking it in all details. The American writer would probably fail badly, for example, in trying to imitate all the nuances of the traditional Japanese beginning and ending. In this memo, the American writer begins rather formally, addresses the request in a general way, and highlights details by a numbered list. But why go to the trouble to follow Japanese practice in these matters? A typical memo in the succinct, frank American style may have been misunderstood by the Japanese manager as an impatient, glib, or even mildly insulting response. In the Latin American memo and its English translation, Figures 19-4 and 19-5, note the distribution of the message on the page (somewhat lower than American practice); the convention of assigning numbers to memos; the use of "Antecedent"; the respectful tone, particularly in the memo opening; and letter-like conclusion. Figure 19-6 shows an American response to a Chilean memo.

In the Russian memo and its English translation, Figures 19-7 and 19-8, note the initial gesture of respect, followed by a straightforward—even blunt—statement of the problem. This business seems to contain an emotional message as well, especially in the passage regarding Mashinka's drinking. The memo closes, as it began, on a highly formal note. The writer signs his full name.

Figure 19-9 shows an American response to the Russian memo.

FIGURE 19-1 A Japanese Manager's Memo

テンポラリーワークス株式会社 御中	1998年10月 2日
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株式会社 取締役人事部長 山田 太郎

業務秘書派遣依頼の件

拝啓、

貴社益々御隆昌の段お慶び申し上げます。また、平素より格別のお引き立ての程誠に有難く存じます。

切て、御事の件に関し、弊社に於きましては、今後米国G社と合弁企業を設立する運びとなり、新会社の為の業務秘書を三名新規募集致します。就きましては、貴社の幅広い人材の中から、下記条件に適合する候補者を弊社人事第一課宛御推薦願ければ幸いです。貴社より御推薦頂きました候補者につきまして、随って面談日時等を取り決めさせていただきたく存じます。

お忙しい中とは存じますが、本件に就いての御検討を宜しくお願い申し上げます。

敬具

記

弊社希望条件 1. 英語能力 (英検二級以上)

2. 和文ワードプロセサー (二級以上)

3. コンピュータ経験有り

以上

FIGURE 19-2 An English Translation

Messrs: Temporary Workers Corporation October 2, 1998

Five Diamond Corporation
Director, General Manager
Taro Yamada
(official seal)

Subject: Secretary Recruiting

Dear Sir:

It is our pleasure for serving you. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting our company for many years.

*(Meantime,) We have finalized a plan to establish a joint-venture with GU Company, our American partner. And we have started looking for two secretaries for this project. Among your numerous capable candidates, we wish you can recommend two people to us with the undermentioned abilities. We will set up interviews with the appointed candidates immediately after receiving your recommendation.

*(We guess that you are busy, however.) We will appreciate your reply as soon as possible.

With our best regards.

Supplements
Requested Conditions

1. Fluent English ability (above JST grade-2)
2. Japanese wordprocessing ability (above grade-2)
3. Experience of computers

*Approximate equivalents for untranslatable Japanese phrases.

FIGURE 19-3 An American Response to a Japanese Memo

Five Diamond Corporation
Director, General Manager
Taro Yamada

October 3, 1998

Temporary Workers Corporation
Vice President
Richard Matthews

Subject: Your Request for Secretaries

Thank you for contacting Temporary Workers Corporation for your employment needs. We have certainly enjoyed being of service to you for the past four years.

After a careful review of sixteen highly skilled candidates, we have selected two secretaries to meet the needs you describe. Both are available at your convenience for an interview. We believe their considerable skills (listed below) will justify their employment.

We recognize that these are indeed busy times for you. However, we will be most pleased to hear from you as soon as possible to schedule interviews.

With sincere best wishes,

Supplements
Qualifications of Both Candidates

1. Grade 3 English ability in speaking and writing
2. Grade 3 Japanese wordprocessing ability
3. Experience with Japanese and American computer systems

FIGURE 19-4 A Chilean Manager's Memo

MEMORANDUM No. 532

Ant.: Su memorandum no.228
de fecha 25.7.98.
Mat.: Solicitud de una
secretaria edicional.

Santiago, 12 de septiembre de 2005

DE: GERENTE DE FINANZAS

A: GERENTE GENERAL

De acuerdo a su memorandum de antecedente, me dirijo a usted con el objeto de solicitarle una secretaria adicional para nuestra gerencia. Como es de su conocimiento, nuestra unidad ha tenido un gran crecimiento en los últimos 5 meses. Se han contratado tres jóvenes profesionales y no se ha aumentado nuestra dotación de personal administrativo. En la actualidad contamos con tres secretarias, muy competentes, pero que no dan abasto con todo el trabajo requerido. Esto no nos permite alcanzar el rendimiento deseado.

La naturaleza de nuestras operaciones hace indispensable que la secretaria que se contrate tenga dominio del idioma inglés, tanto oral como escrito. Adicionalmente, debe estar familiarizada con el uso de procesadores de texto y de Lotus 1-2-3.

Agradezco de antemano su consideración.
Atentamente,

Juan González R.

FIGURE 19-5 An English Translation

MEMORANDUM #532

Antecedent : your memorandum
#228 of 07.25.98

Subject : request of an
additional secretary

Santiago, september 12, 2005

FROM : FINANCE MANAGER
TO : GENERAL MANAGER

Regarding your memorandum of antecedent, I am addressing you with the object of requesting an additional secretary for our department. As you know, our unit has had considerable growth during the last five months. Three young professionals have been recruited and the administrative staff has not increased. At present we have three very competitive secretaries, but they are not able to do all the work required. This has not permitted us to obtain the desired performance.

The nature of our operations make indispensable that the secretary that will be hired has proficiency in oral and written English. In addition, she must be familiar with the use of word processors and Lotus 1-2-3.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

Sincerely yours,

Juan González R.

FIGURE 19-6 An American Response to a Chilean Memo

Memorandum #541

Antecedent: Your memorandum #534,
Sept. 12, 2005

Material: Response to your request
for an additional secretary

To: Finance Manager
From: General Manager

Regarding your request for additional secretarial support, I wish to suggest an alternate way of resolving the problem you describe. Instead of hiring an additional secretary, I propose that you send overflow typing and accounting work to the General Manager's secretarial pool. These employees are often seeking additional work and should be able to give you the support you require.

I have asked the word-processing supervisor to make specific arrangements with you for routing work expeditiously.

Thank you for bringing this problem to my attention and for your cooperation in trying out the solution I suggest.

Sincerely,
Helen Williams

FIGURE 19-7 A Russian Manager's Memo

Святослав Николаевич Кислородов
Заместитель директора по кадрам

Уважаемый Товарищ Кислородов,

У нас в отделе АСУ не хватает секретарей. Несколько дней уже у нас нет способности даже выполнять все очередные документы. А сейчас опять-таки зашла Машинка. Что нам делать? Пожалуйста, немедленно дайте нам разрешение добавить лишь одну секретаршу.

С уважением,

Борис Иванович Боголюбимов

FIGURE 19-8 An English Translation

9/1/98

Svyatoslav Nikolayevich Kislorodov
Deputy to the Director for Personnel

Respected Comrade Kislorodov,

We do not have enough secretaries in our MIS department. For the last few days we have not even been able to fill out the regular documents. And now Mashinka has somehow again taken to drink. What are we to do? Please, immediately give us permission to add at least one more secretary.

With respect,

Boris Ivanovich Bogolyubimov

FIGURE 19-9 An American Response

9/2/2005

Boris Ivanovich Bogolyubimov
Supervisor, MIS Department

Honored Comrade Bogolyubimov,

Supervisor Kislorodov has asked me to respond to your memorandum of Sept. 1, 2005. Like you, we feel the daily need for additional secretarial support. Our official documents are often prepared less quickly than we would wish. Such delays must be expected for the next several months until we receive final approval for Research Allocation Request #607.

I will look to you for patience and ingenuity in continuing to perform your duties admirably under the current conditions. I request that you send Mashinka to meet with Supervisor Kislorodov at 10 a.m., Sept. 15, 2005.

With great respect,

William Evans Phillips
American Liaison for MIS Research

CHINA: AN EXTENDED CASE IN MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION

Geographically, culturally, and economically, China represents a huge footprint on the globe. At its present rate of economic growth, China may surpass the United States in gross national product (GNP) by the second decade of the new century. Even though much of its one billion people now live below the poverty level, the Chinese enjoy a vision of things to come. "One billion people—but 900,000,000 businesspeople," goes the popular Chinese saying.

In preparation for writing this chapter on intercultural communication, the authors visited China twice to meet with more than 200 business managers and leaders in several trading regions of that vast country. This narrative sums up what we learned about intercultural communication with businesspeople in China. We offer these comments and suggestions as guidelines for your own communication with and, perhaps, travel to an emerging economic giant.

- *The Chinese (unlike the French, in some cases) appreciate your attempt to speak a bit of their language.* Understand, however, that the Chinese widely spoken in Hong Kong and the Economic Territories is Cantonese. The Chinese spoken in Beijing and most of the rest of China is Mandarin. Strong feelings are attached in some regions to this language difference. Mandarin speakers in Beijing, for example, may not understand (or pretend not to understand) your tourist phrases spoken in Cantonese. Similarly, Cantonese speakers in Hong Kong may quickly "correct" your Mandarin attempts to their Cantonese equivalent.
- *Food and sociability are intimately linked with business discussions and decision making.* Your Chinese host will offer tea and probably a meal as part of your business visit. (When visiting the United States, your Chinese guest will expect

the same from you.) Although topics of conversation at the table may touch on business matters, more often the Chinese prefer to use meal times as periods of relaxation—a chance to ask questions about your country, to talk about food, the weather, customs in different parts of China, family life (they will appreciate seeing pictures of your friends and family), and many other comfortable topics. Especially in your first meals together, the topics of politics and religion are generally out of bounds. Your questions in these areas will probably be greeted by a polite, ambiguous, and short answer.

- *At a formal meal with Chinese business hosts, you will probably be given a wrapped gift.* It is customary to thank your host and to set the gift aside for opening later. In response, you may present your host with a small, wrapped gift in return. (Your Chinese hosts will not expect such a gift, however; they know that gift-giving customs differ in the United States.) You need not bring a gift for each businessperson at the table. Presenting one gift to your primary host at the table is considered to be giving a gift to all. The most appreciated gifts are those that represent your country in some way or can be set on a shelf or mantel—a regional bowl, a decorative piece, and so forth. Less appropriate are items of personal jewelry or company products. (One U.S. automobile salesperson presented his Chinese host with a chromed carburetor from his company. It still sits on the host's desk as a standing joke.)
- *The Chinese believe deeply in the value of kuanxi ("relationship").* They want to know you deeply (your history, your motives, your personality, and especially your interaction with others) before committing to business relationships. This process of getting to know you takes time—and often many meals together. Be patient, self-disclosing, and gracious during what may seem to you to be a prolonged period of relationship-building.
- *Most successful contracts with the Chinese involve "behind-the-contract" components.* In a state-supervised economy, few Chinese businesspeople see direct personal results from their successful business relations with you. They typically do not receive commissions or other bonuses based on their performance (although this situation is changing, especially in the new Economic Zone territories). As an incentive to accept your contract, Chinese businesspeople are quite receptive to "behind-the-contract" add-ons such as trips at your expense to visit your company in the United States, special equipment given to them as a marginal aspect of the contract, and other "perks." Explicit bribes are both unwelcome and illegal in China.
- *Even after friendships have been established, the Chinese maintain a level of formality in address.* One story will make the point: After visiting and traveling with Ming Xian Liu, our Chinese host, over a period years, he asked the authors, "What shall I call you now that we are friends?" We responded, "Art and Dayle." Then we asked in return what we should call him (expecting his answer to be "Ming" or "Ming Xian"). He replied, without smiling, "Mr. Liu." The Mr. and Ms. forms of address are maintained as a sign of respect even in lifelong friendships (and, we are told, within many Chinese marriages!).
- *The Chinese want you to enjoy and approve their culture and country; they are sensitive about discussions of poverty.* Some parts of China may strike the

Western visitor as poor, dirty, and ugly. At the same time, the grandeur of Chinese culture, history, geography, monuments, and recent economic progress is undeniable. As a general rule, Chinese businesspeople will avoid conversations that delve too deeply into the Third World aspects of the country.

- *Finally, the Chinese are excellent negotiators by leaving many details of contracts and business arrangements unspecified.* Although no strict quid pro quo is intended by their hospitality and relationship-building, the Chinese operate on the assumption that business friends go far beyond the letter of the law to make contracts work to mutual advantage. From a Western perspective, not a little guilt plays a part in this Chinese strategy. We may feel obligated to offer extra services and other accommodations to Chinese hosts who have been so gracious to us. Conversely, Chinese businesspeople often reject business deals that focus too closely on legal recourse, exact specifications of deliverables, and penalties for delays or other interruptions.

As one Chinese business student explained to us, "China is a land of people, not laws." In this brief phrase he was suggesting that the most successful business relationships between China and foreign business interests have been forged as much at the dining table as at the boardroom table. In dealing with a relationship-oriented society, communication skills could not be more valuable in achieving bottom-line business results.

MAKING PRESENTATIONS IN INTERCULTURAL SETTINGS

Just as American approaches to business writing must be adapted to intercultural conventions, oral presentations must be adjusted to what intercultural audiences expect and prefer. Again, an American presenter's goal is not to be taken for a native speaker but instead to adapt successfully to the culture's expectations, with the goal of delivering a culturally acceptable presentation.

Five elements of the presentation should be reevaluated in preparing for an intercultural address:

1. The introduction
2. The method of presenting an argument
3. The use of visual aids
4. The use of humor
5. The conclusion and recommendation

The Introduction

Many cultures expect the speaker to recognize and pay respect to members of the audience, often in the order of their importance. It may be culturally taboo to start off with business early in the presentation. In some cultures, speakers may be expected to give a great deal of background information about themselves and their company.

