

- The goal of this book is to help you develop your communication skills so that you can achieve your business purposes.

THE GOAL AND PLAN OF THIS BOOK

The preceding discussion shows that communication is important to business, that it is performed in various and complex ways, and that it involves numerous stages of analysis and decision making. Helping you develop the communication skills you'll need in order to achieve your business purposes is the goal of this book.

The Plan: Situations, Solutions, Summaries

To achieve this goal, the book introduces each major topic through a business communication situation that realistically places you in the business world. Each situation describes a possible communication problem. Then the following material instructs you on how to solve this kind of problem. For your study convenience, summaries of the text material appear in the margins. A general summary by learning objectives appears at the end of each chapter.

- The book introduces topics by presenting situations and then showing sample solutions. End-of-chapter summaries help your study.

An Overarching Rule: Ethical Communication

As we have said, the human-relations dimension of communication makes it an activity that involves ethics. But business communication in particular brings ethical considerations into play. The fundamental purpose of a business is to stay in business and, most would say, to maintain or increase stakeholder wealth. When a business is in trouble or the owners are greedy, it can be tempting to try to serve this purpose by using communication in unethical ways—for example, lying about or omitting critical information, promoting unfair employment practices, or generating unhealthy needs on the part of consumers. In the pages ahead you will learn how words can be selected and organized to achieve desired goals. These goals can range from good to bad extremes. Without exception, our emphasis will be on achieving effects consistent with honorable goals.



- We stress only ethical communications.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1

Explain the importance of communication to you and to business.

1. Business needs and rewards people who can communicate, for communication is vital to business operations.

- But good communicators are scarce.
- So, if you can improve your communication skills, you increase your value to business and advance your own career as well.

2

Describe the three main forms of communication in the business organization.

2. Communicating in business falls into three categories:

- communication is the communicating a business does to implement its operating plan (its procedure for doing what it was formed to do).
- communication is the communicating a business does with outsiders (customers, other businesses, the public, government agencies, and such).
- communication is informal exchanges of information not formally related to operations but nevertheless important to an organization's success.

3

Describe the formal and informal communication networks in the business organization.

3. The flow of communication in a business organization forms a complex and ever-changing network. Information continually flows from person to person—upward, downward, and laterally.
- The communicating that follows the formal structure of the business comprises the network. Primarily, operational information flows through this network, which is sustained by particular forms of communication ().
 - The flow of personal communication forms the network, or .

4. The kind and amount of communicating a business does depend upon such factors as
 - The nature of the business.
 - Its operating plan.
 - Its environment.
 - The geographic dispersion of its members.
 - Its people.
 - Its organizational (an organization's customary, often unexpressed, ways of perceiving and doing things).
5. Business communication takes place in these contexts:
 - The larger business-economic, sociocultural, and historical contexts.
 - The relationship of the communicators.
 - The communicators' own worlds: organizational, professional, and personal.
6. The process of communication involves these activities, which tend to be linear in nature but are often (revisiting earlier steps):

The initiator

 - Senses a communication need.
 - Defines the situation.
 - Considers possible communication strategies.
 - Selects a course of action (message type, contents, style, format, channel).
 - Composes the message.
 - Sends the message.

The intended recipient

 - Receives the message.
 - Interprets the message.
 - Decides on a response.
 - May send a responding message.
7. Business communication can be thought of as a problem-solving activity.
 - Finding communication solutions requires analysis, creativity, and judgment.
 - (problem-solving devices such as common communication plans) can help make your communication problem-solving more efficient.
 - The common communication plans must still be adapted to each situation.
8. The communication process reveals these truths:
 - Meaning is in the mind, and no two minds are alike.
 - The symbols for communicating are imperfect, and so are our best communication efforts.
 - Communication is about information and relationships.
9. Your best strategy for overcoming communication challenges is adaptation (fitting every facet of your communication solution to your intended recipients).
10. The plan of this book is to introduce you to the primary types of business communication strategies through realistic situations.
 - You are placed in a situation that involves a particular communication problem.
 - You are shown how to solve it by using problem analysis, common communication strategies, and adaptation.
 - And always the emphasis is on ethics.

4 Describe factors that affect the types and amount of communicating that a business does.

5 Describe the various contexts for each act of business communication.

6 Describe the communication process.

7 Explain why business communication is a form of problem solving.

8 Explain three basic truths about communication.

9 Understand the importance of adaptation to successful communication.

10 Describe the goal and plan of this book.

slang terms show lack of sensitivity, too—words such as *retarded*, *handicapped*, and *crippled*. Even harsher are *idiot*, *moron*, and *feeble-minded*, for these labels often are put on the young based on one behavior over a short time period. Presenting both the old and the young objectively is only fair.

As we have suggested, use labels only when relevant, and use positive terms when possible. In describing the old, be sensitive to terms such as *senile*, which on the surface might be well intended but also can imply a negative connotation. Present both groups fairly and objectively when you write about them.

Avoid Words That Typecast Those with Disabilities

People with disabilities are likely to be sensitive to discriminatory words. Television shows those with disabilities competing in the Special Olympics, often exceeding the performance of an average person, and common sense tells us not to stereotype these people. However, sometimes we do anyway. Just as with age, we need to avoid derogatory labels and apologetic or patronizing behavior. For example, instead of describing one as *handicapped*, use *disabled*. Avoid slang terms such as *retarded*; use *intellectually disabled* or other objective terms. Terms such as *idiot* and *moron* should be avoided because they degrade in most cases. Work to develop a nonbiased attitude, and show it through carefully chosen words.

- Disabled people are sensitive to words that describe their disabilities.

In Conclusion about Words

The preceding review of suggestions for selecting words is not complete. You will find more—much more—in the pages ahead. But you now have in mind the basics of word selection. The remaining suggestions are refinements of these basics.

As you move along, you should view these basics as work tools. Unfortunately, the tendency is to view them as rules to memorize and give back to the instructor on an examination. Although a good examination grade is a commendable goal, the long-run value of these tools is their use in your writing. So do yourself a favor. Resolve to keep these basics in mind every time you write. Consciously use them. The results will make you glad you did.

- More about words appears in the following pages.
- The preceding suggestions are realistic ways to improve your writing. Use them.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To communicate clearly, you must adapt to your reader.

- Adapting means using words the reader understands.
- It also involves following the suggestions below.

2. Select words that your reader understands.

- These are the familiar words (words like *child* instead of *minor*).
- They are also the short words (*child* rather than *minor*).

3. Use technical words and acronyms with caution.

- For example, use *intellectually disabled* rather than *retarded*.
- Spell out and define acronyms as needed.
- However, technical words are appropriate among technical people.

4. Prefer the concrete words and active verbs.

- Concrete words are the specific ones. For example, *child* is more concrete than *minor*.
- Action verbs are more vigorous and interesting than forms of “to be.”
- In active voice, the subject acts; in passive voice, it receives the action. For example, use *child acts* rather than *child is acted upon*.

1

Explain the role of adaptation in selecting words that communicate.

2

Simplify writing by selecting familiar and short words.

3

Use technical words and acronyms appropriately.

4

Write concretely and use active verbs.

5 Write with clarity and precision by avoiding camouflaged verbs, by selecting the right words, and by using idioms correctly.

6 Use words that do not discriminate.

- Active voice is stronger, more vigorous, and more interesting. But passive voice is correct and has a place in writing.
 - Avoid overuse of camouflaged verbs—making a noun of the logical verb and then having to add a verb (rather than).
5. Write more clearly and precisely by following these suggestions:
- Develop a feeling for the personalities of words.
 - Select words for their precise meanings (involves studying words to detect shades of difference in meaning—for example, differences in).
 - Also, learn the specific ways that words are used in our culture (called).
6. Avoid discriminatory words.
- Do not use words that discriminate against women. (For example, using or to refer to both sexes and words such as and .)
 - Do not use words that suggest stereotyped roles of race, nationality, or sexual orientation (African Americans and menial jobs, Italians and the Mafia, gays and perfectionists), for such words are unfair and untrue.
 - Do not use words that discriminate against age or disability.

