Preface

This book is so compiled and designed to help students develop a positive, Constructive and practical approach to successful written and oral communication in business and professional settings. It tends to enable students to develop understanding of communication concepts, principle, theories and problems. It is expected that at the end of the course students will be able to communicate in clear, concise correspondence to meet the multifarious purposes of business and social communication situations. It also helps the students in overcoming their deficiencies in English grammar. Well-prepared and well-executed presentations eave an indelible impression on superiors, peers and subordinates. Students will learn to use graphics, audio-visual aids and audience handouts in an effective manner which will help them create their own style and personal presence to the audience.

It emphasized effective spoken communication, focusing primarily on practicing language for business social situations such as meeting someone for the first time, engaging in small talks, networking, telephoning. The Goal of the book is to increase spoken fluency and listening comprehension for social occasions. This compilation will enable students to develop their skill to the fullest and use the combined efficiency of the books selected and added

Samreen Jawed

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Chapter 1

EFFECTIVE & PERSPECTIVES IN COMMUNICATION SKILLS

This Chapter covers

1. The Importance of Communication
2. What is Communication
3. What are Communication Skills?
4. The Communication Process
   - Source
   - Message
   - Encoding
   - Channel
   - Decoding
   - Receiver
   - Feedback
   - Context
5. Perspectives in Communication
   - Visual Perception
   - Language
   - Other Factors Affecting Our Perspective
   - Past Experiences
   - Prejudices
   - Feelings
   - Environment

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

In a survey conducted by the Katz Business School at the University of Pittsburgh, organizations rated communication skills as the most important factor used in selecting their management staff. The study found that oral and written communication skills were important in predicting job success, as was the ability to communicate well with others in the workplace.

> A University of Pittsburgh study found that the most important factor in selecting managers is communication skills.

This makes sense when you think about it. If you can communicate well, you can get your message across to others in an effective way and they then have accurate instructions to complete their assigned tasks. If you are not able to communicate well, the messages you send get lost in translation. Communication breakdowns result in barriers against your ability to develop both professionally and personally.

Even though communications skills are so important to success in the workplace, there are many individuals who find these skills to be a stumbling block to their progress. They struggle to convey their thoughts and ideas in an accurate manner, making it difficult to progress and nearly impossible to lead well.

However, there is hope for anyone who finds communicating to be difficult. These skills can be practiced and learned. It takes learning about how communication works, how to communicate exactly what it is you want to say, what mode of communication is best, and what factors are influencing the ability for you to send and receive messages with acumen.

2. WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?

When asked to define communication, how would you respond? Most people will relate to the forms of communication - talking or listening. But communication goes beyond that. Communication involves getting information from one person to the other person. Yet even this is not a complete definition because communicating effectively involves having that information relayed while retaining the same in content and context. If I tell you one thing and you hear another, have I communicated?

> Communication is the art and process of creating and sharing ideas. Effective communication depends on the richness of those ideas.

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So if we look at communication from another angle, it involves the perception of the information as much as the delivery of that information. In other words, we can define communication as the art and process of creating and sharing ideas. Effective communication depends on the richness of those ideas. In order to be effective at communicating, there are a number of skills that you can rely. Which skill you choose will depend upon your situation, the recipient of your communication, and the information that you need to convey.

3. WHAT ARE COMMUNICATION SKILLS?

Imagine you are on one side of a wall and the person you want to communicate with is on the other side of the wall. But there's more than the wall in the way. The wall is surrounded by a moat that is filled with crocodiles and edged by quicksand. These barriers could be things like different cultures, different expectations, different experiences, different perspectives, or different communication styles, to name just a few.

> Communication skills are the tools that we use to remove the barriers to effective communication.

You might experience only one of these barriers at a time, or you might find yourself facing them all. Getting your message to the other person requires that you recognize these barriers exist between you, and that you then apply the proper tools, or communication skills, to remove those barriers preventing your message from getting through.

Of course, communication is a two-way street. The person on the other side of those barriers will also try to send messages back to you. Your ability to understand them clearly could be left to a dependence on their ability to use communication skills. But that's leaving the success of the communication to chance. Instead, you can also use your own communication skills to ensure that you receive messages clearly as well.

Finally, there isn't only one point in your communication with another person at which you have to watch out for barriers. To be successful at communicating, it's important to recognize that these barriers to communication can occur at multiple points in the communication process.

4. THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

The communication process involves multiple parts and stages. These are:

> The communication process is composed of several stages, each of which offers potential barriers to successful communication.

- **Source**
- **Message**
- **Encoding**
- **Channel**
- **Decoding**
- **Receiver**
- **Feedback**
- **Context**

At each of these stages, there is the potential for barriers to be formed or problems to arise. As we look at ways to limit the barriers to communicating effectively, remember that you may have to apply them at more than one occasion during your communications process. The steps in the process are represented in Figure 1 and explained further in the following information.