How do you know what to do? It's best to discuss your presentation plans with an experienced business speaker who is a member of your audience's culture. Ask advice on what approaches will be most acceptable to your listeners.

The Method of Argumentation

Typical American presentations describe a problem and then go on to suggest possible solutions. This approach may be unpersuasive and even offensive to some cultures. The blatant description of a business problem may be taken as a slight against your audience's country, culture, or company. An intensely proud group of African businesspeople, for example, may rankle at a speaker's opening remarks about starvation or poor rural planning. In many cultures, you may be better off describing your suggestions as a "next step in a glorious heritage." Often, this approach is much more persuasive than the problem-solution approach.

The Use of Visual Aids

American speakers typically rely on slides, graphs, charts, and other visual aids to do much of their communicating. American audiences often take the use of such materials as a sign of the speaker's preparation and expertise. This is not so for some other cultures for which visual aids interrupt the important process of personal evaluation and bonding. To get an idea of this negative effect, think about what your own reaction would be if a new acquaintance who was invited to your home for dinner brought along charts of his educational history and a videotape of his sports prowess. While these matters might come up naturally in conversation, you would probably feel that the visual aids were a bit much. In the same way, some cultures do not place the same importance on visual aids as do American business audiences.

The Use of Humor

For American presenters, keeping an audience awake and alert often involves the periodic use of humor, anecdotal stories, and other attention-getting techniques. These should be checked carefully with a native presenter before you use them in an intercultural speech. There is a fine line between what's funny and what's offensive in all cultures. Even in closely aligned cultures, such as that of Great Britain and America, the types and uses of humor can vary greatly. The British by and large cannot fathom what's funny about Jay Leno or David Letterman; Americans groan at the romping silliness of many BBC sitcoms. Such differences are magnified many times over when the cultures involved do not share common ancestries, religions, or political systems.

The Conclusion and Recommendation

American presenters are often told to ask for the sale—that is, to explicitly tell the audience what should be done. In many cultures, such directness is taken as the worst form of rudeness. Conclusions and recommendations in these cultural settings must be handled with great delicacy so as not to appear high-handed or pushy. Decision-makers in your audience must be credited with the ability to see the implications of your presentation; their agreement or action must be subtly suggested or invited.

YOUR FUTURE AS AN INTERCULTURAL BUSINESSPERSON

As the ability to know—almost instantaneously—transforms lives and cultures around the planet, no businessperson can hide in a regional or national niche and expect to avoid the influence of the Information Revolution. While a hardware store owner in Wichita may not

sell hammers to China, he or she will want to be the first to know when hammers imported from Poland are sold 20 percent cheaper than the American variety. Larger corporations will have no reason to limit their marketing horizons to national borders, especially as jet travel and communication devices make the world what McLuhan calls a "global village." "There are no passengers on spaceship earth," he wrote. "We are all crew."

In the words of John Naisbitt, author of the best-selling book, *Megatrends*,

We are living in the "time of the parenthesis," the time between eras (between the Industrial Era and the Information Era). The time of the parenthesis is a great and yeasty time . . . a time of great change and uncertainty (and we must make uncertainty our friend) . . . and a time of great opportunity. In stable eras everything has a name and everything knows its place . . . and we can leverage very little. But in the time of the parenthesis we have extraordinary leverage and influence . . . individually . . . professionally . . . and institutionally . . . if we can get a clear sense, a clear conception, a clear vision of the road ahead. My God, what a fantastic time to be alive!

SUMMARY

1. Businesspeople must recognize the importance of cultural differences.
2. This chapter suggests 11 key areas in which cultures can be evaluated.
3. Several agencies offer cultural awareness materials and training for businesspeople.
4. Because language is the most important link between people, businesspeople should examine their own use of English in relation to the language needs of their foreign listeners.
5. At all levels, business is becoming internationalized. Business trips to and communications with other cultures will be a reality for more and more businesspeople in the years ahead.

Cases 18 to 25 in Appendix A are intended to accompany this chapter. Each case provides many opportunities for individual writing, group writing, individual speaking, and group speaking activities.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are the 11 areas of cultural sensitivity?
2. How could the use of human time and space affect your business transactions in a foreign country?
3. What are some steps you may take in order to acquaint yourself with a foreign culture?
4. What are name cards? How are they used?
5. How should you rely on a colleague's personal experience in a foreign country you plan to visit?

6. What is probably the most significant way you can prepare ahead for your visit to a foreign country?
7. Why is it important to speak “plain vanilla” English in business meetings abroad?
8. When speaking English with a nonnative speaker, what habits should you avoid?
9. How can visual gestures aid your communication with a foreign businessperson who does not speak your language well?
10. How can you check your listener’s comprehension over the phone?
11. In a face-to-face conversation, what are good ways to check for comprehension?
12. Explain Marshall McLuhan’s statement, “There are no passengers on spaceship earth. . . . We are all crew.”
13. What is the “time of the parenthesis”? What are its advantages?

EXERCISES

1. Pick a country that you would like to visit on business some day. Write a letter to the embassy or consulate of that country, requesting as much information as is available on travel and business opportunities there. Keep this information in your files for future use.
2. Research attitudes on the relationship between men and women in the country of interest to you. How might the relations between the sexes in this country affect your communication with your host?
3. Extend an invitation to a potential business associate in a foreign country. Convey the proper respect for his or her culture.
4. Continue your research on the foreign country of your choice, and identify strict taboos that you’ll want to be aware of. What particular taboos might you have violated if you had not taken time to investigate the cultural differences between your country and the foreign country?
5. How should you dress to make the best impression possible in the foreign country that interests you?
6. Identify the religious and political ideologies you would be most likely to find in the country you are researching. How do these ideologies resemble or differ from your own? How will you avoid possible difficulties in these areas?
7. If you are an American citizen, how might you be regarded in the country of interest to you? Investigate current perceptions about America held in that country. If these perceptions are negative, how do you plan to present yourself positively?
8. Compile a list of slang and idioms that might be misinterpreted by a foreign businessperson with limited English skills.
9. Identify part of your town, city, state, or region where intercultural differences may influence how business is conducted. Describe in writing the kind of adjustments you would make if you were doing business in this locale.

10. Reflect on your own travel experiences inside or outside the U.S. In what areas would you be most comfortable doing business? In which areas least comfortable? Why? Write your responses to these questions.
11. Create two dialogues between businesspeople of differing cultures. In the first dialogue, demonstrate successful intercultural communication. In the second, show the symptoms and results of cultural insensitivity.
12. Watch a foreign film. Keep track of the cultural differences that occur in the 11 areas of cultural sensitivity described in this chapter.
13. Interview a businessperson or some other associate who has lived abroad or in a cultural area of this country that differs from your own culture. Determine how your interviewee made intercultural adjustments. How successful were these adjustments? What would the person do differently now?

WEB ASSIGNMENTS

For the first five years of its existence, your company has extended its market across the continental United States. Now you are ready to "go global" and are preparing marketing teams of managers to travel to Europe, South America, Japan, Korea, and China to explore new marketing opportunities and meet potential trading partners.

You face the problem, however, that very few of your managers have ever worked or traveled abroad. Investigate resources on the Internet. Then prepare a short presentation or write a memo in which you tell your managers why and how to use these sites to improve their intercultural communication skills before they set foot in a foreign country.

Use a search engine to find the Web sites for the embassies of three foreign countries you would like to visit in the future. For each site, list the kinds of information and services available through the embassy. Again for each site, write a paragraph in which you discuss the usefulness of such cultural information for business people preparing to do business in the country at hand.

A PRACTICAL COMMUNICATION DILEMMA

The Job Application. You hear about an interesting job possibility in a nearby city. You have obtained the name of the hiring manager, her e-mail, her phone number, and the address and fax number of the company. The job will be filled within the next ten days. You know that you will have to make adjustments in your resume and cover letter so that they fit this job as precisely as possible. You want your first impression with the hiring manager to be your best. Describe how you would go about obtaining the information you need, then applying for the position. What communication media (e-mail, phone, regular mail, fax, etc.) would you use in this process? Give reasons for your media choices.

SITUATIONAL COMMUNICATION EXERCISE FOR PART V
The New Teacher at Pivotal Private High School

Pivotal employs 45 teachers to serve a student population of 300 students. Salaries are not based on a single pay scale. Instead, each teacher at the time of hiring negotiates his or her best deal. Raises from that point on are determined according to a complicated merit system, which considers teaching evaluations, advanced schooling, publications, school service, and other factors.

Although rumors were always active, teachers tend not to reveal to one another the amount of pay they received. The general assumption was that senior teachers received higher pay than junior teachers. No one seemed to object to that arrangement. Relations among teachers were cordial, and team spirit prevailed.

That all changed when Wendy Bivens, a 22-year-old, was hired straight out of college as the new calculus and trigonometry teacher. The headmaster, Robert Lang, agreed in her hiring negotiation to add an additional \$15,000.00 each year to her regular pay because people in her specialty of higher mathematics were hard to find. Lang neglected to mention that this overscale pay should be kept confidential.

In the teachers' lounge, Wendy told anyone who would listen about her good fortune: "I applied for a job at several private high schools, but the pay was so much better here that I couldn't turn down the offer."

A 20-year teaching veteran, Bob Evans, spoke up: "I didn't realize pay was better here than elsewhere."

Wendy beamed, "Oh, yes. When Mr. Lang told me I would be getting \$72,000 a year, I jumped at the offer. That's about as much as I would be earning in the industry, and I get my summers off."

Evans, who earned \$54,000, didn't reply but felt a slow burn inside. At 48 years old, with two decades of dedicated service to Pivotal, he hated the idea that a brand new teacher was getting substantially more than he. Word quickly spread among the teachers about Wendy's salary. The great majority of teachers discovered they earned less than Wendy.

- What role does the grapevine play in spreading news about Wendy's salary?
 - How do you think Wendy will be treated by the other teachers? Why?
 - How will teachers relate to one another as word spreads about Wendy's salary? Why?
 - How will this salary news influence the willingness of teachers to take on volunteer duties, such as club sponsorship and coaching activities?
 - How will this salary news affect Richard Lang as headmaster of the school? Why?
 - Short of giving every teacher a large raise, how can Richard Lang deal with the ill feelings aroused by the leaked salary information?
 - What specific communication challenges will Lang face in the immediate future? How do you suggest he handle the challenges you have defined?
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MEET A MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATOR



Lindsey Held

Lindsey Held is Executive Director of Media Relations for SAP, world's leading provider of business software. In this role she focuses on all key corporate topics including the market, earnings, mergers & acquisitions, competitive strikes, industry and crisis communications. "As a global communications strategist and corporate spokesperson, I work closely with both internal teams and media worldwide to ensure that our story is told in a strategic manner to targeted stakeholders," said Held. "In order to be effective in this role I work diligently to build close relationships with business, trade and broadcast media."

Headquartered in Walldorf, Germany with their West Coast base in Palo Alto, CA, SAP offers applications and services that enable companies of all sizes and in more than 25 industries to become best-run businesses.

Held's background includes over 10 years experience in developing and executing a broad range of global public relations strategies and programs – across corporate, agency and government environments. Prior to joining SAP, Held worked for global public relations firm, Fleishman-Hillard, in Washington DC where she served a variety of technology clients including AOL and Yahoo! Prior to that she served as a media and research assistant to then California Lieutenant Governor Gray Davis.

When Held is not found on a plane to Germany or hosting press conferences in Palo Alto, she's locked away in a library working on her MBA from the University of San Francisco or off hiking the world's largest mountains with her father.

Management Communication Cases

All names, situations, and locales used in these cases are entirely fictitious. Any similarity to real names, situations, and locales is purely coincidental.

CASE 1: WORDS, WORDS, WORDS

As a farsighted business leader, you saw the light early in the electronic revolution of the office. At considerable expense, you installed word-processing stations, electronic-mail connections, high-speed printers, and all the rest of the modern marvels available for the office.

Although communication within the company has certainly improved, you now find yourself drowning in an embarrassment of riches: you and most of your managers have too many words to deal with each day. Memos, letters, proposals, and reports fly out of the machines at a flash only to pile up on desks throughout the office.

Writing Activities

1. Write an extended memo to your managers. Suggest practical steps they can take to deal with the new flood of words.
2. Write an information sheet for your employees. The purpose of the sheet is to guide their writing efforts. Suggest practical ways they can do their part to halt the glut of words, words, words. Advise them how to write more effectively, not just to write less.

Speaking Activities

1. You have a reputation for getting through your daily reading matter in record time. A group of executives in the company invites you to speak to them for five

to seven minutes about techniques you use to read quickly, to organize, and to remember.

2. A group of secretaries expresses anxiety that new machines will mean a new office staff. Address the group and speak candidly about your estimate of the impact of new electronic office machines upon the present office staff.

CASE 2: NO ONE CAN WRITE AROUND HERE!

Surrounding Washington, DC, are the "Beltway industries"—relatively small companies that provide goods and services to various government agencies. Leaders of these small companies meet each month as members of the Council for Government-related Industries. This group studies common problems shared by member companies.

"Our current problem to solve," says council president Linda Guest, "has more to do with education than with manufacturing or legislation. Our member companies are complaining that they just can't hire people with good writing skills anymore. Most of our companies depend on the writing of proposals for their business. If employees can't write proposals, the company can't win government contracts."

The Beltway industries hire most of their entry-level employees from eight regional community colleges and two area universities. All of these institutions require their students to take one semester of composition and one semester of literature.

The question before the Council for Government-related Industries is what recommendations to offer (and perhaps what assistance to give) to area educational institutions to improve the writing competence of their graduates.