Notice how the transitional expressions (in italics) in the following paragraph signal the relations among the parts and move the reader steadily forward through the ideas:

Three reasons justify moving from the Crowton site. *First*, the building rock in the Crowton area is questionable. The failure of recent geologic explorations in the area appears to confirm suspicions that the Crowton deposits are nearly exhausted. *Second*, the distances from the Crowton site to major markets make transportation costs unusually high. Obviously, any savings in transportation costs will add to company profits. *Third*, the obsolescence of much of the equipment at the Crowton plant makes this an ideal time for relocation. The old equipment at the Crowton plant could be scrapped.

The transition words _____ and _____ bring out the paragraph's pattern of organization and make it easy for the reader to follow along.

- Do not use transitional words arbitrarily.

But a note of caution: do not use transitional words just for the sake of using them. Be sure that they fit your intended meaning and will truly help the reader's comprehension.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1

Explain the role of adaptation in writing clear sentences.

2

Write short, clear sentences by limiting sentence content and economizing on words.

3

Design sentences that give the right emphasis to content.

4

Employ unity and clarity in writing effective sentences.

5

Compose paragraphs that are short and unified, use topic sentences effectively, and communicate coherently.

1. Writing that communicates uses words that the reader understands and sentence structures that organize the message clearly in the reader's mind. It is writing that is _____ to the reader.
2. In general, you should use short sentences, especially when adapting to readers with low reading ability. Do this in two ways:
 - Limit sentence content by breaking up those that are too long.
 - Use words economically by following these specific suggestions:
 - Avoid cluttering phrases (_____ rather than _____).
 - Eliminate surplus words—words that contribute nothing (_____).
 - Avoid roundabout ways of saying things (_____ rather than _____).
 - Avoid unnecessary repetition (_____).
3. Give every item you communicate the emphasis it deserves by following these suggestions:
 - Use short sentences to emphasize points.
 - Combine points in longer sentences to de-emphasize them.
 - But how you combine points (by equal treatment, by subordination) determines the emphasis given.
4. Achieve unity and clarity in your sentences.
 - Make certain all the information in a sentence belongs together—that it forms a unit. These suggestions help:
 - Eliminate excessive detail.
 - Combine only related thoughts.
 - Avoid illogical constructions.
 - Ensure clarity by following the conventional rules of writing (standards of punctuation, grammar, and such).
5. Design your paragraphs for clear communication by following these standards:
 - Give the paragraphs unity.
 - Keep the paragraphs short.
 - Use topic sentences effectively, usually at the beginning but sometimes within and at the end of the paragraph.
 - Leave out unessential details.
 - Use transitional devices for coherence.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1

Explain the need for effect in writing business messages.

1. Although clarity is a major concern in all business writing, you also will be concerned with effect.
 - Specifically, you will need to communicate the effect of goodwill, for it is profitable in business to do so.
 - Sometimes you will need to communicate effects that help you persuade, sell, or the like.
 - To achieve these effects, you will need to heed the following advice.

2

Use a conversational style that eliminates the old language of business and “rubber stamps.”

2. Write messages in a conversational style (language that sounds like people talking).
 - Such a style requires that you resist the tendency to be formal.
 - It requires that you avoid words from the old language of business ().
 - It requires that you avoid the so-called rubber stamps—words used routinely and without thought ().

3

Use the you-viewpoint to build goodwill.

3. In your messages, you will need to emphasize the you-viewpoint (. . . rather than . . .).

- But be careful not to be or appear to be insincere.
- And do not use the you-viewpoint to manipulate the reader.

4

Employ positive language to achieve goodwill and other desired effects.

4. You should understand the negative and positive meanings of words.
 - Negative words have unpleasant meanings ().
 - Positive words have pleasant meanings ().
 - Select those negative and positive words that achieve the best effect for your goal.

5

Explain the techniques of achieving courtesy.

5. You should strive for courtesy in your messages by doing the following:
 - Practice the goodwill techniques discussed above.
 - Focus on your reader (write for the one person).
 - Avoid preaching or talking down.
 - Avoid displays of anger.
 - Be sincere (avoiding exaggeration and overdoing the goodwill techniques).

6

Use the four major techniques for emphasis in writing.

6. Use the four major techniques for emphasis in writing.
 - Determine the items of information the message will contain.
 - Give each item the emphasis it deserves.
 - Show emphasis in these ways:
 - By position (beginnings and endings receive prime emphasis).
 - By space (the greater the space devoted to a topic, the greater is the emphasis).
 - By sentence structure (short sentences emphasize more than longer ones).
 - By mechanical means (color, underscore, boldface, and such).

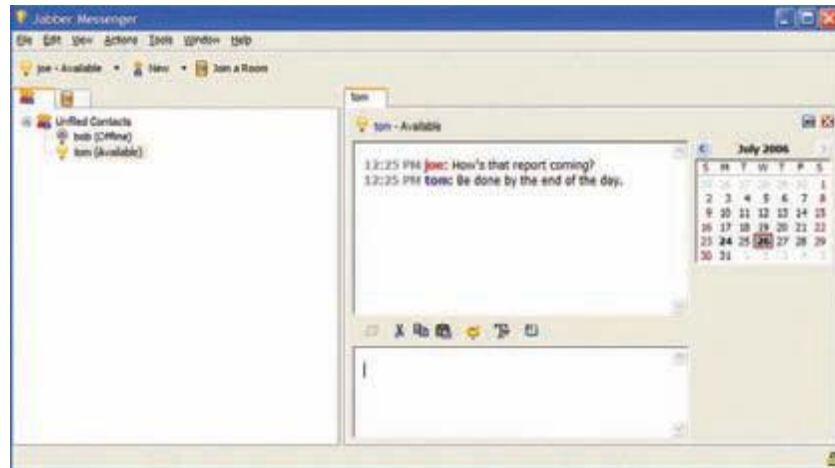
7

Write documents that flow smoothly through the use of a logical order helped by the four major transitional devices.

7. You should write messages that flow smoothly.
 - Present the information in logical order—so that one thought sets up the next.
 - Help show the relationships of thoughts by using these transitional devices:
 - Tie-in sentences.
 - Word repetitions.
 - Pronouns.
 - Transitional words.

Figure 5–6

Enterprise Instant Messaging Often Looks and Works Like Typical Free IM, But It Gives Businesses Added Security and Recordkeeping Benefits



- Your instant messages may be monitored



In writing instant messages you should keep in mind that your instant messages may not be just between you and the other person. Companies often use enterprise instant messaging software to monitor and log employee instant messaging. This communication management software is designed to audit and control instant message use. Specifically, it detects excessive use, inappropriate or unethical behavior, disclosure of proprietary information, use of sexually explicit language, and attachments with viruses. It also has features that protect the company from legal liabilities.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1

Describe the writing process of writing and successful writing strategies.

1. The writing process consists of three main stages:
 - Planning includes the following activities:
 - Gathering and collecting information.
 - Analyzing and organizing the information.
 - Choosing a form, channel, and format.
 - Drafting needs to be flexible.
 - Avoid perfectionism when drafting.
 - Keep going—don't stop for excessive tinkering.
 - Pursue any strategy that will help you make progress on the draft.
 - Revising involves three main levels of edit:
 - Revising for content, organization, and format.
 - Editing sentences and words.
 - Proofreading to catch mechanical and grammatical errors.
 - The three stages are —you can revisit earlier stages at any time.

2

Explain the importance of readable formatting.

2. Making good formatting decisions is critical to your messages' success.

- Good formatting makes your messages inviting.
- Good formatting makes your information easier to find and follow.

3

Describe the development and current usage of the business letter.

3. These are the highlights of the development of business letters:
 - The early civilizations (Chinese, Greek, Roman, Egyptian) used them.
 - They are now used largely in more formal situations, especially with external audiences.
 - Letter formats are standardized (see Appendix B).
 - Early business letters used a stilted language.
 - Strategic organization and humanized language mark recent developments.

