Brief Introduction to Technical Communication

Definition of Technical Communication

What is meant by "communication"?

- the exchange of information, ideas, and knowledge between a sender and a receiver

- Communication in oral or written form

What is meant by "Technical Communication"?

- the process of making and sharing information and ideas ==in the workplace==

- a set of applications — the documents that are written.

GC vs. TC

What are the difference between general communication and technical communication?

General communication	Technical communication
• Contains a general message	• Contains a technical message
• Informal in style and approach	• Mostly formal
• No set pattern of communication	• Follows a set pattern
• Mostly oral	• Both oral and written
• Not always for a specific audience	• Always for a specific audience
• involve no technical vocabulary or graphics, etc.	• Frequently involves jargon, graphics, etc.

Objectives of TC

What are the objectives of technical communication?

- To disseminate knowledge in oral or written form

- To provide organized information that aids in quick decision-making

- To invite corporate joint ventures

What are the characteristics of technical communication?

- correct

- accurate

- clear

- appropriate

- to the point

- The language should be clear and easy to understand.
- The information must be brief and arranged sequentially.
- The technical information provided in the manual should be accurate.

Levels of communication

At what levels does communication take place?

- Extrapersonal communication
  - ➤ communication between human beings and non-human entities
- Intrapersonal communication
  - ➤ communication within an individual
- Interpersonal communication
  - ➤ communication among people
- Organizational communication
  - ➤ communication in an organization at different hierarchical levels
  - ➤ internal-operational, external-operational, and personal communication
- Mass communication
  - ➤ communication through mass media such as journals, books, newspapers, television, radio and Internet
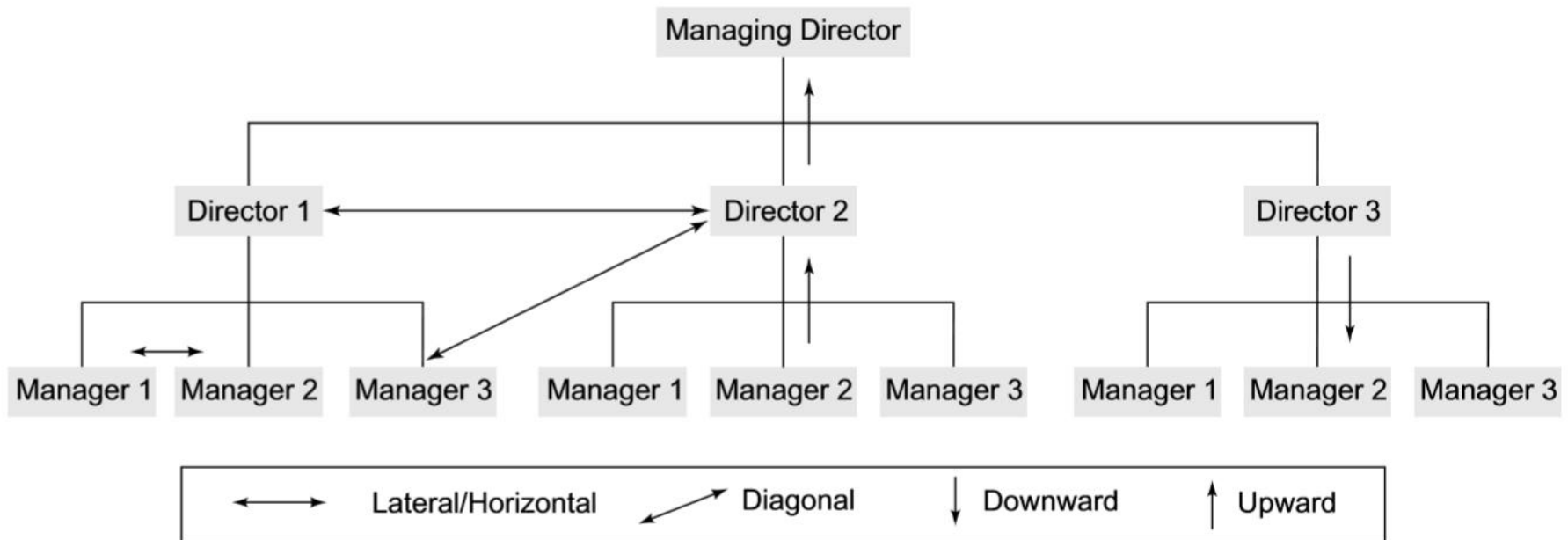
Flow of communication in an organization

How does communication flow in an organization?