Individual Writing Assignments

1. In the role of Linda Guest, write to Herbert Miller, Academic Dean of Montgomery Community College. Your goal in the letter is to inquire about writing requirements for Montgomery graduates and to express the interest of the council in improving writing competence prior to graduation.
2. In the role of Linda Guest, write a memo to other council members. Ask for their insights into why area graduates have inadequate writing skills. Also ask for their suggestions about what to do.
3. In the role of a council member, respond to the questions of Linda Guest in Assignment 2.

Group Writing Assignments

1. Join with several other members of the council in drawing up a one-page press release regarding the writing problem and the council's resolution to do something about it. Remember that you do not want to alienate colleges in the region.
2. Working with several other members of the council, develop a questionnaire that can be administered to new employees who are recent graduates of colleges in the area. Your questionnaire should help to determine what went wrong in the instruction of writing for these graduates and what they think can be done about it.

Individual Speaking Assignments

1. As Linda Guest or a member of the council, prepare a short presentation to give before the Montgomery Community College faculty and administrators. They have invited you to present the concerns and views of the council regarding the writing problem.
2. In the role of a Montgomery faculty member, prepare a short oral presentation in which you defend the colleges of the area against any blame regarding the writing problem. If you admit there is a problem, develop an argument that places responsibility elsewhere for it.

Group Speaking Assignments

1. Convene a meeting of the council to discuss what should be done about the writing problem. Discuss, among other agenda items, possible ways to work with area colleges.
2. Assemble interview panels to talk to recent graduates of area colleges. Inquire about their training in writing. Ask for their ideas on how to improve the writing abilities of entry-level employees.

CASE 3: CAN'T GET STARTED

You are understandably excited about your first day as Unit Supervisor in the communications division of Cosmopolitan Insurance Company. You will direct the writing efforts of seven employees, working on such projects as brochures, advertisements, form letters, and reports.

The previous supervisor was dismissed, you learned, for not providing "direction and leadership" for the unit's writers. You resolve, therefore, to be a hands-on supervisor from your very first day.

Your first day begins at 8 o'clock with the customary introductions and well-wishing. You are somewhat surprised by 9 o'clock to see that none of the writers has yet begun to work. You ask several if they have projects to work on. "Oh, yes," they reply, "we all have plenty to do."

By 10 o'clock, you are dumbfounded to see almost every writer still nursing a morning cup of coffee, talking at the water cooler, or flipping through the newspaper. You promptly call a meeting to get to the heart of the problem.

One writer seems to speak for the rest. "Well, you don't start writing the way you start your car. It's an art, and sometimes it takes several hours to get motivated. Most of us experience Writer's Block until about 11 o'clock every morning."

Individual Writing Activities

1. Write a step-by-step guide for overcoming Writer's Block.
2. In a polite but firm memo to the writers in your unit, set forth your expectations of their activity beginning at 8 A.M. every morning.
3. Write up an account of your first day for your journal.

Group Writing Activities

1. After discussing Writer's Block in groups of three or more, each participant writes down his or her own method of overcoming moments of stagnation and frustration in writing.
2. In the role of writers within the unit, meet in small groups to generate a written reply to the new supervisor's outrageous suggestion that actual writing be undertaken before 11 A.M. each day.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. Deliver an informal pep talk to your writers on overcoming Writer's Block in an efficient way.
2. Tell how you manage to break through the blocks and dead ends that so often accompany the writing process.

Group Speaking Activities

1. Meeting together as a unit, discuss the supervisor's suggestion that the morning be spent more productively each day. Assign roles within your group. One person can play the supervisor, another a militant advocate of the writer's freedom to hours of unstructured thinking, another a lazy writer who simply hates to begin work before 11 A.M. each day, and so forth. Your meeting may not produce agreement, but at least the new supervisor will have a clear idea of the issues involved.
2. One of the perpetual problems in the unit is deciding just how long a given writing assignment should take. Meet as a group, again including the supervisor, to devise some guidelines for estimating the amount of time needed for a given writing project. You may want to develop time estimates for each of these projects:
 - a one-page sales letter
 - a two-page form letter
 - a half-page advertisement (text)
 - a four-page brochure
 - a six-page report

CASE 4: RAYTEX COMPUTERS, INC.

While pursuing a business degree two years ago, you met two classmates who would change your life: Bob Simmons and Kathy Leavitt. After graduation, the three of you pooled your resources, slim though they were, to form Raytex Computers, Inc. In your first six months, you were able to produce the prototype of the Raytex Companion, a lap-sized printer that fit into a briefcase and was capable of printing neat business letters.

On the strength of that prototype, Raytex attracted a sizable venture capital loan and began production.

Now, three years later, the company has reached a plateau of sorts. Certainly, Raytex has been successful in its region of the country. However, you want to market your product nationally before a competitor beats you to the opportunity.

That kind of growth will require more investment capital, more employees, a larger plant, more sophisticated marketing and advertising strategies, and a host of other changes.

As directors of the Raytex Corporation, the three of you have become used to production planning: how many silicon chips to order, how many assembly-line workers to hire, and so forth. Your expansion plans call for a new kind of planning, though—the planning of crucial business communications with banks, advertising agencies, lawyers, accountants, and others. “Once,” Bob Simmons jokes, “my years were all spent with a soldering iron in my hand. Now all you’ll let me touch is a pen.”

Consider the new challenges that face Bob, Kathy, and you as you make the transition from managers of technology (production-line management) to managers of communication (information and persuasion management).

Individual Writing Activities

1. In your role as a director of Raytex, list the major communication activities, both written and oral, that you will face during your national expansion campaign. For example, you will have to make presentations to financial institutions to seek new capital.
2. Write a personal letter to Bob, thanking him for his leadership in the technological sector of the company. Explain to him why he must now get used to using a pen more than a soldering iron as a manager.
3. Write a personal letter to Kathy, thanking her for heading up the difficult area of personnel management at Raytex. Suggest the kinds of changes you foresee in her responsibilities as Raytex begins to penetrate national markets.

Group Writing Activities

1. Meeting in groups of three (representing the three directors of Raytex), draw up a job description for a business communicator to assist the directors. Specify the kind of background you would require of this person, as well as the typical tasks in which the communicator will be involved day to day.
2. Again meeting in groups of three as directors, decide how you can train your managers in communication skills to prepare them for your national expansion campaign. Devise a plan for such training; specify what will be taught, by whom, and when. Set aside an appropriate amount of money to cover the expense of this training effort.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. Tell a group of assembled Raytex managers why the company has decided to “go national” at this time. Point out the distinct advantages of being the first company to market a lap-sized computer on a national scale.
2. Describe the meteoric growth of Raytex, speaking informally as if addressing a local Rotary Club meeting. Focus on the key ingredients that made for your company’s success. Use information contained on the fact sheet accompanying this case.

Group Speaking Activities

1. Participate in a brainstorming session involving other Raytex directors and managers. Try to come up with an orderly and effective plan for national expansion. Present your decisions to a larger group.
2. Participate in a closed-door directors' meeting with Bob and Kathy (in other words, a group of three). Decide through discussion on a fair division of responsibility regarding the major tasks involved in national expansion. Who will speak to the bankers? Who will handle advertising? Who will oversee hiring? Consider these and other topics, then give an oral summary of your decisions to a larger group.

FACT SHEET Raytex Computers, Inc.**Gross Sales**

2005	\$362,000
2006	\$824,000
2007	\$1,903,000
2008	\$3,852,000

Product Line	Units Sold				Projected
	2005	2006	2007	2008	20__
Raytex Personal Computer	202	409	1,082	3,277	6,279
Raytex Dot Matrix Printer	54	201	804	1,203	3,079
Raytex Color Monitor	21	54	302	812	1,502
Raytex Lap Computer (in production)					2,300
Employees	14	28	97	143	166
Earnings per share	-.06	-.02	.21	.54	.85

CASE 5: SHORT AND NOT SO SWEET

At Life Force Insurance, the paper blizzard began in the 1990s with the advent of word processing and grew to crisis proportions as fax, e-mail, and high-speed photocopying arrived. Company president Conrad Underwood acted decisively to control the growing volume of memos, letters, reports, and other documents by insisting on brevity from all company writers: "I don't want to see any memo or letter longer than half a page," he ordered. "Keep every message as short as possible. None of us has time to read a novel."

Employees at Life Force responded immediately to the president's order. Within a few weeks, managers noticed with relief that the documents filling their in-baskets now took less than half the time to read. Everyone in the company seemed to approve the president's direction.

Then came the customer complaints, first as a trickle and then as a flood. It seems that, in correspondence to clients, employees had been brief to the point of being blunt. One notorious letter to a grieving spouse of a deceased policyholder said tersely: "Death claim granted, check attached forthwith."

As such letters tar the image of the company more and more each day, the president faces the immediate task of changing the style of letters to clients without bringing on another paper blizzard in the company.

Individual Writing Assignments

1. In the role of Conrad Underwood, write a memo to all employees in which you instruct them not to write terse letters to clients, but to maintain a brief style for in-house communication.
2. Again in the role of Conrad Underwood, write a letter of apology to a policyholder who received an unnecessarily blunt letter from one of your employees.
3. In the role of a policyholder, write a letter of complaint to Life Force Insurance regarding the blunt and even rude tone of recent letters you have received from the company.

Group Writing Assignments

1. Convene a quality circle (a relatively small discussion and problem-solving group) to discuss the stylistic problems described in the case. Decide what to do about the problem.
2. Join with several other employees at Life Force Insurance to draw up several guide letters that can be used by other company writers who are unsure what should and shouldn't be said to clients in correspondence.

Individual Speaking Assignments

1. In the role of Conrad Underwood, prepare a short presentation for delivery to employee groups. Describe the problems caused for the company by unnecessarily blunt correspondence to policyholders. Instruct employees on the kind of writing you want to see in the future.
2. In the role of a company employee, interview a policyholder regarding his or her impressions of Life Force Insurance, based on correspondence received. Prepare a brief oral report for senior management on your findings.

Group Speaking Assignments

1. In the role of company CEO, convene a meeting of company employees to discuss the writing problem. Come up with solutions that will not bring about another paper blizzard in the company.
2. Join with several of your colleagues in convening a focus group (a small discussion group) of company clients to give you their impressions and reactions to recent company correspondence. Take notes on their opinions, then decide with your colleagues how this information can best be presented to senior management.

CASE 6: CHIPS

It has all happened so fast. Eight years ago you were baking chocolate chip cookies out of your home for a local delicatessen. Now you run The Chips Corporation, a complex business supplying the greater New York City area with cookies from your secret recipes. You employ eight bakers, a fleet of delivery trucks, and several managers, supervisors, and accountants to keep the whole operation running smoothly.

Smoothly? You smile sadly, looking at the pile of "communications" piled on your desk (see the fact sheet accompanying this case). In this rapid growth period, no one took time to organize the kinds of communication useful to managers in the business. As a result, everyone jotted notes on whatever paper was available. Even important business letters sometimes went out in handwritten form.

Individual Writing Activities

1. You resolve to end the paper chaos. Choose at least eight forms of business communication. By describing the uses, stationery, routing, and filing requirements for each form, you will be establishing a systematic network for written communication in your company.
2. Write a memo to your office staff, directing that all in-house memos follow a prescribed form. Specify that form.

Group Writing Activities

1. Meet together in groups of three or more to decide on a color code for in-house stationery. Write up a brief information sheet guiding other employees in the use of the color code.
2. Meet together in groups of three or more to chart the flow of written communications within the company. Who writes to whom? Create a list of suggestions to streamline communication.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. Prepare for your appearance on a network talk show by drawing up speaking notes for a three-minute monologue on your company's rise to success. Deliver the monologue into a tape recorder if possible.
2. Your bakers need an occasional pep talk. Develop a short, informal speech emphasizing their importance to the company. Suggest future rewards and opportunities.

Group Speaking Activities

1. Meet with your key managers. Discuss how your company can keep and even extend its share of the market.
2. Sit down with a group of chocolate chip cookie aficionados. Discuss with them the merits and shortcomings of your cookies.

FACT SHEET Chips

Three examples of communication from Chips Corporation prior to efforts to overhaul business writing within the company.

Letter to a supplier:

20 # flour by June 2 - no later!
 Bill COD
 Owner,
 Bill Lengol

Letter to an overdue account:

Mr. Ledderer, my records show that you bought several dozen trays of our product over the past three months for sale in your two delicatessens. Have you made payment for these? Did I send you a receipt of any kind? We're trying to straighten out your account, and it appears that you owe us. Please respond.

Letter to a bank president:

Dear Sir/Madam:

For some time, as you may be aware, we have been in your neighborhood in the cookie business in New York. And now we are seeking expansion financing, you see we need a new production oven which will cost more than we are able to raise from our own invested funds and therefore are turning to the excellent reputation of your bank for helping small businesses such as us in these matters. Thank you.

Sincerely,
 Bill Lengol

CASE 7: FOR ALL THE RIGHT REASONS

For the past four years, you have built up your retail antique business—the King's Head, on a rural highway outside Sacramento, California. Yesterday, you received word from a real estate agent that a large furniture store had gone bankrupt downtown. The store lease is available to you at an advantageous price (see the fact sheet accompanying this case). To move or not to move, that is the question.

Individual Writing Activities

1. Write a letter to the broker, requesting full details on the property available, including terms of the lease.

2. Make a list of all the reasons you want to move, then all the reasons you don't want to move. Make a second list of all the reasons your customers may want you to move and all the reasons they may not want you to move.
3. Assume for this activity that you do decide to move. Write a goodwill letter to your present customers. Inform them of your move, emphasizing ways in which their interests will be better served (using the "you" perspective).
4. Assume for this activity that you decide not to move. Write a letter to the broker informing him or her of your decision.