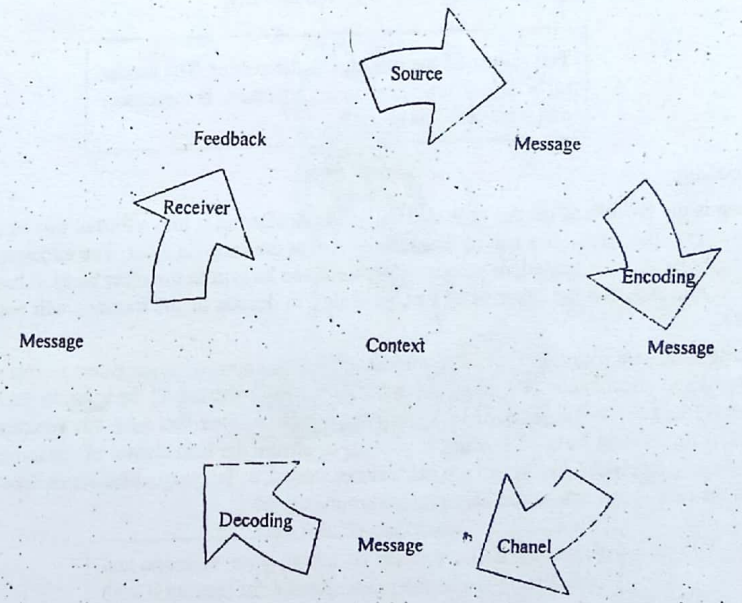

Figure 1: The Communication Process

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- **SOURCE**

The source of the communication is the sender, or for our purposes, you. In order to be a good source, you need to be clear about the message that you are sending. Do you know exactly what it is that you want to communicate? You'll also want to be sure you know why it is that you are communicating. What result is it that you expect? If you cannot answer these questions, you will be starting the communication process with a high chance of failure.

> The source of the message is the sender. The sender must know why the communication is necessary and what result is needed.

- **MESSAGE**

The message is simply the information that you want to communicate. Without a message, there is no cause for communicating. If you cannot summarize the information that you need to share, you aren't ready to begin the process of communication.

> The source of the message is the sender. The sender must know why the communication is necessary and what result is needed.

- **Encoding**

Encoding is the process of taking your message and transferring it into a format that can be shared with another party. It's sort of like how messages are sent via a fax. The information on the paper has to be encoded, or prepared, before it can be sent to the other party. It has to be sent in a format that the other party has the ability to decode or the message will not be delivered.

In order to encode a message properly, you have to think about what the other person will need in order to understand, or decode, the message. Are you sharing all the information that is necessary to get the full picture? Have you made assumptions that may not be correct? Are you using the best form of sending it in order to ensure the best chance of the message being properly received? Are there cultural, environmental, or language differences between you and the other party that could cause miscommunication?

> Encoding is the process of taking your message and transferring it into the proper format for sharing it with your audience. It requires knowing your audience and ensuring that your message provides all of the information that they need.

Of course, to encode a message properly, you have to know who your audience is. You need to have an understanding of what they know and what they need to know in order to send a complete message. You need to use language they will understand and a context that is familiar. One simple example of how you can do this is being sure to spell out acronyms. We sometimes forget that not everyone is familiar with the acronyms that we may use on a regular basis.

- **CHANNEL**

The channel is the method or methods that you use to convey your message. The type of message you have will help to determine the channel that you should use. Channels include face-to-face conversations, telephone calls or videoconferences, and written communication like emails and memos.

> The Channel is the method of communication that you choose such as face-to-face, by telephone, or via email.

Each channel has its advantages and disadvantages. For example, you will find it difficult to give complex, technical information or instructions by using just the telephone. Or you may get bad results if you try to give criticism via email.

- **DECODING**

Decoding happens when you receive the message that has been sent. The communication skills required to decode a message successfully include the ability to read and comprehend, listen actively, or ask clarifying questions when needed.

> Decoding is the process of receiving the message accurately and requires that your audience has the means to understand the information you are sharing.

If the person you are attempting to communicate with seems to be lacking the skills to decode your message, you will need to either resend it in a different way or assist them in understanding it by supplying clarifying information.

- **RECEIVER**

Since you have thought out your message, you've certainly also thought about what you want the desired result to be on the part of your listener. But it's important to realize that each person that receives your message will be listening to it through their own individual expectations, opinions, and perspectives. Their individual experiences will influence how your message is received.

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> You have expectations for a response from the receiver when you send a message. You can increase the chances of getting this result by addressing your audience's concerns or addressing specific benefits as par your communication.

While you can't always address each person's individual concerns in a message, part of planning for your communication is to think ahead of time about what some of their thoughts or experiences might be. For example, if you are releasing a new product and want to convince customers to try it, you would want to be certain to address the specific benefits to the customer, or what improvements have been made since the last version was released.

- **FEEDBACK**

No matter what channel you have used to convey your message, you can use feedback to help determine how successful your communication was. If you are face-to-face with your audience, you can read body language and ask questions to ensure understanding. If you have communicated via writing, you can gauge the success of your communication by the response that you get or by seeing if the result you wanted is delivered.

> Feedback lets you gauge how successful you were at communicating. It also offers a chance to adjust your communication process for the future.