- horizontal/lateral communication
- vertical communication
- diagonal communication

Think and decide

Vertical communication
- Communication between superiors and subordinates

Horizontal/Lateral communication
- Communication between peers

Teacher

monitor 1   monitor 2   monitor 3

TM leader 1   TM leader 2   TM leader 3

M1   M2   M3

TM leader 1   TM leader 2   TM leader 3

M1   M2   M3
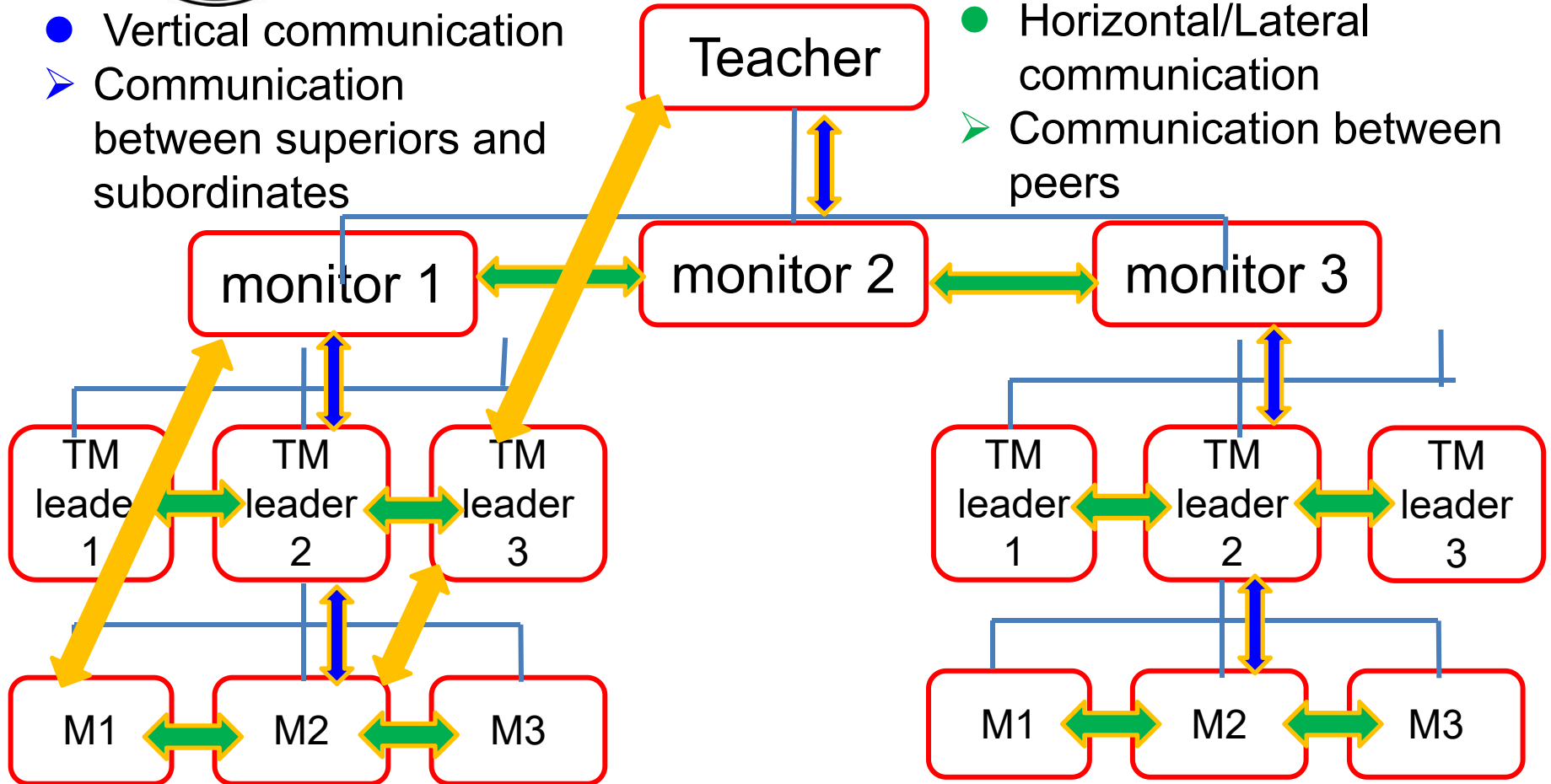
Diagonal communication
- Communication between superiors and subordinates without going through the hierarchical set-up inside the organization

There are many serious ethical and legal issues related to technical communication, and all professionals need a basic understanding of them.

Ethicist Manuel G. Velasquez outlines **four moral standards** that are useful in thinking about ethical dilemmas (2006):

- Rights: individuals' basic needs and welfare.
- Justice: how the costs and benefits of an action or a policy are distributed among a group.
- Utility: the positive and negative effects that an action or a policy has, will have, or might have on others.
- Care: the relationships we have with other individuals.