Group Writing Activities

1. Together with six other merchants along your stretch of highway, you form the Highway 9 Business Group, a chamber of commerce of sorts to promote trade along Highway 9. Meet with at least three other business leaders (your classmates) to draw up a promotional letter for mailing to 5,000 area homes.
2. The Highway 9 Business Group needs a form letter inviting other businesses in the area to join the association. Together with at least three other people, draft the form letter. Focus on what the association can do for the merchant.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. At its first bimonthly meeting, the chairperson of the Highway 9 Business Group calls on you to say a few words about why you decided not to sell out and move into the city. Speak to the group for three to five minutes on that topic.
2. A local service club invites you to speak briefly on antiques. Choose some aspect of that broad topic, and deliver a five- to seven-minute presentation.

Group Speaking Activities

1. A merchant new to the Highway 9 Business Group sits at a conference table with at least three members of the group, including you. The new merchant asks all of you to discuss the future of the Highway 9 area, as you foresee it. Participate in the discussion. The student playing the role of the new merchant can help to generate discussion by asking a series of lively questions. (For example, "What's going to happen to the swamp behind the antique store?")
2. The Highway 9 Group decides to interview the new merchant for membership. First, decide on the procedure and questions for the interview, then lead the questioning. Last, decide on the new merchant's application.

FACT SHEET The King's Head

Information on 2731 W. Main St., formerly Andrews Furniture

The building

The structure comprises three floors, brick exterior, with office facilities on all three floors and show rooms on floors one and two.

Total Square footage: 20,310.

Breakdown: showrooms 14,500 sq. ft.
office facilities 5,810 sq. ft.

Heat: oil furnace

Flooring: carpeting (some stains, worn)

Elevator: services all three floors, not working at present

Windows: large show windows facing onto Main St.

Parking: shares private lot with three other merchants on this block. Most customers find public parking.

The lease

Fifteen percent of the annual lease to be deposited up front as damage—refundable if building is restored to condition in which it was leased.

Lease amount: \$8,200 per month, fixed rate, for seven years. No option rights for renewal, though owner indicated interest in renegotiating terms at some future date.

Utility expense

Average heating bills per month: \$1,805

Average electrical bills mo: \$2,035

Average water/trash per mo: \$800

The area

The three blocks surrounding the building include two banks, one furniture store, several clothing stores, three jewelers, eight professional offices, and one light manufacturer (computer parts). The area is served by public bus lines (47 and 89).

CASE 8: VISIT FOR A DAY, STAY FOR A LIFETIME

Together with two partners, you have developed Pebble Brook Shores, a 1,000-unit lakeside village of condominiums (see the fact sheet accompanying this case). Your buyers, you project, will come primarily from the neighboring community of Tremont (population 110,000).

Unfortunately, Tremont's citizens are served by only one newspaper, the *Triton*. The editor of the paper has stood staunchly against the development of Pebble Brook Shores and now refuses your advertising.

You must find some other way to advertise your development in Tremont.

Individual Writing Activities

1. Write a promotional letter, with blanks left for the addressee's name to be filled in by word processing.
2. Write a goodwill letter to the Tremont Chamber of Commerce. Represent your development as a healthful addition to the community.
3. Write a letter to your attorney. Rehearse the details of the *Triton's* refusal to accept your advertising. Ask for legal counsel in enforcing your right to advertise.
4. Write a letter of thanks to the first family to buy a lakeside condominium.
5. Respond positively or negatively, as you wish, to a claims letter from a purchaser of a condominium. The purchaser alleges that a malfunctioning dishwasher is your responsibility during its first year of operation.

Group Writing Activities

1. Meet with your partners. Write the text for a full-page newspaper advertisement on the Pebble Brook Shores development.
2. Meet with a group of bankers. Write a brief, accurate statement of the financing that they are willing to make available to approved buyers of your condominiums.
3. Meet with your lawyers. Draft a direct letter to the *Triton*, insisting on your right to place an advertisement.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. Briefly address the Chamber of Commerce. Describe the kind of community you have tried to create at Pebble Brook Shores.
2. In a brief presentation, report to your partners on sales at Pebble Brook Shores during the first six months.

Group Speaking Activities

1. Meet with at least three residents of the condominium development. Listen to what they like and dislike about Pebble Brook Shores. Offer your opinions, projections, assurances, and explanations.
2. Meet with the maintenance staff at Pebble Brook Shores. Explain forcefully that they have not been doing a good job and that residents have been complaining. Listen to any explanations they offer, then work toward a constructive solution.

FACT SHEET Pebble Brook Shores

Nature of development: resort condominium village for upscale second-home buyers and midrange first-home buyers.

Number of units

There are a total of 1,000 units. Of these there are 510 one-bedroom units, 200 two-bedroom units, 200 three-bedroom units, and 90 penthouse suites (3/4 bedrooms, 3/4 baths).

Features

Pebble Brook Shores offers the following desirable features:

- membership in Lake Club, with boating/swimming/tennis privileges
- membership in Pebble Brook Golf Association
- gardener provided with monthly association dues (required)
- guard gate with passkey entrance
- all electric kitchens, natural gas heat
- built-in appliances, including microwave oven
- upgraded carpets, fixtures (choice of carpet colors)
- fenced rear yards
- shared swimming pool for every 200 units
- guaranteed parking (two spaces) with one guaranteed space for guest parking
- tasteful use of stained glass in some window areas
- tile floors in kitchen/bath

Price range

Prices range from \$79,500 for one-bedroom units (and up) to \$269,000 for top-of-the-line penthouse units. Developer will assist buyer in finding suitable financing. Qualifies for VA, FHA purchase.

CASE 9: CONVENING THE CONVENTION

In exactly seven months, two days, and four hours, retailers of cotton products from throughout North America will descend on your city for the 19th Annual Cotton Products Convention, sponsored by your employer, the United Cotton Products Association. As executive assistant to the president of the association, you bear full responsibility for organizing the convention and preparing for the guests.

Individual Writing Activities

1. Using the fact sheet accompanying this case, write a letter of inquiry to the Starflight Hotel. Ask a number of specific questions about their convention facilities. Describe your needs.
2. Write a letter of invitation to Senator Rosa Freeman of Georgia. Invite her to deliver the keynote address. Describe the purpose of the conference, its constituency, and the honorarium and travel funds you can make available to the senator.
3. Write a letter of request to the mayor of your city. Ask for public services (such as police and paramedic service) that you will require during the convention. Demonstrate, if possible, that the convention is in the interest of the mayor's city.
4. By means of a business letter, place an order for 3,000 name tags. Specify the kind of name tag, its advertised price, any pertinent code numbers, and the requested date of delivery. Add any other information necessary for the purchase of the name tags.
5. By means of a business letter, reserve the convention facilities of the Starflight Hotel. Abide by any request the hotel has made for a deposit. Specify the arrangements you expect from the hotel during the convention.
6. Write a letter of refusal to a cotton goods wholesaler who wishes to set up a booth in the main hotel lobby during the convention.
7. Write a letter of refusal to Army General Willard "Pap" Reynolds, retired, who has offered to speak to the convention without charge.
8. Write a letter answering the inquiry of a retailer in New Jersey who wants to know why the convention charges have been raised this year from \$35 to \$65.

Group Writing Activities

1. Together with a group of association staffers, write a single page welcoming retailers to the convention. The page will appear inside the front cover of the convention program.

FACT SHEET Cotton Products

Membership profile: United Cotton Products Association

Total membership: 5,320

Regional distribution:	Northeast	1,032
	South	3,021
	Midwest	503
	Other	754

Average age: 54

Average income: \$68,400 per year

Occupations represented: retail cotton products merchants, wholesalers, farmers, brokers, researchers, advertisers, marketers, production specialists, government relations experts

Gender distribution of membership: 73% male, 27% female

Annual membership dues: \$100

CASE 10: FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

For less than two weeks, you have tried to catch on to your new job as Director of Customer Relations for Quantity Foods, Inc. All kinds of duties come your way during the work day; impromptu plant tours for the Girl Scouts, visiting dignitaries from Nepal, consumer activists on the road from Des Moines, and so forth. Mail, too, has been stacking up on your desk. You resolve to answer as many of the letters as possible today.

Individual Writing Activities

1. Write an adjustment letter to Porthfield C. Kaye, who found your chicken soup a bit too salty (and returned the half-used can, wrapped in aluminum foil).
2. Write an adjustment letter to Ms. Brenda Donnelly, who paid 74 cents a can for your cranberry sauce only to discover "an even larger can of cranberry sauce made by Pacific Foods, selling for only 69 cents." She demands a refund of 74 cents.
3. Write an adjustment letter to Herbert Lillian, stock manager of Lincoln Super Market. An order of 600 boxes of powdered sugar arrived in damaged condition; 250 of the boxes were too damaged to be sold.
4. In the role of a grocery customer, write a claims letter to the Customer Relations department. In a can of Quantity Foods' kidney beans, you found a bean-sized stone. Unfortunately, you found it the hard way by biting down and cracking a \$750 crown on a tooth. Decide in your claim letter what you want to ask for.
5. In the role of a retailer doing business with Quantity, write a claim letter regarding the undershipment of some 40 cases of canned vegetables. You ordered 260 cases, and you only received 220 cases.

Group Writing Activities

1. Working with other members of the Customer Relations staff at Quantity Foods, draft a one- or two-page document stating the company's policies with regard to customer claims. Be as specific as possible, and try to cover the most predictable cases that will arise.
2. Again working with the Customer Relations staff, draft a one- or two-page document that can be sent to the customer explaining Quantity Foods' attitudes toward its products, its expressed and implied warranties, and its customer service policies.

INDIVIDUAL SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

1. Prepare and deliver a short presentation of two or three of Quantity Foods' newest or most unusual products. Address a group of interested consumers.
2. Explain the steps Quantity Foods takes to ensure freshness. Address your remarks to a group of nutritionists. Take time to answer their questions after your short speech.
3. Propose the elimination of a certain line (of your choice) from the Quantity Foods family. Address an assembled group of company executives. Speak on the basis of complaints received in your department.

GROUP SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

1. Participate in a "future-think" session with other company members. Brainstorm and speculate on what particular foods will be the hot sales items in the coming five years.
2. Lead a panel of two or three other company members in interviewing a candidate for "Radio Chef," a popular program sponsored by your company. The old chef ate his way to an early death, and you're looking for a personable man or woman to replace him.

CASE 11: YOU'RE SITTING ON MY PROFIT

You manage the collections department at Gold Coast Furniture Mart, a huge wholesaler and retailer of midpriced residential and commercial furnishings. While you have several sets of form letters available on word processing and mail merge, you still take time to write some letters yourself to larger accounts. You also supervise the writing of letters by others in your group.

Individual Writing Activities

1. Write a first collection letter to Mr. and Mrs. Gunther Armstrong, who purchased a \$2,300 living room set last year. The Gunthers have made their agreed-upon

monthly payment of \$79.69 regularly for the past 11 months. The current payment, however, is now 20 days past due.

2. Write a final collection letter to Betterbuy Waterbeds, Inc., who purchased \$6,700 worth of office furnishings from you six months ago. The sale was made "Net 30"—all due and payable within 30 days. You haven't received payment. No one from Betterbuy has responded to your previous letters.
3. Write a second collection letter to National Mattress Supply. Their account for \$368 is now 40 days past due. The manager of the company phoned ten days ago to say that "a check is in the mail." No check has arrived so far.
4. Write a first collection letter to the Urban Recovery Center for Homeless Teenagers. The Center purchased six inexpensive mattresses and bed frames from you five months ago. The monthly payment is \$38.20. All payments except the last have been made on time.
5. Write a first collection letter to the president of the city's chamber of commerce, Wanda Frank. Ms. Frank purchased an expensive burled walnut dining set and agreed to make monthly payments of \$102. She put 20 percent down on the set two months ago and has not sent any payments to date. At last month's chamber meeting, she mentioned to you how much she was enjoying her new table.

Group Writing Activities

1. Together with a group of your collection-letter writers, draft a series of four all-purpose collection letters, to be used in series as an account becomes increasingly delinquent.
2. Working with senior managers and salespeople in the company, develop written profiles of four common types of customers at your furniture store.
3. Together with the sales manager, draft a statement for customers. Explain in the statement what kind of credit is available at your store, and how a customer can qualify. Explain the penalties and consequences of failure to pay.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. Prepare and deliver a short speech (five to seven minutes) for the local Rotary Club. Speak on the topic. "Why Some People Just Don't Pay Their Bills."
2. Prepare and deliver a short speech at a regional meeting of the Account Adjusters Association. Speak on "Powerful Motivators in Debt Collection."

Group Speaking Activities

1. Meet with other staff members in your group to discuss the use of innovative language in bringing about payment of overdue accounts.
2. Together with a vice president in your company, interview a representative of Caldwell Auto Marts, a company that wants to furnish its seven dealerships with your products—purchased on credit, of course. Let a classmate play the part of the Caldwell representative. Supply him or her with some credit data for use in the interview.

CASE 12: INSERT TAB A INTO SLOT B

You have worked at Drayco Toys, Inc., long enough to see tastes come full circle. Parents used to buy model kits and toys they assembled themselves for Johnny and Jill. Then, with fast foods came fast toys—ready to use right off the shelf. Now the pendulum has swung back. You think parents are ripe for your great idea: a kit out of which a parent can build any number of toys for the kids.

Individual Writing Activities

1. Write a memo to your immediate supervisor, asking for time to develop the proposal described in this case.
2. Write a memo to four fellow employees, asking them to participate in the development of the proposal.

Group Writing Activities

1. Divide the task of writing a proposal into several segments, one for each member in the proposal-writing team. Discuss the development of the proposal, then write a rough draft.
2. Play the role of a proposal evaluation team. You have been asked to look over the rough draft developed in Activity 1 above. Read the rough draft, discuss it, then make constructive suggestions for its improvement.
3. On the basis of the evaluation group's suggestions, write a final draft of the proposal. Each member may write a section of the proposal, with one or more members acting as editor for the document as a whole.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. As originator of the idea, prepare and deliver a brief summary of your proposal to an assembled group of managers. Answer their questions after your presentation.
2. Address a group of parents. In a short impromptu presentation, try to make your idea sound attractive.