4. The memorandum is a form of letter written inside the business.

- Hard-copy memorandums usually are processed on special stationery (_____ at the top; _____ and _____ follow).
- Large organizations often include more information (_____ etc.)

5. Today, email is a mainstream form of business communication.

- It has grown because it
 - Eliminates “telephone tag.”
 - Saves time.
 - Speeds up decision making.
 - Is cheap.
 - Provides a written record.
- But it has disadvantages:
 - It is not confidential.
 - It doesn’t show emotions.
 - It may be ignored or delayed.
- Email should be avoided when
 - The message is long, complicated, or needs negotiating.
 - Content needs discussion.
 - Content needs softening in tone, voice, or words.
 - The message is used to avoid unpleasant and uncomfortable personal contact.
 - The message contains sensitive issues.

6. The way to write good email messages is as follows:

- Use standardized prefatory parts.
- Begin with recipient’s name or a greeting.
- Organize logically.
 - For short messages, present the information in descending order of importance.
 - For long messages, use the organization that best presents the information.
- Make the message short.
- Write correctly.
- Close with your name or a closing statement.
- Use asterisks, dashes, solid caps, and such, as needed, to show emphasis.
- Sometimes initialisms are useful, but use them cautiously.

7. Text messaging is an important new type of business message.

- It is widely used today.
- It enables one to send and receive short messages by wireless phones and personal computers.
- It is finding a place in business communication.
- The writing stresses brevity and uses shortcuts—but never at the expense of clarity.

8. Another popular type of electronic message is instant messaging (IM-ing).

- Instant messaging is like a telephone conversation, but it uses type rather than voice.
- Write your instant messages as though you were talking to the other person.
- Be aware that your instant messaging may be monitored in an organizational environment.

4 Describe the purpose and form of memorandums.

5 Understand the phenomenal growth and nature of email.

6 Follow conventional procedures and organize and write clear email messages.

7 Understand the nature and business uses of text messaging.

8 Understand how instant messaging works.

- Other direct message situations occur.
- You should be able to handle them by applying the techniques covered in this chapter.

OTHER DIRECT MESSAGE SITUATIONS

In the preceding pages, we have covered the most common direct message situations. Others occur, of course. You should be able to handle them with the techniques that have been explained and illustrated.

In handling such situations, remember that whenever possible, you should get to the goal of the message right away. You should cover any other information needed in good logical order. You should carefully choose words that convey just the right meaning. More specifically, you should consider the value of using the you-viewpoint, and you should weigh carefully the differences in meaning conveyed by the positiveness or negativeness of your words. As in all cordial human contacts, you should end your message with appropriate and friendly goodwill words.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1 Properly assess the reader's reaction to your message.

2 Describe the general plan for direct-order messages.

3 Write clear, well-structured routine requests for information.

4 Write direct, orderly, and friendly answers to inquiries.

5 Compose adjustment grants that regain any lost confidence.

1. Properly assess the reader's reaction to your message.
 - If the reaction is negative, indirect order is your likely choice.
 - If it is positive or neutral, you probably will want directness.
2. Describe the general plan for direct-order messages.
 - Begin with the objective.
 - Cover any necessary explanation.
 - Systematically present any remaining parts of the objective.
 - End with adapted goodwill.
3. The routine inquiry is a basic direct-order message.
 - Begin it with a request—either (1) a request for specific information wanted or (2) a general request for information.
 - Somewhere in the message explain enough to enable the reader to answer.
 - If the inquiry involves more than one question, make each stand out—perhaps as separate sentences or separate paragraphs.
 - Consider numbering the questions.
 - And word them as questions.
 - End with an appropriate friendly comment.
4. When responding to inquiries favorably, you should begin directly.
 - If the response contains only one answer, begin with it.
 - If it contains more than one answer, begin with a major one or a general statement indicating you are answering.
 - Identify the message being answered early, perhaps in a subject line.
 - Arrange your answers (if more than one) logically.
 - And make them stand out.
 - If both good- and bad-news answers are involved, give each answer the emphasis it deserves, perhaps by subordinating the negative.
 - For extra goodwill effect, consider doing more than was asked.
 - End with appropriate cordiality.
5. As messages granting adjustments are positive responses, write them in the direct order.
 - But they differ from other direct-order messages in that they involve a negative situation.
 - Something has gone wrong.
 - You are correcting that wrong.
 - But you also should overcome the negative image in the reader's mind.
 - You do this by first telling the good news—what you are doing to correct the wrong.

- In the opening and throughout, emphasize the positive.
 - Avoid the negative—words like _____ and _____
 - Try to regain the reader’s lost confidence, maybe with explanation or with assurance of corrective measures taken.
 - End with a goodwill comment, avoiding words that recall what went wrong.
6. Write order acknowledgments in the form of a favorable response.
- Handle most by form messages or notes.
 - But in special cases use individual messages.
 - Begin such messages directly, telling the status of the goods ordered.
 - In the remainder of the message, build goodwill, perhaps including some selling or reselling.
 - Include an expression of appreciation somewhere in the message.
 - End with an appropriate, friendly comment.
7. Claims are a special case. Even though they carry bad news, they are best written in the direct order. The reason: the reader usually wants to correct the problem and requires only that the facts be presented; also, directness strengthens the claim. Follow this general plan:
- Somewhere early in the message (in a subject line or incidentally in the first sentence) identify the transaction.
 - Then state what went wrong, perhaps with some interpretation of the effects.
 - Follow with a clear review of the facts, without showing anger.
 - You may want to suggest a remedy.
 - End with cordial words.
8. Operational (internal) communications must also be clear and effective. The following instructions explain how to write operational communications:
- Organize most of them in direct order.
 - Write the casual ones like good conversation.
 - But make them clear and courteous.
 - Give administrative communications (policies, directives, procedures) the importance due them.
 - Organize them logically; strive for clarity.

6 Write order acknowledgments that cover problems and build goodwill.

7 Write claims that objectively and courteously explain the facts.

8 Write clear and effective operational communications.

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

- 1 When is the direct order appropriate in inquiries? When would you use the indirect order? Give examples.
- 2 “Explanations in inquiries merely add length and should be eliminated.” Discuss.
- 3 Discuss why just reporting truthfully may not be enough in handling negative information in messages answering inquiries.
- 4 Defend a policy of doing more than asked in answering routine inquiries. Can the policy be carried too far?
- 5 What can acknowledgment messages do to build goodwill?
- 6 Discuss situations where each of the following forms of an order acknowledgment would be preferred: form letter, merged letter, and a special letter.
- 7 Discuss how problems (vague orders, back orders) should be handled in messages acknowledging orders.
- 8 Why is it usually advisable to do more than just grant the claim in an adjustment-grant message?
- 9 Usually bad-news messages are appropriately written in the indirect order. Why should claims be exceptions?
- 10 Justify the use of negative words in claims. Can they be overused? Discuss.
- 11 Discuss the use of directness in operational communications. Why is it desirable? Can it be overdone? When might indirectness be appropriate?

benefits that are designed to offset the effects of the bad news. As in all announcements with some negative element, this part must be handled in good positive language. Also, the message should end on a goodwill note. The preceding example of a mail-order/department store's announcement discontinuing a customer program illustrates this situation.

OTHER INDIRECT MESSAGES

- Adapt the techniques of this chapter.

The types of indirect messages covered in the preceding pages are the most common ones. There are others. Some of these (persuasive messages, and job applications) are rather special types. They are covered in the following chapters. You should be able to handle all the other indirect types that you encounter by adapting the techniques explained and illustrated in this chapter.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1

Determine which situations require using the indirect order for the most effective response.

2

Write indirect-order messages following the general plan.

3

Use tact and courtesy in refusals of requests.

4

Write adjustment refusals that minimize the negative and overcome bad impressions.

5

Compose tactful, yet clear, credit refusals that foster goodwill.