Drafting Emails for Work

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2 Elements in an email

3 Style, structure and content

4 Email etiquette

5 Questions for review

Lead-in

- The phenomenally rapid growth of the Internet and its widespread use in business has changed the way in which organizations communicate.

- All organizations have Internet access, and most individuals have a personal email address.

- Many companies are promoting the use of email for most of—if not all—in-house correspondence, and a great deal of communication with outside organizations also relies on email.

- Email is an effective way to communicate. It offers some tremendous advantages, but it is also subject to limitations.

Discuss in groups and make a list of advantages email offers and limitations it suffers.

Advantages

- Email usually reaches its destination instantaneously.
- Messages can be sent to as many people as necessary simultaneously. It avoids repetition or reproduction of text.
- Email messages can be saved and stored, and one can search message files electronically.
- Email systems have a reply button that enables one to include the original message when replying.
- Drawings, sounds, video clips, and other computer files can be attached to an email.
- One need not worry about interrupting someone when sending an email.
- The recipients can read the email at their own leisure and pace and respond after due reflection.
- It is inexpensive, as it saves paper and is promoted as a green initiative.

Limitations

- Email is editable, so email communication is subject to security issues.
- Email is anonymous. The identity of a message's author can be completely masked or lost in just two generations of the message.
- Email cannot be retracted. Once the "Send" button is pressed, there is no bringing it back.
- Email is not necessarily private. Since messages are passed from one system to another, there are many opportunities for someone to intercept or read email.
- It is possible to forge email. This is not common, but it is possible forge the address of the sender.
- We can receive too much or unwanted email, just like other types of junk mail.

Elements in an email

What elements are there in an email?

M✉il QQ邮箱
mail.qq.com

sue_sun<731766789@qq.com> ⚠

邮箱首页 | 设置 - 换肤

Q 邮件搜索…

📝 **写信**

📥 **收信**

📇 **通讯录**

收件箱
星标邮件 ⭐
群邮件
草稿箱
已发送
已删除
垃圾箱
QQ邮件订阅

其他邮箱

日历 | 记事本
在线文档 NEW
附件收藏
文件中转站
贺卡 | 明信片
阅读空间

普通邮件	群邮件	贺卡	明信片

发送 | 定时发送 | 存草稿 | 关闭 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　预览　新窗口写信

收件人 _____

抄送 _____

密送 _____

删除抄送 - 删除密送 | 分别发送

主题 _____

📎 添加附件 | ▼ 　📎 超大附件 　👥 在线文档 　🖼 照片 | ▼ 　📄 文档 　📷 截屏 　😊 表情 　🔲 更多 　**A** 格式↓

正文
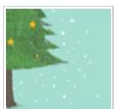
发件人：**sue_sun** <731766789@qq.com> ▼ 　|　其他选项 ⦇

发送 | 定时发送 | 存草稿 | 关闭

通讯录　**信 纸**

◀ 1/2 ▶

➕ 设计新信纸

All of your recipients will know you're sending a copy to this person or group.

None of your readers will know you're sending a copy to this person or group

An email should have a specific subject line.

▷ To: Team leaders
▷ BC: Teacher

▷ To: Monitor
▷ CC: All Members
▷ BC: Teacher

未命名 - 邮件 (HTML)

文件　邮件　插入　选项　设置文本格式　审阅　帮助　♀ 告诉我

五号　A A

B I U ⌷ ⌷ ⌷ ⌷ ⌷ ⌷

通讯簿 检查姓名

附加文件 ▾
附加项目 ▾
签名 ▾

听写

粘贴板　普通文本　姓名　添加　标记　语音

收件人...

抄送(C)...

密件抄送(B)...

主题(U)

发送 (S)