Group Speaking Activities

1. Choose two class members to play the devil's advocate in speaking against your idea. Defend the proposal as well as you can.
2. Meet with the proposal writing team. Discuss alternative ways in which the proposal could be developed.

CASE 13: SEVEN HUNDRED TODDLERS FOR SALE

In the late 1990s, Ruth and William Pennington saw the need for high-quality child care in Seattle, Washington. They had read that more than 60 percent of families in Seattle required at least three days of child care per week. Working closely with state and local

agencies, Mr. and Mrs. Pennington set up a total of 28 child care centers by 2005 throughout the Seattle area.

Now financially secure, this entrepreneurial couple wants to sell all 28 centers. A certified public accounting firm has been retained to prepare financial statements. A separate firm, Genesis Consultants, has contracted to write a report titled "An Overview of Personnel, Facilities, and Child-Care Procedures" for review by potential buyers. The report gives information about the following:

- The number of employees
- Education, training, and experience of employees
- Pay ranges of employees
- A general description of benefits for employees
- Total number of children per center
- Ages of children now under care
- A general description of typical facilities
- A relatively detailed description of care procedures and schedules
- A summary of state and local licenses and permits held by the centers

Individual Writing Assignments

1. In the role of Ruth or William Pennington, write a letter to Genesis Consultants describing the work you would like them to perform. Add any information you think appropriate with regard to deadlines, fees, or other matters.
2. In the role of a potential buyer, write a letter to Mr. and Mrs. Pennington indicating your interest in buying one or more child-care centers. Ask the questions that you will need answered prior to opening serious negotiations.
3. In the role of a Genesis executive, write a letter to Mr. and Mrs. Pennington regarding progress on the work you are doing for them.
4. In the role of a Genesis executive, write a memo to a co-worker inquiring about six details (of your choice) needed for completion of the Pennington report.

Group Writing Assignments

1. Together with several of your colleagues at Genesis, write the report requested by the Penningtons.
2. Imagine that you are part of an investment group that wants to make an offer on several of the Pennington child-care centers. Working together, draft a proposal to purchase the centers.

Individual Speaking Assignments

1. In the role of Ruth or William Pennington, prepare a short presentation to explain to your employees the sale of the child-care centers and to thank them for years of faithful service.

2. In the role of a state official, prepare a short presentation to give to Genesis Consultants regarding the Pennington child-care centers. Make Genesis aware of new state regulations for such centers.

Group Speaking Assignments

1. Convene a meeting of employees at one child-care center. The purpose of the meeting is to determine ways by which the employees themselves may be able to buy and run the child-care center.
2. As part of an interview panel from Genesis, interview several parents of children from Pennington centers. Inquire about what the parents like and dislike about the centers. Gather the information you receive into a short oral report to be delivered to the Penningtons.

CASE 14: I KNOW SOMEONE LOOKING FOR WORK

Top End Audio Outlets began as a large downstore store, then spread over a period of seven years to eleven suburban locations. Floor clerks and salespeople were generally hired at minimum wage plus commissions.

The rapid growth of the company in recent years has required the hiring of many new employees. "It's pretty haphazard," admits company president Sheila Evans. "When we have an opening, one of our employees usually brings in a friend who wants to work. If he or she looks reasonably capable, we hire on the spot."

"Our biggest problem is turnover," she continues. "The new hires brought in by word-of-mouth tend to work for a couple months, then move on to other companies. And we have another related problem: internal theft. I can't prove it yet, but I think a lot of our merchandise is walking out the door with these short-term employees."

"As the company continues to grow, we need to organize our way of hiring new employees. We need to figure out how to attract honest people who are willing to work for a year or more."

Individual Writing Assignments

1. Develop a relatively lengthy help-wanted ad that will attract the kind of employee Top End Audio needs.
2. In the role of Sheila Evans, write a letter to Personnel Associates, a firm specializing in effective hiring. Describe the problems your company is facing, and inquire about what kind of help Personnel Associates can offer.
3. Develop an application form for use by those seeking employment with the company.
4. In the role of an executive from Personnel Associates, write a letter responding to the inquiry (in Assignment 2) by Sheila Evans.
5. In the role of a Top End supervisor, write a memo to all floor managers. Warn them of possible internal shoplifting and inform them of a plan (of your own creation) to apprehend the thieves.

Group Writing Assignments

1. As one of several managers at Top End, work together to write a short report for Sheila Evans on the state of employee turnover in the company and what can be done about it.
2. As part of a writing team at Personnel Associates (see Individual Writing Assignments 2 and 4), write a proposal for Top End Audio describing how you will help them solve their personnel problems.

Individual Speaking Assignments

1. In the role of Sheila Evans, prepare a presentation to deliver at a meeting of company employees. You want to discuss employee turnover, ways to attract and retain employees, and the current theft problem.
2. In the role of an executive from Personnel Associates, prepare an oral presentation to be delivered to senior management at Top End. In your presentation, you will describe how Personnel Associates can help the company solve its personnel problems.

Group Speaking Assignments

1. As part of an interview panel, call in several company employees to discuss with them the problems faced by the company in attracting and retaining employees. Gather together the information you receive into a short oral presentation to be given to senior management.
2. Imagine that you and your co-workers are attending a meeting at which Sheila Evans discusses the company's problems. With one student playing the role of Sheila, let other students play audience members. The goal of the meeting is a frank, open discussion of what's wrong at Top End.

CASE 15: TAKE ME, I'M YOURS

It's April. In less than two months you will graduate with a B.A. in Finance. Uncle Albert and Aunt Rose told you employers would be beating a path to your door as you neared graduation. Well, the path could use a bit more beating. You have no leads at all until you see an employment ad on the finance department bulletin board:

National company seeks entry-level financial managers with strong academic preparation in cash-flow analysis and institutional lending practices. Salary commensurate with proven abilities and preparation. Fringe package outstanding. Send résumé to Alfred T. Ross, Seattle *Express*, Drawer 965A, Seattle, Washington 98172.

That's you they're asking for!

Individual Writing Activities

1. Prepare a letter of application to accompany your résumé.
2. Prepare a résumé (chronological or functional, as you wish).

3. Write to Mr. Ross, inquiring about the nature of the company and the job advertised.
4. Write a brief note to a former employer or an instructor. Ask for a letter of recommendation. Mention the kind of position you seek, and suggest some areas of focus for the letter.
5. Assume that you learn which company Mr. Ross represents. Write a letter of inquiry to the company, asking for the kind of information you think you will need in preparing for a possible interview.

Group Writing Activities

1. Together with three or four of your classmates, draw up a two- or three-page informal report. Point out the experiences and activities that seem to make a difference when it comes time to look for a good job. Offer advice and recommendations.
2. Too many of your classmates have chased blind ads in the employment section only to come up disappointed. Join with them in writing an open letter to a newspaper. Suggest in your letter the kinds of substantive evidence a newspaper should require from the advertiser before allowing a blind ad to run.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. In preparation for a possible interview, speak for two or three minutes about the most valuable work-related experience you have had. How can that experience contribute to your success in the job for which you are applying?
2. Present your résumé as if it were a short oral presentation. Introduce, then sell yourself.

Group Speaking Activities

1. In a group of three or four, exchange résumés. Offer advice and constructive criticism.
2. Practice *round-robin interviewing* with a group of your classmates: one person asks an interview-type question of someone else in the group. After giving an answer, it becomes that person's turn to ask an interview question of someone else in the group.

CASE 16: OH MY GOSH, THEY WANT TO INTERVIEW ME

You receive a letter from CTW International praising your qualifications as expressed in your letter and résumé. The manager who wrote the letter invites you for an on-site interview on Friday, May 20, at 9 A.M.

Individual Writing Activities

1. Write a letter accepting the job interview. Make up a name for the manager.
2. Assume that the interview went well. Write a letter of thanks to those who interviewed you.

3. Time passes so slowly when you're waiting for some action on the part of the prospective employer. Write a polite letter of inquiry in an effort to learn where the company is in its decision-making process regarding your application.
4. When it rains, it really rains. On the same day that you receive a job offer from CTW International, you also receive an offer from FinanceWest. You need to decide. Write a polite letter to each company, asking for a period of time (you decide how long to ask for) to respond to their offers.
5. Write a letter of acceptance for one of the two job offers named in Activity 4.
6. Write a "Thanks, but no" letter to the employer whose offer you did not accept.

Group Writing Activities

1. Discuss possible approaches to the following essay topic: "Why do you seek a degree in business?" After discussion, put your best ideas into a short essay answer of about a page or so.
2. Discuss the most difficult moments (experienced or imagined) in interviews. Create a list of important dos and don'ts for interviewing.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. In a short presentation of three to five minutes, describe the range and depth of your preparation for your chosen career. For what aspects of the job were you prepared well? In what areas will you require further preparation?
2. Interviews often conclude with the invitation. "Do you have any questions for us?" Draw together several meaningful questions that might serve well at such a moment. Speak them to a classmate to test their usefulness.

Group Speaking Activities

1. Together with several of your classmates, interview a candidate for a hypothetical position. After the interview, let the candidate listen in on your evaluative discussion.
2. Divide your résumé into its several parts, giving each part to a different classmate. Sit back with the rest of the audience to listen as your chosen group of classmates presents your résumé aloud, trying to make you sound as admirable as possible. Listen for areas of strength and weakness in your résumé.

CASE 17: TAKE ME AWAY FROM ALL THIS!

You manage Shangri-la Tours, a rapidly expanding chain of travel agencies specializing in exotic tours to out-of-the-way places. Business is great—so great, in fact, that you can't continue to manage your own travel agency while supervising the other branches as well. You need to hire someone to manage the home office. He or she must have all the expected background for such a position but must also possess a flair—a magnetism that makes middle-class customers want to leave the safe world behind and venture (profitably for you) to steaming jungles and windy peaks. In other words, you're looking for a very special person.

Individual Writing Activities

1. Write a letter to an executive employment agency. Describe the kind of manager you seek, and the terms of employment.
2. Write advertising copy for a two-page brochure on one of your exotic vacations.
3. Write a letter to all other branch supervisors, letting them know that applications are being taken for the office manager's job.
4. Write a short report for the directors of your corporation. Describe the specific ways in which you plan to restructure management of the various branch offices once you have hired a replacement for your own position as an office manager. Argue that the changes you propose will benefit the company.

Group Writing Activities

1. Meet with at least three of your branch supervisors. Brainstorm about several new exotic vacation possibilities. Write down a list of tasks for each member of the group so that your ideas become reality.
2. Ask each of your branch supervisors to write one or two pages profiling the kind of person you should hire as the home office manager. Work together as a group to combine the various profiles into one written description of Mr. or Ms. Right.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. Address a group of senior citizens (your classmates will do). Try to interest them in "the vacation of their wildest dreams."
2. Prepare and deliver a short presentation addressed to the directors of your corporation. Argue for the need to replace you as home office manager to free up your valuable time.
3. Pretend that you are the special person Shangri-la Tours seeks for home office manager. Speak about your unique qualifications and background, as if in an interview situation.
4. Using a dictaphone or tape recorder, dictate a letter to Shangri-la Tours. Indicate your interest in the position of office manager, and suggest the range and depth of your qualifications.

Group Speaking Activities

1. With one person playing the role of job applicant, assemble a group of three or four company representatives to interview the candidate.
2. In a group made up primarily of past travel clients, lead a discussion of the values of exotic, risk-filled vacations.
3. Working with a company group of three or four members, divide the typical exotic vacation into stages. Assign one stage to each member of your group. Together, make a short presentation that endeavors to "sell" the vacation to a local travel club.

CASE 18: TRUCKS TO REMEMBER

As Creative Director for Right Now Advertising, Inc., you have taken personal charge of finding an advertising theme for Cross-country Trucking, one of your larger accounts. The president of the trucking firm wants an image the public can remember easily. That image has to reflect friendliness, reliability, and a certain degree of charm.

Individual Writing Activities

1. Write a memo to your advertising staff. Call a meeting to discuss the Cross-country account and other matters. Include a brief agenda in your memo.
2. Write a business letter to the president of Cross-country Trucking. Assure the president that your firm is working hard on the matter of an advertising theme and that you will have results no later than (you specify a time).
3. You have a bright idea for a slogan befitting the trucking company. Write up the idea in the form of a short proposal.
4. The president of your company wants to know how work is proceeding with the Cross-country account. Write a short report summarizing the steps you have taken and any results you have achieved.
5. In developing your advertising campaign, you need some hard facts about the trucking industry. Write a letter of inquiry to the American Trucking Association.
6. The American Trucking Association proves helpful beyond your expectations, all without charge. Write a thank-you letter to the director of the association.
7. You have come up with a logo for Cross-country Trucking. Before proposing it to the trucking company, you have to make sure another company is not now using the logo. Write a letter to your lawyer, asking that a search be undertaken to check out the availability of the logo.

Group Writing Activities

1. After a particularly productive brainstorming session, you and your creative colleagues are ready to write a rough outline to use to develop a short presentation of your chosen theme for the Cross-country account. Write the outline, noting places where visual aids can be used effectively.
2. You have one minute on national television for a Cross-country advertisement. Work with your creative colleagues to write the text for the commercial. Describe the scenario of action and scenery that takes place along with your words.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. Prepare a short presentation on your chosen advertising concept for Cross-country Trucking. Deliver the presentation to a group of executives in your advertising company. Ask their advice, then rework the presentation accordingly.
2. Deliver the presentation of the Cross-country advertising concepts to a group of Cross-country executives. Use visual aids to make your points in a memorable way.