1. When the main point of your message is bad news, use the indirect order.
 - But exceptions exist, as when you believe that the news will be received routinely.
 - Make exceptions also when you think the reader will appreciate directness.
2. In general, bad-news messages follow this general plan.
 - Begin with a buffer that sets up the strategy.
 - Develop the strategy.
 - Present the bad news as a logical result of the strategy.
 - Try to offer an alternative solution.
 - End on a positive note.
3. The refusal of a request is one bad-news situation that you will probably choose to treat indirectly.
 - In such situations, strive to achieve two main goals:
 - to refuse and
 - to maintain goodwill.
 - Begin by thinking through the problem, looking for a logical explanation (or reasoning).
 - Write an opening that sets up this explanation.
 - Then present your explanation (reasoning), taking care to use convincing and positive language.
 - Refuse clearly yet positively.
 - Use a compromise when practical.
 - Close with appropriate, friendly talk that does not recall the bad news.
4. Refusals of adjustments follow a similar pattern.
 - First, determine your explanation (reasoning) for refusing.
 - Begin with neutral words that set up your reasoning and do not give away the refusal.
 - Then present your reasoning, building your case convincingly.
 - Refuse clearly and positively.
 - Close with appropriate friendly talk that does not recall the refusal.
5. Messages refusing credit are more negative than most other types of refusals, for the refusal is tied to personal things.
 - As with other types of refusals, begin by thinking through a strategy.
 - If you are refusing because of the applicant's bad credit character, use a roundabout approach.
 - If you are refusing because of the applicant's weak finances, be more direct.

- In either case, choose opening words that set up your strategy, are neutral, and tie in with the request being answered.
 - To the bad character risk, imply the facts rather than stating them bluntly.
 - In refusals because of weak finances, look hopefully to credit in the future.
 - End all credit refusals with appropriate positive words, perhaps suggesting cash buying, customer services, or other appropriate topics.
6. Sometimes businesses must announce bad news to their customers or employees.
- Indirect organization usually is better for these announcements.
 - This means that convincing explanation precedes the bad news.
 - And positive words are used to cover the bad news.
 - Sometimes directness is appropriate.
 - This is the case when the news is expected or will have little negative impact.
 - Even so, handle the negative with positive wording.

6 Write negative announcements that maintain goodwill.

TECHNOLOGY IN BRIEF

Visuals Help Business Writers Add Interest to Sales Messages

Sales messages—both print and rich email—often include art and animation to increase the visual appeal as well as attract attention to the message. In one recent experiment comparing two types of visual email messages, an HTML and a video message, Holland America found that the video message resulted in a 33 percent higher click-through rate than the HTML mailing. Furthermore, once readers got to the site, the average stay was nine minutes compared to five minutes for the HTML message. Additionally, the video message was cost effective, costing only 20 percent more than the HTML message.*



- <http://webclipart.about.com/>
- <http://www.fotosearch.com/>
- <http://www.flashfoundry.com/en/>
- <http://www.freeaudioclips.com/>

Today's business writers need not be artists or professional photographers to use good visuals in their documents. Major software programs include bundled art, animation, photographs, and sounds; and scanners and easy-to-use programs are readily available to help writers create customized visuals. Additionally, on the web, writers can find a vast assortment of specialists with products and services to help enhance their sales messages.

Here is a short list of a few websites. You'll find more on the textbook website as well.

A rich collection of links to websites for clip art, tutorials, hardware, and software.

A meta search tool for finding professional photographs, illustrations, and videos.

A subscription website for finished and modifiable Flash files.

A site for free audio clips and links to software tools as well as a good search tool.

*Heidi Anderson, "Cruising to E-Mail Results," 10 July 2003 <http://www.clickz.com/em_mkt/case_studies/prnt.php/2232781>.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1

Describe important strategies for writing any persuasive message.

1. Certain advice applies to all persuasive messages:
 - Know your readers—well.
 - Choose and develop targeted reader benefits.
 - Both tangible and intangible benefits can be persuasive.
 - Prefer intrinsic to extrinsic benefits.
 - Express product features as reader benefits.
 - Use scenario painting to help your readers experience the product's appeal.
 - Make good use of three kinds of appeals.
 - Emotional appeals play on our senses (taste, hearing, and so on) and our feelings (love, anger, and the like).
 - Rational appeals appeal to logic (with a focus on thrift, durability, efficiency, and such).
 - Character-based appeals use an appealing spokesperson or an attractive image of the company to help sell the product.
 - Make it easy for your readers to comply.

2

Write skillful persuasive requests that begin indirectly, use convincing reasoning, and close with goodwill and action.

2. Requests that are likely to be resisted require an indirect, persuasive approach.
 - Such an approach involves developing a strategy—a plan for persuading.
 - Your opening words should set up this strategy and gain attention.
 - Follow with convincing persuasion.

- Then make the request—clearly yet positively.
 - The request can end the message, or more persuasion can follow (whichever you think is appropriate).
3. Sales messages are a controversial area of business communication.
- Many sales messages are unwanted.
 - “Junk” mail clutters people’s mailboxes.
 - “Spam” clutters their in-boxes.
 - Some sales messages use unethical tactics.
 - They may make deceptive claims.
 - They may omit important information.
 - They may rely heavily on visuals that trigger a visceral response.
 - Use your conscience and your ability to put yourself in the readers’ shoes to create ethical persuasive messages.
4. A sales message requires special planning.
- Learn all you can about your service or product and your intended readers.
 - Then select an appropriate central appeal and supporting appeals.
 - Determine the makeup of the mailing.
 - Decide what you will include in the letter and what you will put in auxiliary pieces.
 - Consider a creative approach to the letter format itself.
 - Email sales messages can also have auxiliary pieces and innovative format.
5. Although innovations are frequently used, the basic sales message generally follows this traditional plan:
- The opening seeks to gain attention and set up the sales presentation.
 - The body makes your persuasive case.
 - It develops the appeals you have chosen.
 - It uses punchy writing and techniques for visual emphasis (typography, white space, color, and other visual elements).
 - In emotional selling, the words establish an emotional atmosphere and build an emotional need for the product or service.
 - Character-based appeals build trust and invite identification with the company.
 - In rational selling, the appeal is to the thinking mind, using facts and logical reasoning.
 - Throughout the message, emphasis is on good sales language and the you-viewpoint.
 - All the information necessary for a sale (prices, terms, choices, and the like) is included in the message, though references are made to supporting information.
 - Next comes a drive for a sale.
 - It may be a strong drive, even a command, if a strong sales effort is used.
 - It may be a direct question if a milder effort is desired.
 - In either case, the action words are specific and clear, frequently urging action.
 - Taking the action may be associated with the benefits to be gained.
 - Postscripts often are included to convey a final sales message.
 - In email messages, opt-out links are often provided as a professional courtesy, and to comply with new laws.

3 Discuss ethical concerns regarding sales messages.

4 Describe the planning steps for direct mail or email sales messages.

5 Compose sales messages that gain attention, persuasively present appeals, and effectively drive for action.

- Update your résumé regularly to reflect new accomplishments and skills.
- Keeping current in your professional reading brings many benefits.

Maintaining Your Résumé. While many people intend to keep their résumés up to date, they just do not make it a priority. Some others make it easy by updating as changes occur. And a few update their résumés at regularly designated times such as a birthday, New Year’s Day, or even the anniversary of their employment. No matter what works best for you, updating your résumé as you gain new accomplishments and skills is important. Otherwise, you will be surprised to find how easily you can lose track of important details.

Reading Job Ads/Professional Journals. Nearly as important as keeping your résumé updated is keeping up on your professional reading. Most trade or professional journals have job notices or bulletin boards you should check regularly. These ads give you insight into what skills are in demand, perhaps helping you choose assignments where you get the opportunity to develop new skills. Staying up to date in your field can be stimulating; it can provide both challenges and opportunities.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1 Develop and use a network of contacts in your job search.
- 2 Assemble and evaluate information that will help you select a job.
- 3 Identify the sources that can lead you to an employer.
- 4 Compile print and electronic résumés that are strong, complete, and organized.