To

CC=courtesy/complimentary copy

BC or BCC=blind (courtesy) copy

Subject
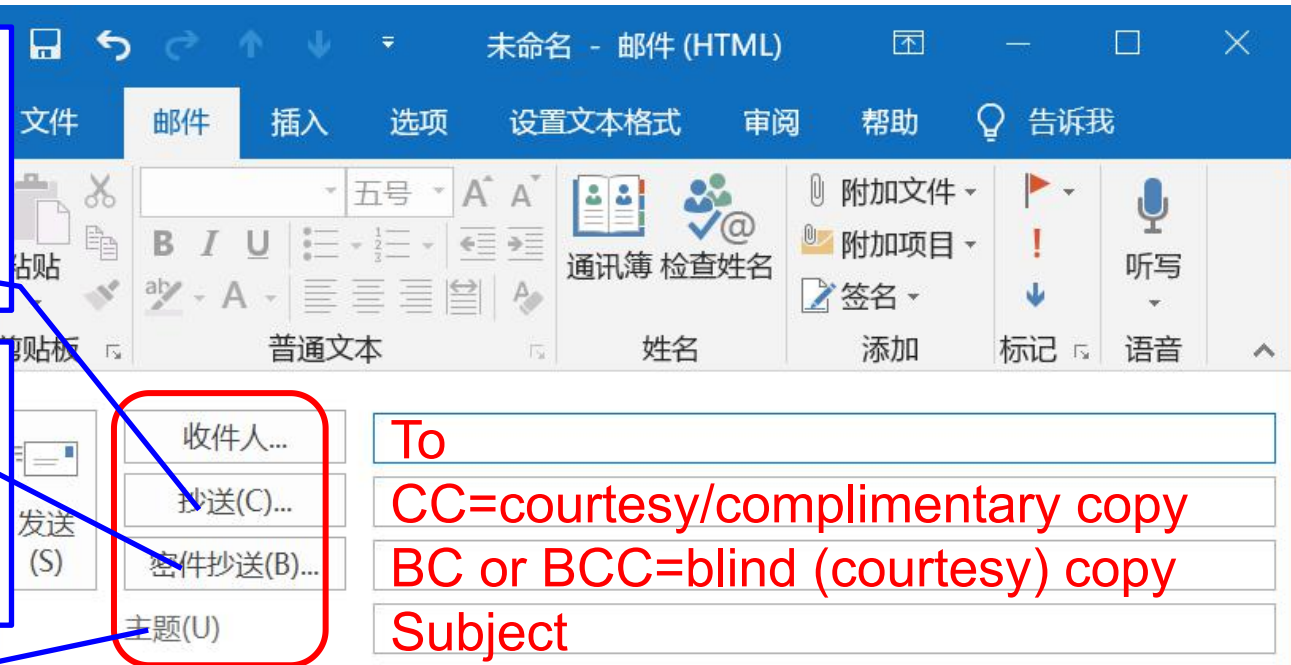
1. Suppose the monitor writes an email to all the team leaders to inform them of a meeting, but he/she doesn't want them to know the email is also sent to the teacher. In which box should the writer put the teacher and the team leaders?

2. Suppose the team leader writes an email to the monitor, he/she wants his/her members to know this, but he doesn't want the monitor and his/her members to know that he/she also sends the email to the teacher, in which box should the writer put the monitor, his/her members and the teacher respectively?

By naming her readers, the writer is showing respect for them.

The first paragraph clarifies the purpose of writing the email.

The middle paragraphs describe the details.

Paragraphs are relatively brief and double-spaced.

The writer explains what she would like her readers to do.

The writer ends the politely

The writer signs the email

signature block containing contact information (address and phone no.)

Email application window — Subject: Input re Policy on Incl...

文件 邮件 插入 选项 设置文本格式 审阅 帮助 操作说明搜

Arial 六号 **B** *I*

发送(S)

收件人(T) Doc Team
抄送(C) Bob Halloran
密件抄送(B) Cindy Belloc
主题(U) Input re Policy on Including Print Doc

Header

Jullie, Bob and Rajiv-

As I mentioned at our meeting last week, I want to get your response to an idea about changing the way we distribute print doc with our systems. I'll be meeting with Ann in Marketing next week, and I want to be sure I can represent our views effectively.

The idea is to stop including the Getting Started brochure and the User's Guide in the box. Instead, we'll include a post card that customers can use to request these two docs, at no cost. Of course, the two docs will remain up on the site as PDFs. And we'll still include the setup instructions on the poster.

A recent thread on TECHWR-L on this technique suggests that it can reduce the number of docs that we need to print by 70-85%. That's good, of course, in terms of print runs, as well as shipping costs. Before I run the numbers on cost savings, however, I want to get a sense of what you think about the idea from the perspective of the customer. Do you think that not including the docs will make a bad impression? Will it increase problems when they set up the printers?

We won't have final say on whether to adopt this idea. I'm afraid, but I want to make sure our voices are heard. After all, we know more about the customer experience than anyone else at the company.

Please respond by e-mail to all of us by Friday at noon. Thanks very much.

Regards.