In any case, feedback is invaluable for helping you to improve your communication skills. You can learn what worked well and what didn't so that you can be even more efficient th next time you communicate with that person or the next time you need to communicate a similar message.

- **CONTEXT**

The context is the situation in which you are communicating. It involves the environment that you are in and that in which your audience is in, the culture of your organization(s), and elements such as the relationship between you and your audience. You communication process will not look the same when you are communicating with your boss as it will when you are communicating with a friend. The context helps determine the tone and style of your communication.

> Context involves things such as your relationship with your audience, the culture of your organization and your general environment.

5. PERSPECTIVES IN COMMUNICATION

We all come to each communication exchange with our own 'filter' through which we see the world, the person we are communicating with and the situation or topic we are communicating about. These filters mean that we don't always start with the same perspective as the person we are communicating with.

> Our individual perceptions are the 'filter' through which we communicate with others.

- **VISUAL PERCEPTION**

These filters can be visual, as in the famous example in Figure 2. What do you see when you look at the picture? A young woman or an old crone? Both perspectives are possible, and both are valid.

Figure 2: Young Woman & Crone

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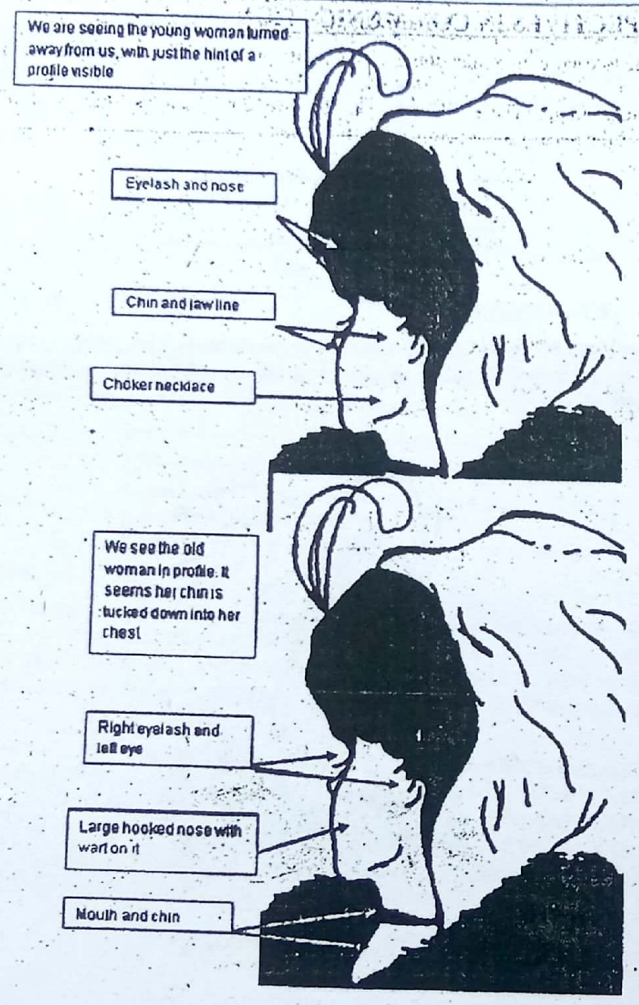

Figure 3: The Two Perspectives

Figure 3 reveals the two perspectives. Both of the perspectives represented in the young and

old woman are valid - they are simply two different ways of seeing the same thing. We cannot decide that one does not exist just because we don't see it. We have to recognize that there is more than one way to perceive the picture, just like there is usually more than one way to see any situation we encounter.

- **LANGUAGE**

The different perspectives we experience can be with language as well. How many times have you received an email that seemed to have a certain 'tone to it,' and that perception of tone colored the way that you might have responded?

> The same words can have very different meanings depending on how we interpret them.

Here's another example. What is the meaning of the following phrase?

A woman without her man is nothing

Sounds pretty bad at first glance, doesn't it? Look again. If you add punctuation or change the word emphasis, how does the meaning change?

A woman. Without her. man is nothing.

The words were the same in both cases. But the meaning has now changed completely. So although we think our meaning may be clear when we use specific words in a certain order, we can't always be certain that the other person will read or hear them in that way.

- **OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING OUR PERSPECTIVE**

There are a multitude of other factors that can affect our perspective, thereby affecting how we communicate with another person. Some of these factors come from our past experiences, our prejudices, our feelings, and our environment. Some of these will be discussed in greater detail in later chapters.

- **PAST EXPERIENCES**

Imagine that you are in a meeting where you will be discussing changes in your personnel policies at work. What will you be bringing to that conversation? You might have examples of other company's personnel policies. You might have examples from your own time in the company that demonstrate why you feel that certain changes might need to be made. Or you might come to the table empty-handed, with just a pad of paper and a pen in order to take notes.

What influences you to do any of these things? Your past experience. You would bring outside information because you have learned in the past that comparing situations can be helpful in decision making. You bring examples of your own experience because you have learned in the past that examples can be powerful ways to make your case. Or you come to

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the table empty-handed because in the past you have felt that your input wasn't valued or you have no past experience in this topic and so you are a clean slate' information wise.