1. A good first step in your job search is to build a network of contacts.
 - Get to know people who might help you later: classmates, professors, business leaders, and such.
 - Use them to help you find a job.
2. When you are ready to find work, analyze yourself and outside factors.
 - Look at your education, personal qualities, and work experience.
 - From this review, determine what work you are qualified to do.
 - Then select the career that is right for you.
3. When you are ready to find a job, use the contact sources available to you.
 - Check university career centers, personal contacts, advertisements, online sources, employment agencies, personal search agents, and web page profiles.
 - If these do not produce results, prospect by mail.
4. In your application efforts, you are likely to use résumés and cover messages. Prepare them as you would written sales material.
 - First, study your product—you.
 - Then study your prospect—the employer.
 - From the information gained, construct the résumé, cover message, and reference sheet.

In writing the résumé (a listing of your major background facts), you can choose from two types.

- The —traditional and scannable.
- The —ASCII, attached file, and HTM file.

In preparing the traditional résumé, follow this procedure:

- List all the facts about you that an employer might want to know.
- Sort these facts into logical groups:
 - Put these facts in writing. As a minimum, include job experience (dates, places, firms, duties) and education (degrees, dates, fields of study). Use some personal information, but omit race, religion, sex, marital status, and age.
 - Authorities disagree on whether to list references. If you list them, use complete mailing addresses and have one for each major job.
 - Include other helpful information: address, telephone number, email address, web page address, and career objective.

- Write headings for the résumé and for each group of information; use either topic or talking headings.
- Organize for strength in reverse chronological, functional/skills, or accomplishment/highlights approach.
- Preferably write the résumé without personal pronouns, make the parts parallel grammatically, and use words that help sell your abilities.
- Present the information for good eye appeal, selecting fonts that show the importance of the headings and the information.

In preparing the scannable résumé, follow these procedures:

- Include industry-specific keywords.
- Choose precise nouns over action verbs.
- Present the information in a form read accurately by scanners.

In preparing the electronic résumé, follow these procedures:

- Use the electronic format the receiver specifies or prefers.
- Remove all contact information except your email address.
- Consider adding a last updated notation.
- Extend the HTML format to include colors, graphics, video, and sound as appropriate.

5. As the cover message is a form of sales message, plan it as you would a sales message.
 - Study your product (you) and your prospect (the employer) and think out a strategy for presentation.
 - Begin with words that gain attention, begin applying for the job, and set up the presentation of your sales points.
 - Adapt the tone and content to the job you seek.
 - Present your qualifications, fitting them to the job you seek.
 - Choose words that enhance the information presented.
 - Drive for an appropriate action—an interview, further communication, reference checks.
6. Your major contact with a prospective employer is the interview. For best results, you should do the following:
 - Research the employer in advance so you can impress the interviewer.
 - Present a good appearance through appropriate dress and grooming.
 - Try to anticipate the interviewer's questions and to plan your answers.
 - Make a good impression by being at ease.
 - Help the interviewer establish a dialogue with questions and comments that enable you to present the best information about you.
7. You may need to write other messages in your search for a job.
 - Following the interview, a thank-you message is appropriate.
 - Also appropriate is an inquiry about the status of an application.
 - You also may need to write messages accepting, rejecting, or resigning a job.
 - Write these messages much as you would the messages reviewed in preceding chapters: direct order for good news, indirect order for bad.
8. To learn information about the changes occurring in their field and to be aware of better job opportunities, you should
 - Maintain their résumés.
 - Read both job ads and professional journals.

5

Write targeted cover messages that skillfully sell your abilities.

6

Explain how you can participate effectively in an interview.

7

Write application follow-up messages that are appropriate, friendly, and positive.

8

Maintain your job-search skills.

Assign Parts to Be Written. After the planning has been done, the group next turns its attention to the writing. The usual practice is to assign each person a part of the report.

Write Parts Assigned. Following comes a period of individual work. Each participant writes his or her part. Each will apply the ideas in Chapters 2 and 3 about word selection, sentence design, and paragraph construction to writing the assigned parts.

Revise Collaboratively. The group meets and reviews each person's contribution and the full report. This should be a give-and-take session with each person actively participating. It requires that every person give keen attention to the work of each participant, making constructive suggestions wherever appropriate. It requires courteous but meaningful criticisms. It also requires that the participants be open-minded, remembering that the goal is to construct the best possible document. In no case should the group merely give automatic approval to the work submitted. In cases of controversy, the majority views of the group should prevail.

Edit the Final Draft. After the group has done its work, one member usually is assigned the task of editing the final draft. This gives the document consistency. In addition, the editor serves as a final proofreader. Probably the editor should be the most competent writer in the group.

If all the work has been done with care and diligence, this final draft should be a report better than anyone in the group could have prepared alone. Those who study groups use the word *synergy* to refer to groups that function this way. The final report is better than the sum of the individual parts.

- They assign themselves report parts to write.
- The members then write their parts.
- The group members collaboratively review the writing.
- A selected member edits the final draft.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Your work on a report begins with a problem (purpose, goal, objective).
 - Get the problem in mind by gathering all the information you need about it.
 - Then develop a problem statement from the information.
 - Phrase this statement as an infinitive phrase, a question, or a declarative statement.
 - Understand that you may need to revise your problem definition as you proceed with your research.
2. From the problem statement, determine the factors involved.
 - These may be subtopics in information reports.
 - They may be hypotheses (possible explanations) in problems requiring a solution.
 - They may be bases of comparison in problems requiring evaluations.
3. After you have gathered the information needed, interpret it as it applies to the problem.
 - Interpret the information in light of your problem and your readers' needs.
 - Heed this advice for avoiding human error:
 - Report the facts as they are.
 - Do not think that conclusions are always necessary.
 - Do not interpret a lack of evidence as proof to the contrary.
 - Do not compare noncomparable data.
 - Do not draw illogical cause–effect conclusions.
 - Beware of unreliable and unrepresentative data.
 - Do not oversimplify.
 - Tailor your claims to your data.

1 State a problem clearly in writing.

2 List the factors involved in a problem.

3 Explain the common errors in interpreting and develop attitudes and practices conducive to good interpreting.

4 Organize information in outline form, using time, place, quantity, factor, or a combination of these as bases for division.

- Adopt these attitudes and practices:
 - Maintain a judicial attitude.
 - Consult with others.
 - Test your interpretations by applying the test of experience (reason) and the negative test (question them).
 - Use statistical analysis to help you interpret numerical data.

4. Next, organize the information (construct an outline).

- An outline helps you group and order the information and create an information hierarchy.
 - Your research plan and interpretation notes can help you make your report outline.
 - You may choose to use conventional outline symbols (I, A, 1, a) or numeric symbols (1, 1.1, 1.1.1), but any outline format is fine if it helps you write a well-organized draft.
 - The outline is a tool to help you—feel free to mark it up and revise it.
- Organize the report body (the part between the introduction and the ending section) by a process of division.
 - Look over the findings for ways of dividing on the basis of time, place, quantity, factor, or combinations.
 - Then divide, forming the major parts of the report.
 - Next, look at these divisions for ways of dividing them.
 - Continue to subdivide as far as necessary.
 - The end result is your outline.

5 Turn an outline into a table of contents whose format and wording are logical and meaningful.

5. Turn your outline into a table of contents.

- Use a format that your reader will find instructive, readable, and appropriate.
- Use the topic form (identifies topic).
- Or use the talking form (identifies topic and says something about it).
- Make the wording of comparable parts parallel grammatically.
- Prune each heading for conciseness.
- Avoid excessive repetition of words.

6. From the outline, write the report.

6 Write reports that are focused, objective, consistent in time viewpoint, smoothly connected, and interesting.

- Draft to get the right information in the right order; then revise for perfection.
- Make your beginning and ending reader centered.
 - Write a beginning that tells what problem you studied, how you studied it, and what you found out.
 - Write an ending that summarizes the main findings and their significance to the readers.
- Maintain objectivity (no bias).
 - An impersonal writing style (third person) has long been associated with objectivity.
 - But some authorities question this style, saying that a personal style is more interesting.
 - The argument continues, although most formal reports are written in the impersonal style.
- Be consistent in time viewpoint—either past or present.
 - Past-time viewpoint views the research and findings as past and prevailing concepts and conclusions as present.