Melissa

Melissa Cartright, Senio
PrintPro Systems
voice: 216.555.3407
fax: 216.555.3400

Style, Structure, and Content

Header

From:
To:
Cc:
Bcc:
Sent:
Subject:
Attachment:

Always take the time to consider the effect that the tone, style, grammar, and spelling of a mail may have on the recipient.

message

Salutation

Body

Complimentary close

Signature

signature block

- Name, office title, address and phone number(s)
- Automatically attached to the email

- Email messages must be kept brief; ideally, under 200 words.
- The tone, i.e. the audience and purpose of the email, should be carefully considered.
- Poor spelling and grammar in email messages could lead some readers to question the writer's competence.

Email etiquette
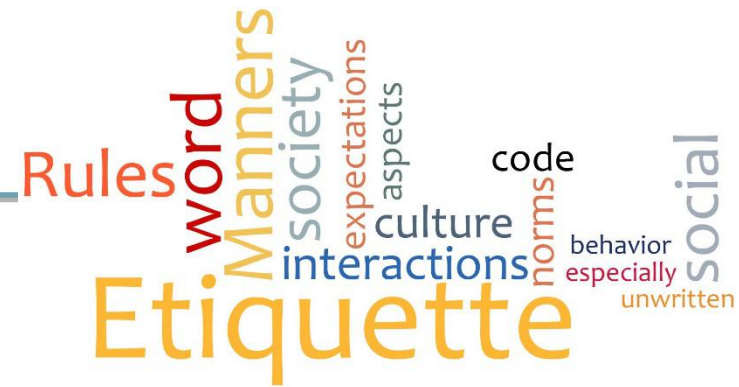
- Stick to business
- Write correctly and honestly
- Use proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation
- Use appropriate formality
- Use proper structure and layout
- Identify yourself and the topic
- Be careful with formatting

KISS
Principle

KEEP
IT
SIMPLE
STUPID

- Be concise and to the point
- Do not write in CAPITALS
- Avoid long sentences
- Use active instead of passive voice
- Keep the language gender-neutral
- Be kind. Do not flame.
- Re-read the email before sending it

Rules word Manners society expectations aspects code culture interactions norms behavior especially social Etiquette unwritten

- Avoid using URGENT and IMPORTANT
- Take care with abbreviations and emoticons
- Answer swiftly
- Do not overuse Reply All
- Maintain coherence
- Use templates for frequently used responses
- Answer all questions, and pre-empt further questions
- Do not overuse the high priority option
- Do not attach unnecessary files
- Do not use email to discuss confidential matters
- Do not reply to spam
- Don't forward a message to an online discussion forum without the writer's permission
- Don't send a message unless you have something to say

Level of formality

- the frozen style
  - 庄严体
- the formal style
  - 正式体
- the consultative style
  - 商议体
- the casual style
  - 随意体
- the intimate style
  - 亲密体

Martin Joos
THE
A linguistic excursion
FIVE
into the five styles
CLOCKS
of English usage

Introduction by Albert H. Marckwardt

A Harbinger Book H 058 $1.95 Slightly higher in Canada
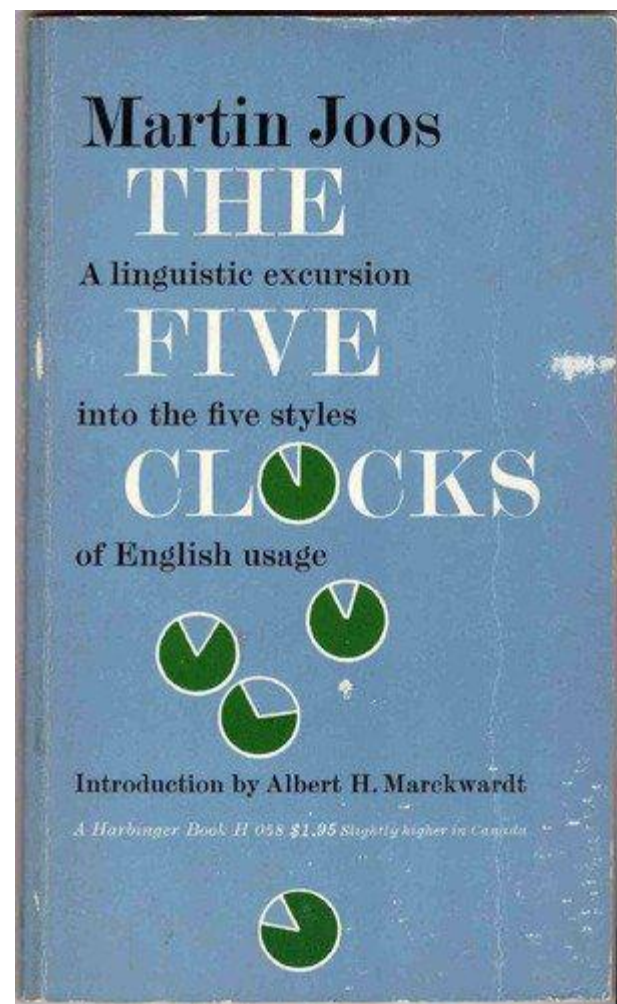
1) My dear father has just expired.
2) My old man just kicked the bucket.
3) My dad has died.
4) My beloved parent has just passed to his heavenly reward.
5) My father has just passed away.