In every one of these situations, your communication is being affected by your past experience. You enter a situation, a meeting, or a conversation, with certain expectations of what will happen in that scenario, and you behave accordingly.

Of course, sometimes you want your past experience to influence your future communications. For example, when your team responded positively to the sales tactics you put in place, those same or similar tactics can certainly be successful again.

It's when our negative past experiences stifle our communication or alter our full potential for communicating that we need to be aware. Further examples of how your past experience could influence your communication are given in Figure 4. Note that not all of them are negative - our past experiences can reaffirm our communication as well.

- **PREJUDICES**

We all have prejudices. They occur when we take our past experiences with a person and assume that the same type of experience will happen with all people who are similar to the first. Prejudices are partly due to culture and partly due to personal preference or experience. Not all prejudices involve a negative characteristic either; for example, you could consider all of one group to be smart.

Past Experience	Resulting Effect on Communication
Your boss has reacted negatively when you have discussed this topic in the past	You hesitate to discuss the topic even when it is necessary for your work
Your co-worker has forgotten important information multiple times in the past	You assume he or she will forget the information this time and so you overload him or her with reminders
Your boss ignored your idea in the last meeting	You don't bring up another idea that could have made an impact
You got nervous the last time you gave a presentation	You start out even more nervous on your next presentation
The group reacted well to your last sales pitch	You use a similar style for your next sales pitch

The last twenty customers rejected your new product	You fail to offer that product to the 21st customer and beyond, some of whom may have wanted the product
The last email you received from a colleague was rude (you perceived it as rude!)	You send a rude email in return
Your subordinate was disagreeable the last time you asked him to work overtime	You don't ask him this time, even though he would have agreed

Figure 4: Past Experiences Influencing Communication

The problem with prejudices is when they start to influence how or to whom we communicate. To get an idea of how this could be happening in your workplace, consider how you might complete the phrases below. If you can't think of a way to complete it from your own experience, complete each phrase with a stereotype that you might have heard in the past:

- Women in the workplace are
- Young people in the workplace are
- Seniors in the workplace are
- Working mothers in the workplace are
- Supervisors at work are
- The lowest job level workers are
- Blacks, whites, or (fill in a race) in the workplace are
- Homosexuals in the workplace are
- Christians, Muslims, or (fill in a religion) in the workplace are
- Disabled people in the workplace are

> Prejudices occur when we take an isolated experience with one 'type' of person and then act as if all encounters in the future with people of the same 'type' or with the same characteristics will result in the same experience.

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When we categorize people like this, we eliminate their individuality. If you are communicating to a person through a perceived prejudice or stereotype, at the very least you are greatly limiting the chances of your communication being successful or producing the desired result. At the most, you are alienating or insulting someone with whom you are trying to build a working relationship.

Your goal should be to see each person as an individual that is separate from any preconceived notions you might have about them. It takes practice, but wouldn't you like to be seen and communicated with as an individual and not as a sum of different labels that can be placed on you?

- **FEELINGS**

For this area of influence, there are actually two ways in which your feelings can influence your communication with another person. The first simply refers to the way that you feel on a given day; if you feel well, you'll communicate in one way and if you feel ill you'll communicate in another. Since your well being fluctuates, it makes sense that the way you communicate will change somewhat with how well you are feeling. If you find yourself experiencing difficulty in communicating due to an illness or other physical stressor, recognizing and acknowledging it, when appropriate, can be very helpful when others might interpret the change in your communication as having something to do with them.

The second aspect related to feelings refers to how you feel about a specific person. When you genuinely like someone, the way you communicate is going to show it. Unfortunately, the same can be said for when you don't like someone. However, as you continue learning about effective communication skills in the following chapters, you will find some tools to help you be as effective as possible in communicating, even when it's with someone that you dislike.

- **ENVIRONMENT**

The last area of influence on your communication is your environment. All of us communicate differently in different environments. This is simple enough to observe in everyday life. Do you speak to your colleagues the same way that you do to your friends? Do you talk to strangers with more or less formality than people you know well? Do you talk to your subordinates the same way when your own boss is there as you do when she is not there? As you go through your workday, notice how where you are, what is going on and who else is present may be impacting the way that you communicate.

Recognizing how the environment might be affecting others you communicate with is a skill that can come in handy for you, particularly when you perceive that the environment is having a negative impact on your ability to communicate effectively with someone. This skill will help you to perceive why someone might be communicating in the way that they are. It will also give you a factor that you can alter in order to make the person more comfortable or to establish a level of formality that you feel is important in a particular situation.

Chapter 2

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

This Chapter covers

1. Factors Affecting The Flow And Quality Of Organizational Communication
2. Hierarchical Structure
3. Organizational Reengineering
4. Management Styles
   - Classical Style
   - Humanistic Style
   - Theory X and Theory Y
5. Organizational Culture
6. Elements Of Organizational Culture
7. Exchanging Messages in the Organization
8. Communicating Information to Employees
9. Informal Messages and Grapevine
10. Special Challenges for Organizational Communicators

In this chapter, we will examine how the forces that operate in an organization ermine the flow and quality of information and communication within that anization. We will examine the influence of hierarchical structure, management e, and culture on communication patterns, the characteristics of message direction ward, downward, and horizontals), and a few of the challenges facing peoples in personal relationships in organizations.