What is needed in a given case depends on its unique requirements. But in any event, the particulars should anticipate and answer the readers' questions and be presented in the most positive light.

- 7. Ability to deliver.

7. . The proposing organization must sometimes establish its ability to perform. This means presenting information on such matters as the qualifications of personnel, success in similar cases, the adequacy of equipment and facilities, operating procedures, and financial status. Whatever information will serve as evidence of the organization's ability to carry out what it proposes should be used. With an external proposal, resist the temptation to throw long, generic résumés at the readers. The best approach is to select only the most persuasive details about your personnel. If you do include résumés, tailor them to the situation.

- 8. Concluding comments (words directed toward the next step).

8. . In most proposals you should urge or suggest the desired action. This statement often occurs in a letter to the readers, but if there is no cover letter or the proposal itself is not a letter, it can form the conclusion of your proposal. You might also include a summary of your proposal's highlights or provide one final persuasive push in a concluding section.

In Chapter 12, you will see how to adapt this chapter's guidelines for short reports and proposals to longer, more formal documents. As you might expect, these too will be shaped by the readers' needs and expectations.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1

Explain the structure of reports relative to length and formality.

1. Length and formality determine the following general progression of report structure:

- The very long ones have prefatory pages (title fly, title page, letter of transmittal, table of contents, executive summary).
- As reports become shorter and less formal, the composition of the prefatory parts section changes, generally in this order:
 - First, the title fly drops out.
 - Then, in succession, the executive summary and letter of transmittal are combined,
 - The table of contents is omitted, and
 - The combined letter of transmittal and executive summary is dropped.
- Even less elaborate are the letter report and the email report.

2

Discuss the four major differences involved in writing short and long reports.

2. The shorter and by far the most common reports are much like the longer ones except for these four differences:

- They have less need for introductory material.
- They are more likely to begin directly (conclusion and recommendation first).
- They are more likely to use personal style.
- They have less need for a formal coherence plan.

3

Choose an appropriate form for short reports.

3. The shorter reports come in three main forms.

- The report form has these traits:
 - It consists of a title page and report text.
 - Usually it begins with a summary or conclusion.
 - Then it presents findings and analyses.
- Letter reports are also popular.
 - Usually they are written in the indirect order.
 - They are organized much like longer reports.
- Email reports are like letter reports.
 - They are usually written for and by people within an organization.
 - They are the most common report form.

4. Among the varieties of short reports, five types stand out.

- Routine operational reports keep others informed about company operations.
 - Their form and content will vary, depending on the organization.
 - They should deliver the required information efficiently, clearly, and on time.
 - Special word-processing features can assist you with standardized reports.
- Progress reports review progress on an activity.
 - Most are informal and in narrative form, but some are formal.
 - They should emphasize the positive.
- Problem-solving reports help decision makers choose a course of action.
 - They can be internal or external.
 - You will need to decide whether or not to make recommendations.
 - You will need to decide whether to take a direct or indirect approach.
 - Though not persuasive per se, these reports do need to convince with their good data and analysis.
- Audit reports hold organizations accountable to certain standards.
 - The most common type is the financial audit prepared by an accounting firm.
 - Short financial audits follow a standardized format.
 - Longer audit reports vary in form and content.
 - The Sarbanes-Oxley Act has increased the need for audit reports.
- Meeting minutes, a type of descriptive report, provide a written record of a group's activities and decisions.
 - Most are distributed by memo or email, but their layout varies.
 - Typical minutes include common preliminary, body, and closing items.
 - Minutes have political implications. Use good judgment when preparing them.

5. Proposals resemble reports but differ in their fundamental purpose.

- They are intentionally persuasive.
- They can be categorized in two ways:
 - Internal or external.
 - Solicited or unsolicited.
- They vary widely in terms of format and formality.
 - As with reports, proposal formats can range from short emails to long, elaborate documents.
 - Their levels of formality vary as well.
- The goal for your content is to make a persuasive argument.
 - Review your readers' needs and your ability to address them.
 - Then develop your central argument.
 - Bear in mind the main criteria that evaluators use.
- The contents of proposals vary with need, but one should consider these topics:
 - Writer's purpose and reader's need.
 - Background.
 - Need.
 - Plan description.
 - Benefits.
 - Particulars (time, schedule, costs, performance standards, and such).
 - Ability to deliver.
 - Concluding comments.

4 Adapt the procedures for writing short reports to routine operational, progress, problem-solving, and audit reports as well as minutes of meetings.

5 Write adapted, well-organized, and persuasive proposals.

loud and forceful or barely audible? Are they smooth or disjointed? These questions are examples of the types you would ask to analyze the nonverbal symbols of paralanguage. The symbols become a part of the meaning that is filtered from a spoken message.

Paralanguage meanings also are conveyed by consistencies and inconsistencies in what is said and how it is said. Depending on the circumstance, a person's voice may or may not be consistent with the intended word meanings. But you should make every effort to avoid inconsistencies that will send a confusing message. Consistency between the words you choose and how you deliver them to create clear meaning should be your goal.

Senders and receivers have certain expectancies about how a message should sound. Whether real or imagined, people infer background factors (race, occupation, etc.); physical appearance (age, height, gender); and personality (introversion, social orientation, etc.) when they receive and filter voice patterns. When you speak, you should do whatever you can to influence these expectancies positively. Many of the suggestions in this chapter and the following one should help you deliver a consistent and effective message. Active listeners will also want to listen between the lines of a spoken message to determine the true meaning a speaker is sending.

Other Types of Nonverbal Communication. Other types of nonverbal communication exist. But the preceding four types are the primary forms. For example, color communicates different meanings to us. Artists, interior decorators, and “image consultants” believe that different colors project different meanings. What meanings do you get from red, yellow, black, blue? That you can answer at all should prove that colors produce meanings in our minds. Applications of the idea to speaking and listening include visual-aid construction, wardrobe, office decor, and the like. Thus, you should give more than casual attention to color as a type of nonverbal communication. Indeed, you will want to create a specific and intended meaning with it.

Still another type of nonverbal communication involves the structure of our physical context—its layout and design. In an office, the physical arrangements—furniture, carpeting, size, location, and decorations—all communicate meaning to us and to others. These elements provide the context for many of our speaking and listening activities. As such, we should consider them as part of the messages we send and receive.

- Degrees of consistency between what and how someone says something convey meaning.

- Expectancies about background, appearance, and personality are part of paralanguage.

- Two other nonverbal types exist, but they are minor. One is color.

- Another is physical context—office, carpeting, decorations, and such.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Talking is the oral expression of our knowledge, viewpoints, and emotions. It depends on four critical factors:

- Voice quality—talking with variations in pitch, delivery, and volume.
- Speaking style—blending voice quality and personality.
- Word choice—finding the right word or words for the listener.
- Adaptation—fitting a message to the mind of a unique listener.

2. In business, you are likely to participate in meetings, some formal and some informal.

- If you are in charge of a meeting, follow these guidelines.
 - Know parliamentary procedure for formal meetings.
 - Plan the meeting; develop an agenda and circulate it in advance.
 - Follow the plan.
 - Keep the discussion moving.
 - Control those who talk too much.
 - Encourage participation from those who talk too little.
 - Control time, making sure the agenda is covered.
 - Summarize at appropriate times.

1 Discuss talking and its key elements.

2 Explain the techniques for conducting and participating in meetings.

3 Describe good phone and voice mail techniques.

- If you are a participant at a meeting, follow these guidelines:
 - Stay with the agenda; do not stray.
 - Participate fully.
 - But do not talk too much.
 - Cooperate.
 - Be courteous.