--- by Martin Joos

Frozen   Formal   Consultative   Casual   Intimate
(4) (1)   (5)   (3) (2)

- Our meeting with United went south right away when they threw a hissy fit, saying that we blew off the deadline for the progress report.

  too informal

➤ In our meeting, the United representative expressed concern that we had missed the deadline for the progress report.

- It was indubitably the case that our team was successful in presenting a proposal that was characterized by quality of the highest order. My appreciation for your industriousness is herewith extended.

  too formal

➤ I think we put together an excellent proposal. Thank you very much for your hard work.

you attitude vs. we/me attitude

多用你方态度(you-attitude)，少用我方态度(we/me-attitude)

- Correspondence must convey a courteous, positive tone.
- The key to accomplishing this task is using the "you attitude" — that is, looking at the situation from the reader's point of view and adjusting the content, structure, and tone to meet his or her needs.

> - Put yourself in your reader's shoes
> - Try to imagine what your reader will feel about what you write
> - Reflect and emphasize your reader's needs, interests and concerns
> - Protect your reader's ego

- You must have dropped the engine. The housing is badly cracked.

  accusing

- The badly cracked housing suggests that your engine must have fallen onto a hard surface from some height.

- You'll need two months to deliver these parts? Who do you think you are, the post office?

  sarcastic

- Surely you would find a two-month delay for the delivery of parts unacceptable in your business. That's how I feel, too.

- The messages are written in capital /uppercase letters.
  - It is difficult to read.
  - It appears as if the writer is yelling at his/her reader(s).

末命名 - 邮件 (HTML)

文件　邮件　插入　选项　设置文本格式　审阅　帮助　♀ 告诉我你想要做什么

Arial　小四　A A ⋮ ⋮ A
B I U aby A 📋 📋 📋 📋 📋 📋 📋 通讯簿 检查姓名
粘贴
剪贴板　普通文本　姓名　添加　标记　语音

收件人...　Supers and Leads
抄送(C)...
发送(S)　主题(U)

LATELY, WE HAVE BEEN MISSING LASER REPAIR FILES FOR OUR 16MEG WAFERS. AFTER BRIEF INVESTIGATION, I HAVE FOUND THE MAIN REASON FOR THE MISSING DATA.

OCCASIONALLY, SOME OF YOU HAVE WRONGLY PROBED THE WAFERS UNDER THE CORRELATE STEP AND THE DATA IS THEN COPIED INTO THE NONPROD STEP USING THE QTR PROGRAM. THIS IS REALLY STUPID. WHEN DATE IS COPIED THIS WAY THE REPAIR DATA IS NOT COPIED. IT REMAINS UNDER THE CORRELATE STEP.

TO AVOID THIS PROBLEM, FIRST PROBE THE WAFERS THE RIGHT WAY. IF A WAFER MUST BE PROBED UNDER A DIFFERENT STEP, THE WAFER IN THE CHANGE FILE MUST BE RENAMED TO THE ** FORMAT.

EDITING THE WAFER DATA FILE SHOULD BE USED ONLY AS A LAST RESORT, IF THIS BECOMES A COMMON PROBLEM, WE COULD HAVE MORE PROBLEMS WITH INVALID DATA THAT THERE ARE NOW.

SUPERS AND LEADS: PLEASE PASS THIS INFORMATION ALONG TO THOSE WHO NEED TO KNOW.

ROGER VANDENHEUVAL

- The writer does not state his purpose in the subject line and the first paragraph.

- Salutation is not written.

- The writer's tone is hostile.

- The writer has not proofread it.

- The writer does not conclude politely.

保存 撤销 重做 未命名 - 邮件 (HTML)

文件　邮件　插入　选项　设置文本格式　审阅　帮助　告诉我

Arial　小四　A A
B I U 三 三 三 三
粘贴　aa A
剪贴板　普通文本　姓名　添加　标记　语音

附加文件
附加项目
签名
通讯簿 检查姓名

发送(S)

收件人... | Supers and Leads
抄送(C)...
密件抄送(B)...
主题(U)

Lately, we have been missing laser repair files for our 16meg wafers. After brief investigation, I have found the main reason for the missing data.