Today, many of the issues confronting organizations result form change. The c nature of organizations changes with mergers, acquisitions, and downsizing.

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The changing nature of the employer has brought many issues to the forefront of employer-employee discussions. Examples include the issues of day care in the workplace, family leave, medical benefits retirement pensions, computer networking, and globalization. Management values and styles are also changing. Advances in technology and an increasing reliance on teamwork are eliminating middle management positions-a scenario that presents organizations with a variety of communication challenges.

The reverse is true as well. Advances in communication are responsible for a great deal of this change. Communication brings the world closer together. Changes in one location affect other locations because communication makes information acquisition fast and frequently inexpensive. Internet services, television, print media, and radio are constant reminders of change. In fact, the media themselves can cause change. For example, in the 1980s when the media focused on the illegal and unethical practices of businesses such as junk bond trading, securities fraud, and savings and loan failures, organizations began to reemphasize ethics as an important part of their business practices. Numerous organizations hired expensive "ethics consultants" to conduct training workshops for employees.

Communication patterns in organizations can changes as a result of a major upheaval or catastrophe. Burger King, headquartered in Miami, is a case in point. Burger King's corporate offices were devastated by Hurricane Andrew on August 24, 1992. Moving quickly, the executive office instituted new communication patterns to accommodate their emergency situation. Communication in the makeshift offices was more informal. Structured lines of communication were substituted with casual modes of conversation, and people shared offices and phones with one another. Most important, once they were able to assume a more normal mode of operation, the new communication practices remained. Employees and management alike realized how important it was to communicate with each other on a less formal basis. Burger King learned that formal channels of communication can be poor substitutes for the quality of information shared in informal and unplanned interpersonal communication.

1. FACTORS AFFECTING THE FLOW AND QUALITY OF ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATION

Organizational communication is the process of exchanging messages between organizational members. Each time an organizational context changes, the communication within that context can change. Employees who change jobs often

remark that ways and means of communicating are different depending on the type of organization they find themselves in. We'll look at three major factors that determine the flow and quality of communication-how the members of an organization communication. These factors are hierarchical structure, management style, and organizational culture. Some organizations supervise and control employees strictly with an extensive bureaucracy, while others use a "hands off" policy to encourage creativity and innovation. At the heart of an-organizations guiding principles in communication or message exchange.

2. HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE

One way that you can understand how communication operates in an organization is by measuring the height and width of its operating structures, or its hierarchical structure. You may have heard of tall and flat organizations. Tall organizations have many levels of management. Firms within the insurance, banking, and telecommunications industries often have tall structures. In such organizations, a board of directors is at the top, followed by a CEO and/ or president, a chief operating officer, a chief financial officer, an executive VP, senior VPs, associate VPs, assistant VPs, and so on. In the chain of command at such firms, a subordinate who wants to suggest a new procedure must first communicate with her boss, who will talk to her boss, who will contact his boss and so on, following the chain of command could take weeks or even months.

Dozens of organizational researches and consultants insist that the most successful companies have reduced the layers of hierarchy so that freer patterns of communication can take place. During the last few years, more companies have been downsizing by removing middle layers of management. In order to "do more with less," companies are relying on advanced technology and teamwork. Although the purpose of downsizing is to save money by eliminating the salaries of middle managers, an additional benefit is to streamline the flow of communication within the organization. You are more likely to find flat organizations in companies where employees must be able to communicate with each other rapidly, spontaneously, and informally. Restaurant and food service organizations, customer-oriented retail outlets, and electronic repair businesses and just some of the organizations that benefit from a flat structure.

A specific example of an organization "flattening" itself is IBM's electronic card assembly and test plant in Austin, Texas. IBM Austin found that it had to

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increase the speed at which it developed and produced its equipment (electronic cards for computer equipment). The only way management found to increase speed was by reducing the hierarchy of decision making and flattening the structure. This meant that employees could communicate with each other more rapidly by bypassing the old hierarchy

3. ORGANIZATIONAL REENGINEERING

Tall organizations recognize that two of their most important resources-time and communications are underused. When management has many layers, communication is slow, often resulting in a filtering of information as each person in the chain of command adds his or her own interpretations to the message. Furthermore, when organizations are structured around specialized departments such as marketing, research and development, operations, manufacturing, and sales, each department guards its turf and communication between department moves slowly through formalized lines of authority.

Enter the organizational reengineering revolution. Since the early 1990s, a new, flattened, horizontal structure has emerged from the dismantling of the former systems. In the reengineered organization, specialists from marketing, management, research accounting, and manufacturing come together as cross-functional teams, thus eliminating layers of hierarchy. Communication is more direct, efficient, and timely. At Xerox Corporation, engineers work with marketing specialists to develop copying products that appeal to customer preferences. Xerox converted four large, bureaucratic, specialized departments into nine streamlined areas that now concentrate on consumer products. Figure 2.4 illustrates the new organizational process developed by Xerox.