3. To improve your phone and voice mail techniques, consider the following:

- Cultivate a pleasant voice.
- Talk as if in a face-to-face conversation.
- Follow courteous procedures.
 - When calling, introduce yourself and ask for the person you want.
 - State your purpose early.
 - Cover points systematically.
 - When receiving a call, identify your company or office and offer assistance.
 - When answering for the boss, do not offend by asking questions or making comments that might give a wrong impression; and do not neglect callers placed on hold.
 - When screening calls for the boss, be courteous and honest.
 - Listen when the other person is talking.
 - Do not interrupt or dominate.
 - Plan long conversations, and follow the plan.
- For good voice mail messages, follow these suggestions:
 - Identify yourself by name and affiliation.
 - Deliver a complete and accurate message.
 - Speak naturally and clearly.
 - Give important information slowly.
 - Close with a brief goodwill message.
- Demonstrate courtesy when using cell phones by following these general guidelines:
 - Turn off the ringer where it could disrupt others.
 - Avoid use at social gatherings.
 - Keep the phone off the table during meals.
 - Talk only in places where others won't be in earshot.
 - Avoid talking about confidential or private business.
 - Keep voice volume down.
 - Initiate calls in quiet places away from others.
 - Be conscious of others when you talk.
 - Avoid talking while driving, especially if it is against the law.

4 Describe the techniques of good voice input.

4. In dictating messages and reports, follow these suggestions.

- First, gather all the information you will need so you will not have to interrupt your dictating to get it.
- Next, plan (think through) the message.
- Until you are experienced, force the words to flow—then revise.
- Remember, also, to speak in a strong, clear voice.
- Give punctuation and paragraphing in the dictation.

- Play back only when necessary.
- Proofread for accuracy.

5. Listening is just as important as talking in oral communication, but it causes more problems.

- Listening involves how we sense, filter, and retain incoming messages.
- Most of us do not listen well because we tend to avoid the hard work that good listening requires.
- You can improve your listening with effort.
- Put your mind to it and discipline yourself to be attentive.
- Make a conscious effort to improve your mental filtering of incoming messages; strive to retain what you hear.
- Follow the practical suggestions offered in “The Ten Commandments of Listening.”

5 Explain the listening problem and how to solve it.

6. Nonverbal (nonword) communication is the communication that occurs without words.

- One major type is body language—the movements of our arms, fingers, facial muscles, and such.
 - Our face and eyes are the most expressive parts of body language.
 - Gestures also send messages.
 - Our physical appearance (clothing, cosmetics, jewelry, hairstyle) communicates about us.
- Space is a second major type of nonverbal communication.
 - We create four unique types of spaces: (1) intimate, (2) physical, (3) social, and (4) public.
 - We communicate differently in each space, as determined by our culture.
- How we give meaning to time is a third type of nonverbal communication.
- Meanings the sounds of our voices convey (paralanguage) are a fourth type.
- Color and physical context are minor nonverbal forms.
- In our speaking, we should use nonverbal communication to accent our words.
- In listening, we need to “hear” the nonverbal communication of others.

6 Describe the nature and role of nonverbal communication.

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

- 1 Talking is a natural occurrence, so we should give it little attention. Discuss.
- 2 How do the elements of talking help us communicate better?
- 3 Being able to start a conversation is especially important when meeting clients in social settings. Discuss the types of topics that would and would not be appropriate.
- 4 The people attending a meeting—not the leader—should determine the agenda. Discuss.
- 5 As meetings should be democratic, everyone present should be permitted to talk as much as he or she wants without interference from the leader. Discuss.
- 6 Describe an annoying phone practice that you have experienced or know about (other than the ones discussed in the chapter). Explain and/or demonstrate how it should be corrected.
- 7 Describe the strengths and weaknesses of voice mail systems with which you are familiar.
- 8 Use the Internet to gather information and present a report on recent developments in voice recognition.
- 9 Discuss why we have difficulty in listening.
- 10 What can you do to improve your listening?
- 11 Explain how each type of nonverbal communication relates to speaking and to listening.

- Effective virtual presenters often use a variety of technological tools to keep their audiences attention.
- Effective virtual presenters manage the timing carefully.

The delivery of your presentation will be much like that for other presentations, except you will be doing it from your desktop using a headphone. You may want to use the highlighter or an animation effects tool in PowerPoint to help you emphasize key points that you would otherwise physically point to in a face-to-face presentation. You will want to plan breaks where you will poll or quiz the audience or handle questions that have come in through the chat tool. If you use the presenter's view in PowerPoint, you can set the timer to help you do this at regular intervals as well as gauge the timing through the questions and speed feedback.

In the closing, you will want to allow time to evaluate the success of your presentation as well as to handle questions and answers. Watching your time is critical because some systems will drop you if you exceed your requested time.

Overall, presenting virtually requires the same keys to success as other presentations—careful planning, attentive delivery, and practice.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1

Select and organize a subject for effective formal presentation to a specific audience.

1. Consider the following suggestions in selecting and organizing a speech.
 - Begin by selecting an appropriate topic—one in your area of specialization and of interest to your audience.
 - Organize the message (probably by introduction, body, conclusion).
 - Consider an appropriate greeting (“Ladies and Gentlemen,” “Friends”).
 - Design the introduction to meet these goals:
 - Arouse interest with a story, humor, or such.
 - Introduce the subject (theme).
 - Prepare the reader to receive the message.
 - Use indirect order presentation to persuade and direct order for other cases.
 - Organize like a report: divide and subdivide, usually by factors.
 - Select the most appropriate ending, usually restating the subject and summarizing.
 - Consider using a climactic close.
 - Choose the best manner of presentation.
 - Extemporaneous is usually best.
 - Memorizing is risky.
 - Reading is difficult unless you are skilled.

2

Describe how personal aspects and audience analysis contribute to formal presentations.

2. To improve your speaking, take these steps:
 - Work on these characteristics of a good speaker:
 - Confidence.
 - Sincerity.
 - Thoroughness.
 - Friendliness.
 - Know your audience.
 - Before the presentation, size them up—looking for characteristics that affect your presentation (gender, age, education).
 - During the presentation, continue to analyze them, looking at facial expressions, listening to noises, and such—and adapt to them.

3

Explain the use of voice quality and physical aspects such as posture, walking, facial expression, and gestures in effective oral communication.

3. What the listeners see and hear affects the communication.
 - They see the physical environment (stage, lighting, background), personal appearance, posture, walking, facial expressions, gestures, and such.
 - They hear your voice.

- For best effect, vary the pitch and speed.
- Give appropriate vocal emphasis.
- Cultivate a pleasant quality.

4. Use visuals whenever they help communicate.

- Select the types that do the best job.
- Blend the visuals into your speech, making certain that the audience sees and understands them.
- Organize your visuals as a part of your message.
- Emphasize the visuals by pointing to them.
- Talk to the audience, not the visuals.
- Do not block your audience's view of the visuals.

5. Group presentations have special problems.

- They require all the skills of individual presentation.
- In addition, they require extra planning to
 - Reduce overlap and provide continuity.
 - Provide smooth transitions between presentations.
 - Coordinate questions and answers.

6. Business oral reports are spoken communications of factual business information and its interpretation.

- Written and oral reports differ in three significant ways.
 - Written reports permit more use of visual helps to communication (paragraphing, punctuation, and such); oral reports allow voice inflection, pauses, and the like.
 - Oral reports permit the speaker to exercise greater control over the pace of the presentation; readers of a written report control the pace.
 - Written reports place more emphasis on writing correctness (grammar, punctuation, etc.).
- Plan oral reports just as you do written ones.
 - First, determine your objective and state its factors.
 - Next, organize the report, using either indirect or direct order.
 - Divide the body based on your purpose, keeping the divisions comparable and using introductory/concluding paragraphs, logical order, and the like.
 - End the report with a final summary—a sort of ending executive summary.

7. Advances in hardware and software along with increases in broadband speeds and Internet access have spawned the growth of virtual presentations in business.