Occasionally, some of you have wrongly probed the wafers under the correlate step and the data is then copied into the nonprod step using the QTR program. This is really stupid. When date is copied this way the repair data is not copied. It remains under the correlate step.

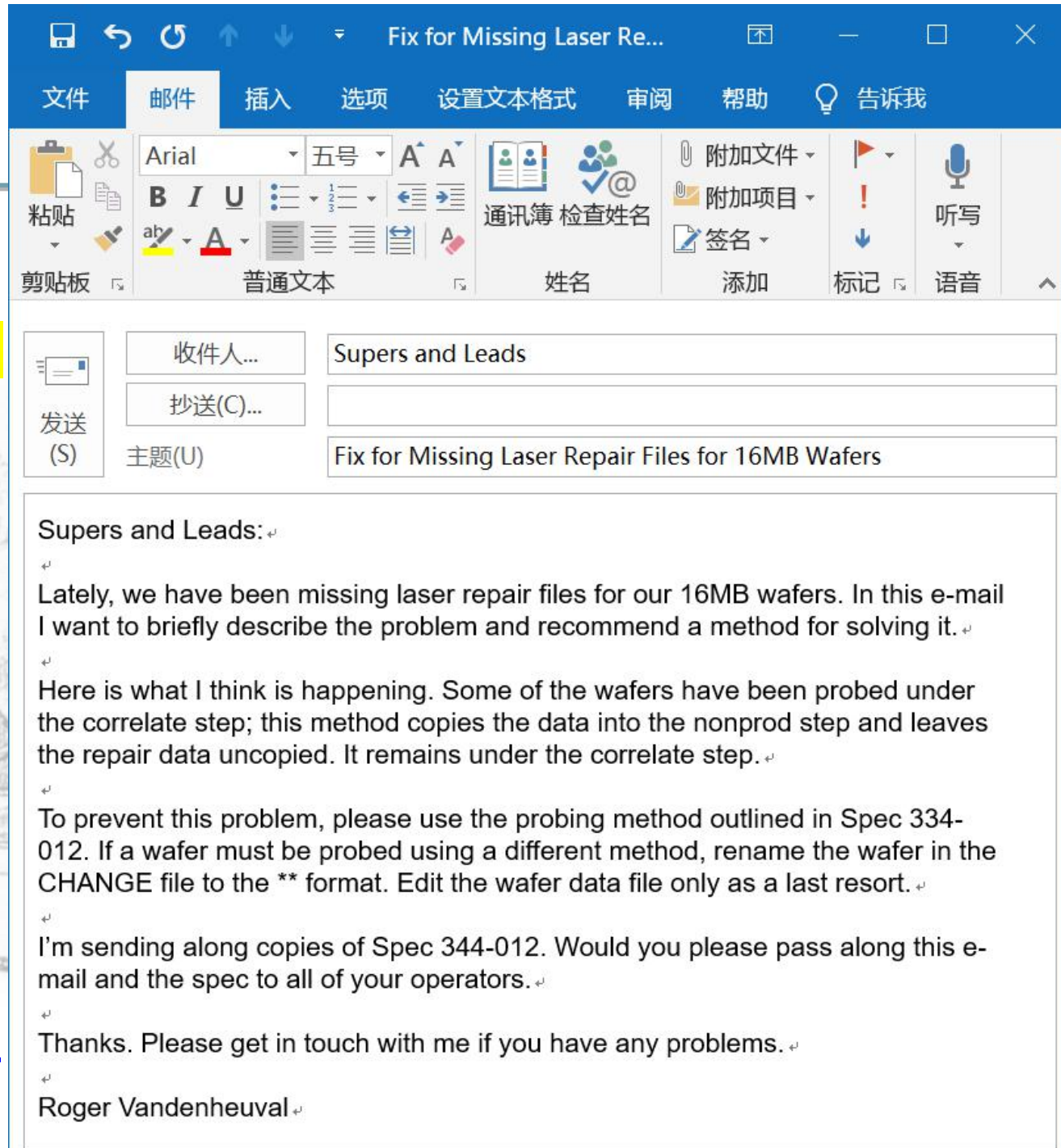To avoid this problem, first probe the wafers the right way. If a wafer must be probed under a different step, the wafer in the CHANGE file must be renamed to the ** format.

Editing the wafer data file should be used only as a last resort, If this becomes a common problem, we could have more problems with invalid data that there are now.

Supers and Leads: please pass this information along to those who need to know.

Roger Vandenheuval

- The subject line and first paragraph clearly state the writer's purpose.

- Double-spacing between paragraphs makes the e-mail easier to read.