This new organization has shifted Xerox's focus form bureaucratic preoccupation to matching customers with the products they want. The special challenge of the reengineered organization is ensuring that the high-level communication processes required by the transformation are matched with competent communication skills.

4. MANAGEMENT STYLES

Just as all organizations have certain hierarchical characteristics, each organization also has an organizational style. An organizational style results from a set of formal or informal rules and conditions that stipulate how people should behave

when doing their work. Sometimes these styles are rooted in traditions that began when the organization was created. In other cases, organizational management styles have evolved from changes that the organization had to make due to turbulent conditions or because the organization wanted to keep up with the latest trends. Two traditional styles that you can still see in many organizations are the classical and humanistic styles.

• CLASSICAL STYLE

Organizations with a classical style are guided by a philosophy that stresses a strict adherence to formalized rules and the scientific training and development of workers. The goal of this philosophy is for the organization to operate at peak efficiency. Classical organizations stress scientific principles and procedures, and encourage conformity to work standards within the workplace. They believe that cooperation and collaboration rather than individualism should be the rule, and they seek to develop each employee to promote the greatest efficiency.

Classical organizations emphasize rigid bureaucratic procedures as a way to get the job done. Such organizations place authority in the hand of those at the top of the hierarchy. They have a top-down system of communicating and delegating responsibility. In classical organization, communications are discouraged from deviating from the formal procedure for sending message. If one person needs to send a message to those at the top of the hierarchy, it must first be sent to the superior who will send it to the next level of authority, until the message reaches top management. The military is famous for this type of style. Typically, many more communication messages flow downward than upward in a classical organization.

Classical organization work best when the following conditions exist.

Employees have straightforward and repetitious tasks to perform.

- The environment is stable enough to ensure that the products produced will be appropriate for the market and consumers. The same product is produced exactly the same way each time.
- Precision is at a premium.
- Workers are compliant and act as they have been instructed to do.

Examples of effective classical organizations include surgical wards, finance offices, and accounting firms. Organizations in industries that experience a great

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deal of change (such as airlines or electronics firms) or must constantly maintain a creative edge (such as public relations, advertising, and marketing firms) are ill-suited to a classical structure.

- **HUMANISTIC STYLE**

Research as well as common sense has taught us that worker attitudes have as much to do with employee productivity as do the technical resources available to do the job. The humanistic style focuses on how people conduct their work. This approach emphasizes that workers are assets to be developed, rather than liabilities to be controlled. One of the main interests of humanistic organization is fostering the creation of informal groups or networks on the job. We know that informal channels of communication are just as prevalent as formal ones. A great deal of work is accomplished through this type of communication, including feedback, direction, orders, and encouragement. The strength and prevalence of the grapevine, which we discuss later in this chapter, is a prime example of how workers act on their own and communicate with one another about work and social issues.

Humanistic organizations also reject the notion that workers have to be carefully supervised in order to produce effectively. In fact, these organizations believe that with the right type of communication, members can be creative as well as hardworking.

- **THEORY X AND THEORY Y**

In 1960, Douglas McGregor published a very influential book titled "The Human Side of Enterprise" in which he compared the classic scholl thought with humanistic movement: Theory X and Theory Y respectively. Theory X says that workers are unproductive, unmotivated, and must be coerced to perform their tasks. Workers cannot be trusted to perform their duties without direct supervision. In contrast, theory Y states that workers are creative and motivated individuals who do not require coercion except in rare instances. When given the chance, employees will perform well.

Even as new theories of organizations develop, mangers will tend to use Theory X and Theory Y to understand how employees are motivated in organizations. We have seen that organizational structure and management styles are primary elements of the communication process. However, organizational culture also influences communication quality.

5. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

How an organization thinks of itself and its members determines its organizational culture, which in turn influences communication. Think about the organizations of which you are a member. How do their values guide the rules and obligations of communication within the group? Outside the group? If one organization places a great deal of power in

the hands of the leader, that individual will be in a critical position to regulate communication. If power is shared in an organization, communication practices and patterns more likely will be negotiated among members.

6. ELEMENTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

The best way to understand organizational culture is by examining its makeup. Elements of culture include the values that organizational members share-those ideas and concepts that are deep seated, are significant, and have a great deal of worth for peoples in the organization. Shared values serve as guiding principles by which individual actions can be judged. They are the basis of many mission statements written, produced, and posted by organizations. Examine the following list of values that have been embraced by a number of organizations.

- Customer satisfaction is essential to enterprise success
- If we make a commitment, you can put it in the bank.
- People want to do a good job
- Teams can frequently accomplish more than individuals
- We can and must continuously improve our performance
- Excellent performance will be noticed and rewarded

Cadet Uniform Service, the third largest uniform service company in Canada, pursues a corporate culture of quality employees and quality service. The guiding principles (values) that promote Cadet's success include the following.