- In virtual presentations the speaker cannot see the audience and often the audience cannot see the speaker. But today's software helps bridge this gap.
- Before delivering a virtual presentation, the speaker should plan for the technology being used, announcements mailed to the audience ahead of the meeting, system testing, assistance for presentation support from technical and non-technical sides, and material for early arrivers to view.
- During the delivery, the speaker should plan interreaction with polling or quizzing, take regular breaks for feedback and questions, and be attentive to the feedback from the audience on speed of delivery.
- In closing, the speaker should allow ample time for both questions and evaluation.
- Overall, the virtual presentation like the face-to-face presentation requires planning, attentive delivery, and practice.

4 Plan for visuals to support speeches and oral reports.

5 Work effectively with a group in preparing and making a team presentation.

6 Define oral reports and differentiate between them and written reports on the basis of their advantages, disadvantages, and organization.

7 Plan and deliver presentations virtually.

COMMUNICATION MATTERS

Words of Wisdom

The lexical differences between American English and British English can be traced to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when early settlers brought to North America the language of their homelands. British settlers found that their language was not adequate for life on a different continent. The new things they encountered necessitated their adapting the meanings of existing English words or finding new words.

James Calvert Scott, Utah State University

James Calvert Scott, "Differences in American and British Vocabulary: Implications for International Business Communication," *Business Communication Quarterly* 63. 4 2000: 28.

You also will communicate better if you carefully word your questions. Be sure your questions are not double questions. Avoid "Do you want to go to dinner now or wait until after the rush hour is over?" Also, avoid the yes/no question that some cultures may have difficulty answering directly. Use more open-ended questions such as "When would you like to go to dinner?" Also, avoid negative questions such as "Aren't you going to dinner?" In some cultures a yes response confirms whether the questioner is correct; in other cultures the response is directed toward the question being asked.

Finally, try to check and clarify your communication through continuous confirmation. Summarizing in writing also is a good idea, and today's technology enables parties to do this on the spot. It allows you to be certain you have conveyed your message and received the response accurately. Even in Britain, whose culture similar to ours, similar words can have vastly different meanings. For example, we use a billion to mean 1,000,000,000 whereas the British use it to mean 1,000,000,000,000. If a British English speaker asked to _____ another item, an American English speaker will probably interpret that as a request to put it off when the real request was to bring it to attention.¹⁴ Continually checking for meaning and using written summaries can help ensure the accuracy of the communication process.

- Word questions carefully to elicit the response intended.
- Continually check the accuracy of the communication.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Businesses are becoming increasingly global in their operations.
 - Being able to communicate across cultures is necessary in these operations.
 - Specifically, it helps in gaining additional business, in hiring good people, and generally in understanding and satisfying the needs of customers.
2. _____ may be defined as "the way of life of a group of people."
 - Cultures differ.
 - People tend to view the practices of their culture as right and those of other cultures as peculiar or wrong.
 - These views cause miscommunication.

1 Explain why communicating clearly across cultures is important to business.

2 Define culture and explain its effects on cross-cultural communication.

¹⁴ Danielle Medina Walker, Thomas Walker, and Joerg Schmitz, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2003) 211.

3 Describe cultural differences in body positions and movements and use this knowledge effectively in communicating.

4 Describe cultural differences in views and practices concerning time, space, odors, and such and use this knowledge effectively in communicating.

5 Explain the language equivalency problem as a cause of miscommunication.

6 Describe what one can do to overcome the language equivalency problem.

3. Variations in how people of different cultures use body positions and body movements is a cause of miscommunication.
 - How people walk, gesture, smile, and such varies from culture to culture.
 - When people from different cultures attempt to communicate, each may not understand the other's body movements.
4. People in different cultures differ in their ways of relating to people.
 - Specifically, they differ in their practices and thinking concerning time, space, odors, frankness, relationships, values, and social behavior.
 - We should not use our culture's practices as standards for determining meaning.
 - Instead, we should try to understand the other culture.
5. Language equivalency problems are another major cause of miscommunication in cross-cultural communication.
 - About 3,000 languages are used on earth.
 - They differ greatly in grammar and syntax.
 - Like English, most have words with multiple meanings.
 - As a result, equivalency in translation is difficult.
6. Overcoming the language equivalency problems involves hard and tedious work.
 - The best advice is to master the language of the nonnative English speakers with whom you communicate.
 - Also, you should be aware of the problems caused by language differences.
 - Ask questions carefully to make sure you are understood.
 - For important communications, consider back translation—the technique of using two translators, the first to translate from one language to the other and the second to translate back to the original.
 - Check the accuracy of the communication with written summaries.

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

- 1 “Just as our culture has advanced in its technological sophistication, it has advanced in the sophistication of its body signals, gestures, and attitudes toward time, space, and such. Thus, the ways of our culture are superior to those of most other cultures.” Discuss this view.
- 2 What are the prevailing attitudes in our culture toward the following, and how can those attitudes affect our communication with nonnatives? Discuss.
 - a. Negotiation methods
 - b. Truth in advertising
 - c. Company–worker loyalty
 - d. Women's place in society
 - e. The Protestant work ethic
- 3 Some of our message-writing techniques are said to be unacceptable to people from such cultures as those of Japan and England.
 - a. Which techniques in particular do you think would be most inappropriate in these cultures?
 - b. Why?
- 4 Think of English words (other than text examples) that probably do not have a precise equivalent in some other culture. Tell how you would attempt to explain each of these words to a person from that culture.
- 5 Select a word with at least five meanings. List those meanings and tell how you would communicate each of them to a nonnative.
- 6 From newspapers or magazines, find and bring to class 10 sentences containing words and expressions that a nonnative English speaker would not be likely to understand. Rewrite the sentences for this reader.
- 7 Is conversational style appropriate in writing to nonnative readers? Discuss.

there is absolutely no evidence that these messages can be handled in a way that does not require basic writing and speaking skills. Business communication is here to stay. In fact, the increasing advancement of the technology of the future is likely to require more—not less—of it.

SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Technology helps a writer construct messages through every step of the writing process including
 - Planning,
 - Gathering and collecting information,
 - Analyzing and organizing information, and
 - Writing and rewriting.
2. Each stage of the writing process has a set of tools most appropriate for the tasks in that stage. These include the following:
 - Outlining or concept-mapping, project management, and personal information management programs for planning;
 - Database programs and reference managers for gathering and collecting information; and
 - Statistical, spreadsheet, graphics, and outlining or concept-mapping tools for analyzing and organizing information, and word processing, spelling, thesaurus, grammar and style checking, reference, graphics, drawing, and voice recognition, and information rights management programs for writing.
3. Technology helps in the presentation of documents with both sophisticated hardware and software.
 - Software contributes with publishing features that combine text, graphics, links, audio, and video and that promote good layout and design.
 - Hardware contributes in the printing and display of documents.
4. Communicators have a variety of choices of media for transmitting their messages.
 - Oral messages can be sent by mobile phone, voice messaging systems, and sound clips.
 - Videoconferencing technology combines oral and visual messages.
 - Written messages can be transmitted by fax, email, text messaging, instant messaging, and blogs.
5. A range of software tools assists groups of writers in asynchronous and synchronous writing environments.
 - Asynchronous tools such as word processing, discussions, blogs, and email are used for different-time/different-place collaboration.
 - Synchronous tools allow writers to work on a document at the same time. Electronic meeting system tools are used for same-time/same-place writing, and collaboration tools are used for same-time/different-place writing.
6. Business leaders believe technology will continue to advance. Future developments are expected to enhance present technologies, making them better and easier to use. Researchers at large companies are working on a variety of projects, including many search and social networking areas. Future developments will likely mean more need for good basic communication skills.

1 Explain how technology helps in constructing messages.

2 Identify appropriate tools for different stages in the writing process.

3 Discuss how technology helps in the presentation of messages.

4 Discuss various ways to transmit messages and the hardware currently used.

5 Describe how technology assists in collaboration.

6 Discuss what impact future developments in technology might have on business communication.