3. Develop and read the text of a one-minute television or radio commercial for Cross-country Trucking. Ask a group of listeners to give you feedback on the content and delivery of the message.
4. Prepare and deliver a short speech of five to seven minutes on the methods you used to come up with the advertising package for Cross-country Trucking. Your speech will be given to the American Trucking Association at their annual convention and probably will produce a flood of new business for your firm.

Group Speaking Activities

1. Brainstorm with at least three other members of your company about a workable and exciting advertising concept for Cross-country Trucking. It will be your responsibility to summarize ideas and points of view for the group at the end of the brainstorming session.
2. Assume that you have developed an advertising package for Cross-country Trucking. Assign one portion of the package to each member in your group. Together, you will present the entire package to Cross-country management. Use visual aids appropriately.
3. Three representatives of your advertising company meet with three representatives of Cross-country Trucking. Each side gives ideas, reactions, preferences, and possibilities. At the end of the session, try to reach consensus on the areas of agreement and disagreement in the group.

CASE 19: THE TONGUE-TIED PRESIDENT

Springfield Medical Supply began with a \$200,000 bank loan, guaranteed by the Small Business Administration. Its gross sales of medical supplies and small equipment topped \$8 million last year. The company employs 42 people. Its president and chief executive officer is Bernard Springfield, founder of the company.

Springfield began his career in medical supplies as a warehouse supervisor. His genius for minimum inventory and on-time delivery of orders attracted the attention of two physicians, who helped Springfield attract an S.B.A. loan for his own company.

As president and CEO, Bernard Springfield maintains a hands-on style of leadership, particularly with regard to ordering, warehousing, and delivery. There are days, in fact, when his managers in these areas wish he wasn't so directly involved in their tasks. "I don't know how he finds time," one manager says, "to do my job and also his own as president."

Springfield Medical Supply is in the initial stages of planning to go public with a stock offering on the American Stock Exchange in the near future. This move will give the company badly needed capital for expansion into new product lines. It will also require that Bernard Springfield make a number of crucial presentations to bankers, stock analysts, and stock market regulators.

Unfortunately, there's a problem. Bernard Springfield, for all his expertise in medical supply, has no experience in making major business presentations. On the few occasions in the past when he has made speeches, he has tended to mumble, ramble, and perspire profusely. Employees and investors at Springfield worry that the president won't inspire the confidence of Wall Street.

Individual Writing Assignments

1. In the role of Bernard Springfield, write a letter to First National Bank describing, in general, the business mission and success of Springfield Medical Supply. In your letter, express interest in opening a line of credit with the bank.
2. In the role of a Springfield customer, write a letter of thanks for prompt deliveries and flexibility in solving ordering problems.
3. In the role of Bernard Springfield, write a memo to all company employees informing them of plans for a public stock offering and future changes in the company.

Group Writing Activities

1. Together with other major investors at Springfield, draft a tactful letter to Bernard Springfield suggesting that he seek help in public speaking before facing Wall Street analysts.
2. Join with other co-workers at Springfield in writing a proposal to Bernard Springfield. In it, suggest specific ways by which employees can acquire company stock at attractive prices before the company goes public.

Individual Speaking Assignments

1. Instead of writing a letter to Bernard Springfield, as in Group Writing Assignment 1, prepare the information for delivery as an oral presentation. One student should play the role of Bernard Springfield at the meeting where the presentation is delivered.
2. You have been selected to present the employee stock proposal (Group Writing Assignment 2) to Mr. Springfield. Make the presentation by arguing as persuasively as possible for the employee plan.

Group Speaking Assignments

1. Participate as part of a meeting of business leaders who share fears about public speaking. Bernard Springfield is attending at the request of his company's investors. Discuss the causes of speakers' nervousness and possible solutions.
2. Participate as a member of an employee committee invited by Mr. Springfield to discuss the employee stock-ownership plan. Divide various aspects of the plan among your group for discussion.

CASE 20: LIES, LIES, LIES

Your company's product—Dreamboat cream-filled cupcakes—has fierce competitors. While you don't mind a fair fight for market dominance, you do despise the cheating, lying advertisements appearing on nationwide television during the last two weeks: "An independent survey revealed that children from Oregon to Vermont are switching from Dreamboat cupcakes to Super Spongies. Why? Probably because Dreamboat cupcakes contain absolutely no dairy products: no milk, no cream, no butter. Growing kids need good nutrition. Join the thousands who would rather have a Spongic."

FACT SHEET Anti-Dreamboat Advertisements by Spongie Corporation

These ads appeared in nationwide magazines:

1. What's your child putting in his or her mouth?

(picture of a child putting a small boat toward mouth)

Boats are for sailing, not for eating. Dreams won't make them taste any better (especially when they contain absolutely no nutritional value for growing young bodies).

Say goodbye to the Dreamboats, Mom, and hello to Spongies—the snack that cares about what your child eats.

2. It looks like cream. It isn't. It looks like cake from whole wheat flour. It isn't.

(picture of child examining a squished Dreamboat)

Only a child could be fooled by Dreamboats. That's just the point.

Introducing Spongies—real nutrition from real milk, flour, eggs.

3. Getting ready to launch another Dreamboat . . .

(picture of cluttered chemical laboratory with bubbling vats)

Next time, Mom, reach for Spongies. The snack food made from milk, eggs, and flour, not artificial ingredients and laboratory chemicals.

Individual Writing Activities

1. Prepare an advertising counterattack by listing those claims you can refute, those claims you can explain away, and those claims you must admit. Develop your own set of claims against Spongies. For additional background information, use the fact sheet accompanying this case.
2. Pay particular attention to Spongies' "independent survey." In a one- or two-page memo, demonstrate (by making up whatever evidence you require) that the Spongies company is using statistics in a deceptive way.
3. In a page or two, compare the ingredients of Dreamboat cupcakes with Spongies. Argue that Dreamboats have superior nutritional value.
4. In the role of Dreamboat CEO, write a letter to the National Advertising Division (NAD) of the Better Business Bureau. After explaining your position on the Spongies ads, solicit the NAD's assistance in resolving the problem.

Group Writing Activities

1. Meet with at least three other company members to write the text of a television ad to counteract the effect of the Spongies advertising.
2. Meet with several other company members to plan for a new product in the Dreamboat line. Write a one- or two-page description of the new product.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. Deliver a short presentation on Dreamboat cupcakes to your stockholders' meeting. They need to be reassured that the popular Spongies ads are not correct and can be counteracted.

2. Speak briefly and informally to your advertising group on the importance of absolute truthfulness in the treatment of statistics.

Group Speaking Activities

1. Meet with other company members to devise a strategy to counteract the Spongic advertisements.
2. Hold a news conference at which you and other company members answer questions about the impact of the Spongic ads on the Dreamboat line of pastries. Have some of your classmates play the parts of newspaper and television reporters.
3. Play the role of president of Dreamboat Corporation on the telephone with another class member playing the part of the president of Spongic Corporation. State your charges frankly and try to work toward a solution.

CASE 21: MIRROR, MIRROR

You work as a manager for Associated Chemical Products, a multinational corporation with a wide product line, ranging from chemicals for the production of plastics to pharmaceuticals. Your particular responsibility lies in the area of personnel management. You hire and sometimes participate in the firing of administrative personnel for your foreign operations. You claim, in fact, to know more people in more foreign countries than the Secretary of State.

Writing Activities

1. Write a guide for use by your company's foreign visitors when they visit the United States. Of course, you cannot write a complete history or geography text. Instead, try to indicate some of the subtle customs or cultural habits of our people. Foreign visitors might be interested in knowing, for example, what the "thumbs up" sign means in this country. Choose 15 or 20 such cultural items for your guide.
2. Write a letter in English to a foreign company executive about to visit the home office for the first time. Present in your letter an agenda of events for the day of his or her visit, adding any other information the visitor may find helpful.

Speaking Activities

1. You are invited to speak to a foreign exchange club, as a person knowledgeable about foreign travel and business. You agree to speak for seven to ten minutes on the topic, "What to do and say when you don't know what to do or say in a foreign culture."
2. Your boss pooh-poohs the idea of a short training seminar for employees going abroad to work. In a presentation of five to seven minutes, argue that the seminar is important. Address your remarks to a group of company executives, including the boss who's opposed to the seminar.

CASE 22: GET READY, GET SET, GET EDUCATED

As marketing director for Teletronics Video Systems, you oversee the company's new sales effort: sending 20 bright, personable salespeople abroad to establish the Teletronics image and product line in foreign countries. Each company representative will have specialized training for the country of his or her destination. Before they go off to such seminars, you gather the group together for a general presentation on cultural differences.

Writing Activities

1. Write an agenda for the presentation, pinpointing your major points in a memorable way. The agenda will be kept by participants as a summary of the presentation.
2. Your immediate supervisor, a vice president in the company, has asked you to write a worst-case scenario for the kinds of things that might go wrong when 20 Teletronics salespeople go abroad. Consider various aspects of cultural differences, then write a short report to the vice president on the topic.

Speaking Activities

1. Address the assembled salespeople on the topic, "Keeping Your Eyes and Ears Open to New Experiences and Surroundings."
2. Join with two or three other company members in interviewing candidates for foreign service. Devise an insightful list of interview questions that will let you determine which candidates are most likely to succeed abroad.

CASE 23: WOULD YOU BUY A USED CAR FROM THIS PERSON?

The used-car display areas for Executive Auto run for more than three blocks along Main Street in Phoenix, Arizona. The dealership specializes in upscale automobiles, including Cadillac, Lincoln, Mercedes, BMW, Audi, and Volvo. Last year, the company sold 3,300 cars, an average of almost 10 per day.

In the competitive Phoenix market, Executive Auto works hard to maintain customer confidence. The company has tried to disassociate itself from the usual stigma attached to used-car lots by telling the truth about each car on its lot. In fact, the dealership's motto is "A Square Deal Every Time."

No wonder, then, that company president Ralph Owens flew into a rage when he saw the front page headline in the *Arizona Republic*: "Investigation of Auto Swindles Likely." Several auto companies, including Executive Auto, were named in the article as likely targets for a state investigation of illegal business practices. Specifically, the article alleged, used-car dealers were destroying records and other evidence of repairs done by previous owners of the cars they were selling.

Owens called an immediate meeting of sales managers and read the article to them. The truth came out slowly in the meeting. Finally, one manager blurted out, "A lot of our

used cars come to us with the glove compartment stuffed with old repair bills, gas receipts, and other papers. We just clean them out and throw them away." When Owens asked specifically what was done with a car's service and repair record, the manager described the typical cleaning process: "We look through any service or repair book we find in the car. If it's going to hurt the sale, we trash it. If it looks clean, we leave it in the glove compartment for the new buyer to see. There's nothing illegal about that."

The manager was right, of course. No law requires that a dealer save repair receipts or transfer them to the buyer of a used car. It's also true that a buyer would be leery of purchasing a car with a documented history of transmission, engine, or electrical problems. The question facing Ralph Owens is whether his company should destroy records found in the automobile, when those records may discourage a buyer from purchasing the car. The issue, Owens recognizes, is an ethical one.

Individual Writing Assignments

1. In the role of an Executive Auto customer, write a letter complaining of preexisting mechanical problems in a car you purchased from Executive Auto. From a previous owner of the car, you have learned that Executive Auto knew of the problems. Describe what you want done about the situation.
2. In the role of Ralph Owens, write a letter of protest to the *Arizona Republic* for their story naming Executive Auto as a possible target for investigation.
3. In the role of Ralph Owens, write a memo to all sales employees. Try to determine what they know about disposing of papers and service books containing negative information about the condition or history of cars on the Executive Auto lot. Word your memo in such a way that employees will not be afraid to respond.

Group Writing Assignments

1. As part of the sales group at Executive Auto, write a short report for Mr. Owens on how receipts, papers, and service books found on trade-in cars are handled when the cars are prepared for resale.
2. As part of an investigative team from the Arizona State Consumer Protection Agency, write up a list of questions you will ask senior management at Executive Auto to answer in writing.
3. As a member of senior management at Executive Auto, respond in writing to the questions posed in Assignment 2.

Individual Speaking Activities

1. In the role of Ralph Owens, prepare a speech for all sales employees in which you emphasize the importance of following ethical standards as well as legal standards in the sale of used automobiles. Be specific about the procedures and practices you want your employees to follow.
2. In the role of an irate customer, meet personally with Mr. Owens to describe the problems you have experienced with a car you purchased from Executive Auto and to suggest ways to resolve the problem.

Group Speaking Experiences

1. Participate, as a salesperson, in a group discussion with Mr. Owens about the limits of a salesperson's responsibility in telling potential buyers about automobiles for sale. Discuss ethical as well as legal issues.
2. Participate as a member of a state consumer protection panel in interviewing disgruntled customers of Executive Auto. Draw up the results of your interviews into a short oral presentation to be delivered to the State Attorney General.

CASE 24: BUT THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID

For the past ten years, you have directed Automagic Specialties. With corporate offices now in six states, you can usually live up to your claim of finding rare and exotic automobiles for upscale clients. Much of your promotional work is done through the mail. Your employees—auto brokers—send out letters advertising the specific characteristics of the cars they have available.

Writing Activities

1. Write a guide letter to suggest wording for the promotional letters mailed out by your employees.
2. Write a list of legal and ethical no-nos for your employees. Describe by example the kind of representations they should not make about the cars they advertise. In each case, explain why.

Speaking Activities

1. One of your more expensive cars will go up for auction soon. The auctioneer asks you to prepare a two- or three-minute promotional presentation on the car, to be delivered at the auction. Prepare and deliver the short speech.
2. A dissatisfied customer, Cal Vinegard, writes to tell you that his expensive Cord purchased from your company has turned out to be a lemon. He expects you to refund his money or face legal suit. Place a telephone call to Cal in an effort to reach a mutually acceptable resolution to the problem. A classmate can play the role of Cal, with the telephone arrangements simulated.