1. Treat others you work with as you would want them to treat you. This includes co-workers, customers, and suppliers.
2. Do it right the first time, every time. Complete every task the way it should be done. Don't fix it later
3. Do it now. If it should be done, do it. Don't put if off.

If you understand and accept the values of an organization, you will be able to develop messages that appeal to its members. Many organizations have their values printed along with the mission statement, or printed on the back of their business cards. In other cases, you may have to ask organizational members to state their values. Another way to learn about an organization's culture is to learn about its history.

Getting a sense of how the organization began and has changed over time may help you understand unique qualities about the organization.

Other properties of culture include elements that can be observed more visibly. For example, the jargon, or language, provides a hint at how the organization operates. computer software developers speak in a very technical language,

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demonstrating that they work in a very special culture. Artifacts can also serve s cultural signs. The logo on a building or letterhead, special dress codes or uniforms, or even special office layouts are examples of artifacts that demonstrate the uniqueness of that organizations culture. For example, Eastman Kodak's black and white film manufacturing division adopted the symbol of a zebra when the division restructured into a flatter, more lean organization, they chose the name "Team Zebra" to illustrate that they were working as a team, and to indicate that this was the black and white division of the company. They also considered other qualities of zebras that paralleled the division.

- Zebras are endangered (much as the black and white division at the time)
- Zebras survive by banding together (something Kodak had to do)
- Each Zebras stripes are different (just as team members at Kodak can make unique contributions to problems solving).

Sometimes certain rights or rituals are performed that contribute to the culture. Some universities insist that faculty members address each other formally in the presence of students (for example. Dr. Smith. Professor Haragan, Dean Hamilton). Some organization hold award ceremonies to reward employee productivity, such as a luncheon honoring employees who surpass their quotas. Colleges, for example, highly publicize their award luncheons and banquets to promote the feeling that good peoples (student and faculty) are rewarded and recognized. Some organizations orient new employees to their unique culture by exposing them to training video that highlight their strengths the intent is to acclimate the new employee to the existing culture as rapidly as possible.

Culture provides a portrait of the actions, norms, motives and communication philosophies that are valued by organization culture facilitates and regulates our communication with others. Knowing that certain procedures are followed in a culture, understanding corporate values, recognizing particular rites and rituals, and adopting the communication climate can helping framing appropriate messages. If you need to send a memo to your firm's human resources department asking for information on benefits of your new office assistant, having an understanding of the corporate culture could assist you in writing the memo. In many companies, employees must send copy of the memo they write to recipient boss as well as to their own boss. Violating the chain of command by sending a letter to our superior's boss, rather than your own boss, could be prevented by knowing that culture prohibits such communication. Even talking informally with reporters form business week about plant layoffs at one of your company's factory may be taboo. Knowing the cultural rule about median interviews might save your job!

Knowing cultures of other organizations can also be important. If your are on a team that is negotiating a five years sales contract with a company known for tis

tough bargaining posture, it would be better to understand its culture. By calling stock brokers, public relations firms, and former customers and suppliers, you might learn that company's culture is one of the "quality services". You learn that its tough bargaining image is more reflective of quality supplies than of simply going after the lowest price. By stressing the quality of your products at a fair price, your bargaining position improves.

The factors affecting the flow and quality of organizational communication are symbiotic in nature. Each one affects ad is affected by the other two factors. In turn, these factors influence the design and delivery of messages. In a reciprocal fashion, messages can influence these factors. In the following two sections, you will gain a special understanding of how this symbiotic relationship is applied to exchanging messages in organizations and to four special challenges facing organizational communicators.

7. EXCHANGING MESSAGES IN THE ORGANIZATION

An organization's hierarchical structure, its management style, and its organizational culture influence the direction in which messages flow. Messages can flow in three directions downward, upward, and horizontally.

Downward communication

Downward communication involves messages that travel from superior to subordinates there are five types of downward messages.

1. **Job instructions** messages specify how to conduct tasks on the job. For example, an e-mail message might request that payment arrangements be included in a new client's contract.
2. **Job rationale** messages explain why tasks must be performed and how these tasks relate to other activities of the organization. In many cases, employees who are not motivated to perform a task will change their minds when they are given a rationale or reason for doing so. A message that explains why there must be three copies of a contract-one for the client, one for the main office, and one for the legal office- is an example of a job rationale message.
3. **Procedures and practices** messages inform members of an organization about their responsibilities, obligations, and privileges. An example of this message type is a brochure sent to all employees must travel on one airline that offers discounts, unless otherwise approved by a manger.
4. **Feedback** messages apprise employees of their performance in the organization. An example is a letter from the CEO that congratulates an employee for exceeding last month's production, or a unit being recognized at an awards banquet for improved customer services.

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5. **Indoctrination of Goals** messages convey the mission, goals, and objectives of the organization. An example would be a memo or e-mail message a manager sends an employee asking for third-quarter goals based on the new mission statement of the organization.

Several factors can affect down ward communication. Distortion or filtering of messages may occur as they travel down the hierarchy to employees. For example, a memo requesting volunteers for overtime may be abbreviated or elaborated at each stage of the hierarchy so that the memo changes form a request for volunteers to a demand for required overtime. Superiors can send contradictory of conflicting messages, thereby confusing workers. For example, one superior may specify no music with a new ad campaign, while another insists on the inclusion of a jingle.