- The writer concludes politely.

Fix for Missing Laser Re...

收件人... Supers and Leads

抄送(C)...

发送 (S)

主题(U) Fix for Missing Laser Repair Files for 16MB Wafers

Supers and Leads:

Lately, we have been missing laser repair files for our 16MB wafers. In this e-mail I want to briefly describe the problem and recommend a method for solving it.

Here is what I think is happening. Some of the wafers have been probed under the correlate step; this method copies the data into the nonprod step and leaves the repair data uncopied. It remains under the correlate step.

To prevent this problem, please use the probing method outlined in Spec 334-012. If a wafer must be probed using a different method, rename the wafer in the CHANGE file to the ** format. Edit the wafer data file only as a last resort.

I'm sending along copies of Spec 344-012. Would you please pass along this e-mail and the spec to all of your operators.

Thanks. Please get in touch with me if you have any problems.

Roger Vandenheuval

Read, comment and revise

What is the matter with this email?

To: Jack
cc:
bcc:
Subject: Monthly report for April

My dear,

I have been told that the monthly report for April should be submitted by you before this Friday.

I remember that you have been told about the deadline and how to prepare for the report.

If you have any questions, I don't mind to be interrupted any time.

BR,

Lily Zhu

To: Jack
cc:
bcc:
Subject: Monthly report for April

My dear,

I have been told that the monthly report for April should be submitted by you before this Friday.

I remember that you have been told about the deadline and how to prepare for the report.

If you have any questions, I don't mind to be interrupted any time.

BR,

Lily Zhu

Instead of using **"My dear"**, it is more appropriate to address the recipient's name **"Dear Jack".**

Overuse of passive voice sounds really odd and may create misinterpretation.

In business emails, try not to use abbreviations and emoticons.

To	Jack
cc	
bcc	
Subject	Monthly report for April

Dear Jack,

I am writing to let you know that the deadline for April monthly report is this Friday.

I trust you are well aware of the time frame and how to prepare for the report.

However, if you need any support, please feel free to contact me any time.
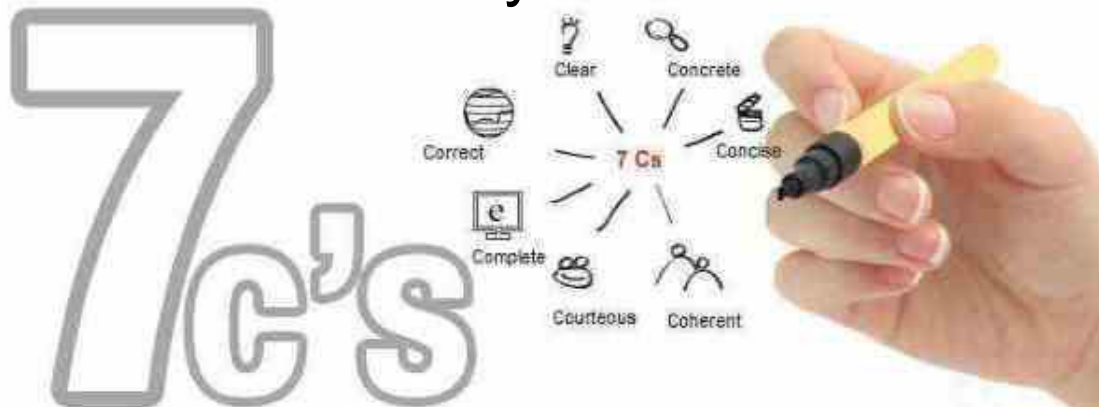
Best regards,

Lily Zhu

It sounds much more professional.
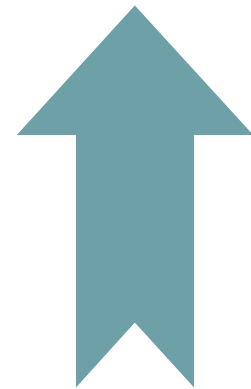
Principles to be observed in writing

- Clear in content

- Concise in language

- Courteous in attitude

- Considerate in tone

- Coherent in expression

- Correct in form

- Customary in format

Questions for review

- Did you refrain from discussing ==nonbusiness subjects==?
- Did you keep the e-mail as brief as possible and send it only to appropriate people?
- Did you use appropriate formality?
- Did you write correctly?
- Did you avoid flaming?
- Did you write a specific, accurate subject line?
- Did you use ==uppercase and lowercase== letters?
- Did you ==skip lines between paragraphs==?
- Did you keep the line length under 65 characters?
- Did you check with the writer before forwarding his or her message?

Thank You for Attention！