CASE 25: HAVE WE GOT A DEAL FOR YOU

At Diversified Investment Group, your active staff makes oral and written representations regarding a wide variety of investment vehicles, ranging from blue-chip equities to precious metals, mutual funds, growth stocks, and even speculation in commodities such as soybean futures and pork bellies.

Writing Activities

1. Draft a general, commonsense guide to business ethics for your employees to read and follow.
2. To demonstrate the difference between enthusiastic sales presentations and misleading deception, write side-by-side descriptions of an investment possibility of your choice. One description should be straightforward and honest; the other description should illustrate how words can be used to distort facts and deceive readers.

Speaking Activities

1. You yourself were burned by a clever con artist. In a presentation of five to seven minutes, tell how you were deceived and describe the reparations you want. Present your case as if you were speaking to the judge in a civil suit.
2. The local Rotary Club has invited you to speak for a few minutes on the most spectacularly successful investments you have ever heard of. Imagine that you have agreed to give a five- to seven-minute talk. Use visual aids to illustrate your points.

Grammar, Punctuation, and Usage

This concise guide limits its scope to practical problems faced by business writers. For a more complete grammar of the English language, refer to one of the comprehensive handbooks available.

SENTENCES MUST BE COMPLETE

English sentences are composed of a subject (a noun or pronoun) and a predicate (containing a verb).

(noun)	—	(verb)
<i>Western Electric</i>		<i>explored fiber optics</i>
(subject)	—	(predicate)

Nouns name people (Clark Kent), places (Cincinnati), things (boxes), ideas (freedom), and activities (thinking).

Verbs describe action (pushes, sends, reaches) and states of being (is, are, was, were).

Commands ("Go for coffee.") are complete sentences, though they seem to be missing a subject. The subject *you* is implied:

<i>(You)</i>	<i>Go for coffee</i>
(implied subject)	(predicate)

When a group of words lacks either a subject or a predicate, the result is a sentence fragment, not a sentence.

Fragment: And walked aimlessly for hours. (no subject)

Fragment: Waking from a bad dream. (no predicate)

Fragment: The man who left his briefcase in the car. (no predicate)

While advertising and magazine writers use sentence fragments freely, traditional business prose does not usually allow sentence fragments.

SENTENCES MUST BE DISTINCT

When two sentences run together as one, the result is a run-on sentence.

Error: Sandra gave creative energy to the company, she sparked the imaginations of others by using her own.

When a writer unsuccessfully tries to repair a run-on sentence by using only a comma, the result is a **comma splice**.

Error: Sandra gave creative energy to the company, she sparked the imaginations of others by using her own.

Run-on sentences and comma splices can easily be repaired in any one of six ways.

1. Separate the two sentences with a period.

Error: The mills needed raw materials the workers needed jobs.

Correct: The mills needed raw materials. The workers needed jobs.

2. Join the two sentences with a semicolon.

Example: The mills needed raw materials; the workers needed jobs.

3. Join the two sentences with a comma and a conjunction.

Example: The mills needed raw materials, and the workers needed jobs.

4. Join the two sentences with a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb followed by a comma.

Example: The mills needed raw materials; however, the workers needed jobs.

Common conjunctive adverbs

accordingly	besides	hence	likewise	otherwise
also	consequently	however	moreover	still
anyhow	finally	indeed	nevertheless	then
anyway	furthermore	instead	next	therefore

5. Join the two sentences with a subordinate conjunction.

The workers needed jobs because the mills needed raw materials.

Common subordinating conjunctions

Time: before, after, since, until, till, when, whenever, while, as

Place: where, wherever

Manner: as if, like

Reason: because, as, so that

Contrast: though, although, even though

Condition: if, unless, whether

6. Join the two sentences together with a relative pronoun.

Error: Bernard Clay is an engineer, he banished the slide rule from our offices.

Correct: Bernard Clay is the engineer who banished the slide rule from our offices.

Common relative pronouns

Who	Whose
Whom	That
Which	

SENTENCES MUST BE ORDERLY

Sentences must have their parts in the right places to work properly.

Error: Sarah placed both hands on the lectern, rising to speak. (The lectern is not rising to speak!)

Correct: Rising to speak, Sarah placed both hands on the lectern.
Sarah, rising to speak, placed both hands on the lectern.

Phrases such as “rising to speak” add extra meaning to (or modify) the subject of the sentence, Sarah. Always keep such modifiers close to the word they modify, to prevent distorted and silly meanings.

Error: He left his car behind, smoking a cigar.

Correct: Smoking a cigar, he left his car behind.

A modifier is said to “dangle” when added incorrectly at the beginning or end of a sentence:

Error: You can buy the watch at a discount price, which has a platinum bracelet.

Error: Together with the platinum bracelet, you can buy the watch at a discount price.

Correct: You can buy the watch with the platinum bracelet at a discount price.

SUBJECT AND VERB MUST AGREE

By acquired habit as speakers of English, we usually choose verbs that agree with the subjects in our sentences.

Factories sometimes cost (*not costs*) too much in the suburbs.

Each of the workers leaves (*not leave*) at 5 P.M.

(singular)	(singular)
------------	------------

Sometimes, however, we trip up by attaching a singular subject to a plural verb or vice versa.

Other easily mistaken singular subjects are

- Either/or
Example: Either Jill or Mary answers our needs.
- Everyone
Example: Everyone of them knows the head supervisor.
- Subjects separated by or
Example: The computer or the teletype causes (not cause) static on the telephone.

Some plural nouns have singular meanings.

Economics is difficult but enlightening.
(singular)

Other plural nouns include *aesthetics*, *checkers*, *mathematics*, *mumps*, *physics*, *politics*, and *statistics* (when referred to as a field of study).

Collective nouns can take singular or plural verbs, depending on whether they refer to a group as a unit or as a collection of individuals.

The team was organized by Henderly. (a group)
The team play their hearts out every game. (individuals)

Pronoun Choice

Pronouns in a sentence must agree with the noun to which they refer.

Every one of the packages lost its wrapper.
(not their)

1. Use a plural pronoun to refer to two nouns joined by *and*.

Wilson and Anderson gave their resignation speeches together.

Use a singular pronoun to refer to subjects preceded by *each* or *every*.

Each manager and each supervisor gave his or her approval to the project.

2. Use a singular pronoun to refer to nouns separated by *either/or* or *neither/nor*.

Either the door or the hallway needs its annual coat of paint.

When a singular and a plural noun are separated by *or*, the pronoun reference (and verb form) agrees with the noun closest to the verb.

Common stock or apartments seem to be likely investment vehicles if their value remains steady this year.

Apartments or common stock seems to be a likely investment vehicle if its value remains steady this year.

3. Use a singular or a plural pronoun to agree with collective nouns such as committee, crew, group, majority, number, and team, depending on whether it refers to a group as one unit or as a collection of independent individuals.

The crew wins another of its many races.

The crew are ready to receive their ribbons.

4. Use a singular pronoun to refer to *everyone*.

Everyone has a right to express his or her own opinion.

5. Use a singular or plural pronoun to refer to *some* or *most*, depending on whether *some* or *most* refers to singular or plural nouns.

Some of the sport has lost its excitement.

Some of the sports have lost their excitement.

6. Use *I*, *we*, *you*, *he*, *she*, *it*, and *they* as subjects,

He, she, and I went to the personnel office.

Note that these same forms are used after linking verbs:

The best worker is she. (She is the best worker.)

7. Use *me*, *us*, *you*, *him*, *her*, *it*, and *them* as direct objects, indirect objects, and objects of prepositions.

The job affected him and her in positive ways.

Send Tom and me the bill.

Send the bill to Tom and me.

8. Use *who* as a subject.

Who tells the boss what to do?

I want to meet the person who tells the boss what to do.

9. Use *whom* as an object.

Give the package to whom you wish.

10. The indefinite pronouns *few*, *several*, and *all* take plural verbs and pronoun references.

Few of the employees dislike their bosses.

Several of her friends board their pens.

All the boxes still sit in their appropriate places.

Indefinite pronouns such as *none* and *someone* take singular verbs and pronoun references.

None of the men knows his grandfather's place of birth.

Someone continues to leave his or her coat on my chair.

Comma

Use a comma

1. To set off an introductory phrase or subordinate clause from the independent statement

When she saw the computer display, she noticed how little space it took on the top of the desk.

2. Before a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *or*, *but*, *for*, *yet*, or *nor*) linking two independent clauses; if the independent clauses are very short, the comma may be omitted

Landscaping for company headquarters may prove to be expensive, but first impressions of the company are often important for new clients.

3. After a conjunctive adverb following a semicolon

The staff members agreed to work extra hours for three weeks; however, they requested overtime pay.

4. To set off nonrestrictive (or nonessential) phrases or clauses

One of our managers, who knew PASCAL, offered to help debug the program.

5. To set off phrases or words in apposition

John Wilson, candidate for Congress, spoke at the luncheon.

6. To set off a name directly addressed

We will expect your letter, Ms. Jones, no later than September 5.

7. To set off an interjection

Well, I see your point.

8. To separate adjectives in a series

For our service truck, we sought an inexpensive, dependable vehicle.

9. To set off quoted material from the rest of a sentence

"We can meet our goals," proclaimed the new president.

10. To precede the conjunction when a list of three or more items is given.

The clips, brads, and fasteners were in the drawer.

SEMICOLONS

1. Use semicolons to separate closely related main clauses.

Creative business managers know how to delegate authority; they give their employees a sense of importance by involving them in significant ways.

2. Use semicolons to separate items in complex lists.

The assembly line faced a variety of problems: workers who left by themselves, wasted time; machinery that dated from the Eisenhower years; and rushed schedules that brought perpetual panic.

COLONS

1. Use colons to signal the introduction of an example, an explanation, a quotation, or a list. Colons should always follow complete sentences.

Error: The ingredients of the concrete: Portland cement, lime, sand, pea gravel, and water.

Correct: The ingredients of the concrete were the following: Portland cement, lime, sand, pea gravel, and water.

2. Use colons in time designations and after greetings in formal letters.

The workday begins promptly at 8:00 A.M.
Dear Ms. McCoy:

APOSTROPHES

1. Use apostrophes to mark missing letters in contractions.

isn't they've she's

2. Use apostrophes to form some plurals.

Ph.D.'s C.O.D.'s

3. Use apostrophes to indicate possession.

<i>Singular:</i>	business's	boss's	manager's	woman's
<i>Plural:</i>	businesses'	bosses'	managers'	womens'

- a. It's = it is It's important to me.
Its = belongs to it The table is missing its leg.
- b. Personal pronouns (hers, theirs, ours) do not take apostrophes.
The job is hers if she wants it.
- c. The impersonal pronoun *one* uses an apostrophe.
One's work can also be one's recreation.

QUOTATION MARKS

1. Use quotation marks to separate others' words from your own.

He called out, "Please step forward if you wish to bid."

2. Use quotation marks to set off titles of short poems, short stories, songs, chapters, essays, or articles.

"How to Write a Résumé" "The Lake Isle of Innisfree"

3. Use quotation marks to indicate irony.

His "university degree" was in fact a diploma purchased for \$300.

Be careful not to overuse quotation marks in this way.

ITALICS

1. Use italics (or underlining) to mark the titles of books, plays, movies, newspapers, and magazines.

The *Wall Street Journal* reviewed the financial aspects of *Star Wars*.

2. Use italics to identify foreign words and phrases.

The visitor used the German word for work, *arbeiten*.

3. Use italics to give special emphasis.

We asked the supervisor not only *how* to do the job, but *why* it should be done at all.

4. Use italics to set off words that you wish to call attention to as words.

Tell the technical writers they use *is* too often.

PARENTHESES

1. Use parentheses to enclose explanation or details.

The 507 press (a fabrication press for plywood) saved the company \$82,000 in one year.

2. Use parentheses to enclose publisher information in a footnote.

John Renley, *Common Stock Investment Strategies* (New York: Williams Press, 1983).

DASHES

1. Use dashes to separate a series from the rest of the sentence.

The essential materials of the automobile—steel, rubber, plastic, and glass—can be stockpiled in almost unlimited quantities.

2. Use dashes to mark off an afterthought.

Her resignation came only after repeated attempts to get the raise she wanted—and deserved, for that matter.

3. Use dashes to separate a parenthetical comment.

Ledger books—the kind used for professional bookkeeping—were being sold at half price.

HYPHENS

1. Use hyphens to mark divisions within hyphenated words.

editor-in-chief twenty-one (but one hundred and five)

2. Use hyphens to divide words into syllables when division is necessary at a line-end.

cor- corpo- corpora-
poration ration tion

CAPITALIZATION

1. Use a capital letter to begin sentences, direct quotations, and most lines of poetry.

Let your employees feel that they matter.

He asked, "Why did you call?"

2. Capitalize the names and initials of persons, places, and geographical areas.

Henry Higgins Hinton, Iowa the South

3. Capitalize the names of organizations and their members.

Rotary Club Rotarians

4. Capitalize the names of ships, planes, and spacecrafts.

Voyager II the Queen *Elizabeth II*

5. Capitalize the names of ethnic groups, races, nationalities, religions, languages, and historical periods.

Jewish Romanian Native American English Renaissance

6. Capitalize the names of days, months, holidays, and historical periods and events.

Friday October the Roaring Twenties Memorial Day

7. Capitalize the first word and all other major words in titles of books, plays, poems, musical compositions, films, and works of art.

"Some Enchanted Evening"
The Sound and the Fury
Star Wars

Documentation

Documentation refers to the practice in professional and academic writing of citing sources for ideas, specific language, graphic illustrations, and other materials borrowed from the work of others. The two documentation systems used most often in contemporary academic communication are the Modern Language Association (MLA) system and the American Psychological Association (APA) system. These widely used documentation systems undergo periodic revision. For reference in future years, the reader is therefore advised to check the latest documentation publications of these organizations, usually available at public and university libraries.

Some businesses publish their own guides to documentation, including IBM, NASA, and TRW. In addition, many associations specify a particular set of style and documentation guidelines for their membership and publications. Among such associations are the American Chemical Society, the American Mathematical Society, and the American Institute of Physics. Technical communicators working within these disciplines or submitting to the professional journals of these organizations should determine which documentation system is expected.

THE PURPOSES OF DOCUMENTATION

Business writers document material borrowed from the work of others for at least three reasons:

1. Appropriate citation adds credibility to the writer's assertions. In effect, expert testimony or supportive facts are summoned by the writer to support his or her argument. Lacking such cited sources, the writer's claims could seem merely a matter of individual opinion.
2. Documentation also helps the writer avoid plagiarism. Just as physical property should not be stolen from others, so intellectual property (in the form of ideas,

graphic illustrations, statistics, and other material) should not be borrowed without appropriate acknowledgment.

3. Accurate citation guides the reader to sources for further reading or investigation about a topic. In many cases, business writers will include references not only to works actually cited, but also to other works germane to the topic.

ITEMS TO DOCUMENT

Business writers must provide appropriate documentation for

- verbatim material cited in their work;
- paraphrased versions of the ideas and language of others;
- points of fact not established by the writer's own research and not held as common knowledge;
- borrowed or adapted graphic aids and tables.

AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

Business writers have varying degrees of understanding regarding the nature of plagiarism. By defining and describing plagiarism, this brief discussion is intended to help writers avoid a serious breach of academic and professional integrity.

The *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, third edition (1988), by Joseph Gibaldi and Walter S. Achtert, defines plagiarism as "the act of using another person's ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source. . . . In short, to plagiarize is to give the impression that you have written or thought something that you have in fact borrowed from someone else" (p. 21).

Examples

1. Repeating more or less verbatim someone else's words without acknowledging the source.

The following passage occurs in *Basics of Qualitative Research* (1990), by Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin.

"In axial coding our focus is on specifying a category (*phenomenon*) in terms of the conditions that give rise to it; the *context* (its specific set of properties) in which it is embedded; the action/interactional *strategies* by which it is handled, managed, carried out; and the *consequences* of those strategies" (p. 97).

Plagiarism occurs if this passage is repeated without a source acknowledgment, even if several words are changed:

In axial coding we specify a category in terms (a) of the conditions that give rise to it; (b) the context in which it is embedded; (c) the action or interactional strategies by which it is managed; and (d) the consequences of those strategies.

This passage must be footnoted, with appropriate reference in the notes and bibliography to Strauss and Corbin's work.

2. Paraphrasing someone else's terms, ideas, or argument without acknowledging the source.

Plagiarism of the Strauss and Corbin passage occurs if their ideas are used without source credit:

To perform axial coding correctly, researchers begin by specifying a coding category. Next, they describe the context of that category as well as the strategies by which it is managed. Finally, they define the consequences of those strategies.

Plagiarism could be avoided in this passage by inserting the phrase "according to Strauss and Corbin" and footnoting the reference appropriately.

MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION (MLA) DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

Prior to 1988, the MLA documentation system was based on footnotes or endnotes, with superscripted (raised) numbers within the text to indicate reference locations. Examples of this system can be seen in many pre-1988 books, particularly those in the humanities. This older system is still used in some companies.

In general, however, most business and professional organizations using the MLA system have switched to the new MLA documentation guidelines summarized here. This new system is much like the APA documentation style, with in-text citations of author and page information coordinated with full citations listed in a bibliography or "Works Cited" section.

In-text Citation

Follow these guidelines in placing reference citations within the text.

Citing a Single Author

When an author is named in the text, cite only the page reference:

According to Norman Victor, price fluctuations in copper "depend directly upon political conditions in South America" (152).

When an author is not named in the text, include both author and page reference without a separating comma in parentheses:

Price fluctuations in copper "depend directly upon political conditions in South America" (Victor 152).

If the author is not known for a report, magazine article, or similar publication, use the short title of the work in place of the author's name.

"Preferred provider organizations (PPOs) continue to lobby vigorously for their political agenda" (*HMO Report* 321).

Citing Multiple Authors

When citing a reference with multiple authors, cite the authors' last names without a separating comma between the names and the page reference:

"Profits from personal computer sales have been distributed much more widely in the 2000s than in the 1990s" (Woodruff, Lincoln, and Todd 243).

When citing a reference to more than one work, separate the works by a semicolon:

Several authorities point to the economic rise of South Korea as a key factor in moderating world-wide steel prices (Andrews 142; Wilson 304; Kent 102).

When citing more than one work by the same author, use short title citations for the works, separating them from one another by a semicolon:

Franklin Evert found that CEOs typically distinguish themselves as top performers within the first two years of their careers (*Leadership* 133; *At the Top* 231).

Citations are placed before the period (as illustrated above) or, in the case of longer, indented quotations, two line spaces below the last line, flush with the right margin:

Legal expenses for American corporations exceeded \$6 billion in 2005, a figure that could be reduced by at least half through mutually agreed-to arbitration. The American Arbitration Association holds regular informational seminars for companies interested in seeking low-cost alternatives to litigation.

(Brown 322)

Bibliography or Works Cited

The term "Bibliography" may be used for a list of works cited or an extended list that also includes relevant works not actually cited. The term "Works Cited" is used only for a list of works referenced in the text.

The list of works cited should be placed at the end of the paper, beginning with a new page. Page numbers should continue consecutively from the last page of the text. The words "Works Cited" are centered on the first line after the top margin. The list of works begins at the left margin, two line spaces down from this heading. Each entry begins at the left margin. If the entry is longer than one line, indent the second and following lines five spaces from the left margin.

Entries are listed alphabetically by the last name of author or, if the author's name is not known, by the first word (other than "A," "An," or "The") in the title.

Required Citation Information for Books

Author, title, and publication information are the minimal information requirements for book citation:

Jones, Richard. *Advertising at Work*. 6th ed. New York: ABC Publishing Group, 2005.

A Book by Multiple Authors

Cite the authors' names in the order they appear on the title page of the work. Reverse only the name of the first author:

Hovland, Roxanne, and Gary B. Wilcox. *Advertising in Society*. Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing Group, 1989.

Multiple Books by the Same Author

Name the author only for the first work listed. Thereafter, type three hyphens followed by a period. List multiple books alphabetically by first main word:

Jones, Richard. *Advertising at Work*. 6th ed. New York: ABC Publishing Group, 2005.

———. *Which Ad Works?* 7th ed. New York: ABC Publishing Group, 2005.

Organization Author

If only an organization is listed as the author of a work, treat the organization name as an author name. List it alphabetically by first main word:

Plastics Institute. *Polymer Research*, 2004. New York: Plastics Institute Publications, 2005.

Anonymous Author

If the author of a work is unknown, list the title of the work in the place reserved for the author:

Encyclopedia of Magnetic Resonance Imaging. New York: Urban Publishing, 2005.

Pamphlet Citation

Cite pamphlets in the same way books are cited.

Understanding the Communication Revolution. New York: Western Digital, 2005.

Jenson, R. Edward. *Accessing the Internet*. Chicago: Technology Publications, 2005.

Required Citation Information for Books

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Cite pamphlets in the same way books are cited.

Understanding the Communication Revolution. New York: Western Digital, 2005.

Jenson, R. Edward. *Accessing the Internet*. Chicago: Technology Publications, 2005.

Citation of an Article in a Collection

Foster, Conrad. "Management Training." *New Horizons for Leadership*. Ed. C. Walton Smith. New York: Academy Publishers, 2005.

Citation of a Government Publication

If the author of the work is unknown, state the name of the government followed by the agency.

Arizona. Department of Land Management. *Water Conservation for the 2000s*. Phoenix: State Publications, 2005.

Citation of Association Proceedings

Technical Education: A Review of Approaches. Proceedings of the Society for Technical Education. Atlanta: STE Publications, 2005.

Required Citation Information for Periodicals

Periodicals include magazines, journals, newspapers, and other publications that appear at regular intervals. Required publication information includes author, title of the article cited, title of the publication, and publication data.

Citation of a Newspaper Article

"Super-Computer Access Opens Up." *San Francisco Chronicle*. 8 June 2005: D1.

Lincoln, Robert L. "Evaluating Mortgage Rate Fluctuations." *Banking News*. 16 May 2005: 4.

Citation of a Magazine or Journal Article

Foster, Linda. "Reengineering as a Management Tool." *Fortune*. 23 Aug. 2005: 40–48. [magazine]

"Ethics Policies Help Reduce Internal Control Costs." *Journal of Accountancy*. 4 (2005): 14–16. [journal]

Citation of a Review

Edwards, Ted. "Reengineering under Pressure." Rev. of *Reengineering: Using the Power of Innovation*, by Robert Lohr, *Plant Engineering*. Dec. 2005: 20.

Citation of Other Sources

Software

Johnson, Cynthia, et al. *Pro-Soft*. Vers. 1.3. Computer software. Personal Bibliographic Software, 2005. IBM, CD data disk.

TV and Radio

Teleconferencing for Business. Narr, Robert Trent. KNBC, Los Angeles, 6 May 2005.

Recordings

Lloyd Webber, Andrew. *Cats*. Cond. David Firman. Geffen, 2GHS 2017, 2005.

DVDs and Films

High-Impact Communication Skills. D. E. Visuals, 2005. [DVD]

What Makes Rabbit Run? Dir. David Chesire and R. Eaton. Centre Productions, 1985. (16 mm, 29 min.) [film]

Interviews

Richardson, Linda C. Personal Interview. 19 May 2005.

Wolfe, Tom. Interview. *The Wrong Stuff: American Architecture*. Videocassette. Dir. Tom Bettag. Carousel Films, 1983.

Lectures and Speeches

Sidney, Collin. Address. Opening General Session, ABC Convention. New York, 14 June 2005.

[See the last page of this Appendix for Internet documentation advice.]

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (APA) DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

APA documentation style for in-text citation is similar to MLA guidelines, with these key differences:

1. All in-text references to authors or sources are by last name only:
Frederickson (2005) reported an increase in polio among Hispanic Americans.
2. The year in which the cited source was published is enclosed in parentheses immediately after the name of the author. (See example above.)
3. Page numbers are cited only in the case of a direct quotation, not for paraphrased material.
Woodward (2005, p. 122) predicted "comet fragments larger than a kilometer in size will strike Jupiter in the summer of 2007."
Woodward (2005) predicted that mile-sized comet fragments will collide with Jupiter in the summer of 2007.
4. Use "p." (for single pages) or "pp." (for multiple pages).

APA Guidelines for References

The page(s) called “Works Cited” in MLA documentation style are titled “References” in APA style. As with MLA style, all items listed are placed flush left, with second and following lines for each entry indented three spaces.

Observe the following differences with regard to book citations:

1. List the last name of the author and initials for given name(s), followed by year of publication in parentheses, then title (with only the first word and all proper nouns capitalized) and publication information:

Shelton, J. (1994). *Handbook for technical writing*. Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing Group.

2. List multiple works by the same author in chronological (not alphabetical) order:

James, C. (1988). *Econometrics*. New York: Technical Publications.

James, C. (1991). *The new markets*. New York: Seager Press.

3. Multiple authors are listed by last name and initials, separated by “&”:

Brown, H. & Buskirk, B. (1989). *Readings and cases in direct marketing*. Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing Group.

Observe the following differences in periodical citations:

1. For journals, list the authors by last name, initial(s), publication date, article title, publication title, and publication information.

Rieseman, R. (1994). Position emission tomography. *Medical Diagnostics*, 41, 238–244.

2. For magazines, add the month after the year:

Forest, K. (1994, August). Preparing for a technical career. *Technical Careers*, pp. 20–34.

3. For newspapers, add the day after the year and month:

Victoria, L. (1994, May 1). Locating blood donors in an emergency. *Los Angeles Times*, p. A4.

Other forms of citation follow these same general principles.

Review

Jacobs, E. (2005, January 8). Effective speaking for technical managers. [Review of *Professional Speaking*]. *The Technical Manager*, p. 17.

Software

Andrews, L. (2005). *Hyperion* [computer program]. St. Louis, MO: Legacy Software.

DVDs and Films

Reston G. (Producer). (2005). *Diversity in the workplace*. [Videotape]. Miami, FL: Business Production.

Interviews

Osborn, W.K. (2005). [Personal interview]. New York.

Lectures and Speeches

Amandson, L. (2005). "Exploring Alaska's hidden heartland" [Lecture]. University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ.

DOCUMENTING INTERNET SOURCES

The Internet presents special problems for documentation. First, many Internet sources have little recognized validity. Information they contain may not have gone through a review process of any kind to check for accuracy; as the saying goes, "You can put anything on the Internet." Second, Internet sources have an annoying habit of going out of existence without notice—and leaving no record of their previous contents behind. Finally, these sources often fail to update their information in a timely way, or even to specify when the information was placed on the Internet.

For all these reasons, business writers have the obligation of providing enough information to assure accessibility and suggest credibility for the Internet materials they cite. Do so by specifying the following in your References section:

- the full Web site address and title (if any), including all extensions and icons
 www.buscomm.html, The Writer's Helper, icon: "Style"
- the date you accessed the Web site
 Accessed Jan. 9, 2005
- brief information on the individual or group who authors or supervises the Web site
 This site is maintained by the Department of Communication at the University of Oregon. The site supervisor is Dr. Allen Forbes. [If you can find no such information, say: "No site author or supervisor information available."]
- place Internet sites alphabetically by address, not title, within your References
- within your body text, cite only the Internet address and title within parenthesis:
 Magazine editors expect professional writers to avoid "is" and "are" when possible in favor of more vivid verbs (www.buscomm.html, The Writer's Helper).

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