Downward communication is often unclear and vague because it is hurriedly prepared. A request for the "latest transactions" or "highest sales" are examples of vague communication. Some downward messages can communicate a lack of regard for a subordinate's position. For example, an upper-level executive might criticize the performance of a middle manger in front of the manger's peers and subordinates without regard to his or her status. If downward communication is used to often, it may cause information overload. For example, a cluster of instructions contained in a 40-page manual filled with technical information may cause information ay cause information overload. Information overload is known to cause stress, anxiety and poor productivity.

The critical element in downward communication is the ability to send the right message to the right people, with the appropriate content, at the right time. While too much information can overload employees and cause information processing problems, too little information may adversely affect decision making or even reduce morale. When employees sense that they are in an "information vacuum," they may feel nervous threatened, or resentful of upper management. They may rely upon or even create information such as rumors to fill the gap created by too little downward information. .

8. COMMUNICATING INFORMATION TO EMPLOYEES

Many organizations with multiple sites, offices and plants are findings technology an indispensable tool in getting information in the hands of all

employees. Companies such as IBM, Cadillac, and Federal Express use their own "in-house television networks" to broadcast live messages to their employees. Federal express has gone so far as to make the live broadcast interactive so that employees can ask key mangers questions about operational issues. Westing House and Motorola have developed quality-control messages on video tapes for their employees to watch at their leisure. Cadillac puts answers to frequently asked questions on voice mail system to ensure that personnel get the information they need. Technology makes it easier for top management to communicate downward communication, such as time delays and distortion, and can have confidence in their communication systems. In addition employees can access the information they want it, sidestepping the problem of information overload.

The internet has already become a key player in organizational communication. The intranet or the use of internet technology for communication within organization is growing at a rate that is outpacing the internet itself. Because the intranet use the same user friendly technology as the world wide web, they are becoming a popular choice among the organization that want to disseminate information easily and uniformly. Creating an intranet requires a company to establish an internal web that can be accessed only by the employees. Once they get into the system, employees can use internet e-mail, check bulletins about the organization and read memos distributed to all employees or select groups in the organization. In short, almost any organizational communication can be handled through an intranet. Organizations that use intranets include Ford Motor Company, Silicon Graphics, and Tyson Foods. Federal Express among other organizations even connects its intranets to the internet, which allows outsider access to check on the progress of packages.

Which avenues of downward communication do you think are better received by employees? Do electronic forms of downward communication improve efficiency or create more information overload?

Upward communication

Upward communication involves messages that are sent from subordinates to superiors. In your own career you will send many messages to people above you in your organization's hierarchy. Upward messages usually fall within five basic categories.

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1. Messages providing answers to inquiries from upper-level management, such as providing details about the status of a company-wide distribution of new laptop computers.
2. Messages reporting on activities and tasks associated with goal accomplishment, such as reporting early completion of a project.
3. Messages communicating attitudes and understanding about organization practices and policies, such as applauding a new insurance program.
4. Messages revealing information about fellow employees, such as recommending coworker for "employee of the month".
5. Messages concerning employee performance ad job related problems such as requesting a pay raise.

There are several advantages or values to upward communication. For example, upward communication reveals to your superiors whether you understand and accept their ideas, plans and policies. You can also alert superiors to problems from which they themselves are isolated. In addition upward communication can satisfy your need to feel valued or to have your opinions valued in the organization. Talking to superiors can release tension or stress that you may feel when coping with your job. Finally, upward communication gives you an opportunity to participate in the decision making process.

9. A COMPARISON OF UPWARD AND DOWNWARD COMMUNICATION

Upward and downward communications differ not only in the purposes they serve, but also in the ability of the receiver to access messages. Subordinates do not have the same ability to communication upward as superiors have to communicate downward. You should also remember that managers are usually more receptive to upward messages that carry good news and those that are in step with current policy and procedures. Unfortunately, most of us will occasionally have to communicate negative messages and messages that are counter to policy. For example, we may need to report the dishonesty of a fellow employee or question the legality of a company policy.

How do organizations encourage upward communication? Most organizations traditionally have allowed employees the opportunity to make suggestions through a suggestion box. Suggestion systems have met with mixed results, although successful suggestion systems have focused on rewarding employees with good suggestions in unique ways. For example, RLI insurance in Peoria, Illinois, avoids giving away big prized for suggestions and instead reward every idea, whether it is used or not, with a $2 bill. When an idea is used, the responsible employee is entered into a quarterly drawing

for prizes ranging from $50 to $100. RLI reports a dramatic increase in the total number of suggestions made as well as an increase in the quality of suggestions received.

Peak Electronics in Orange, California, has moved to an even more creative method of soliciting employee suggestions:

- Employee are encouraged to suggest one idea per month
- Two employees with the best suggestions are named "Thinkers of the Month" and given prestigious and convenient parking spaces
- Managers have the authority to implement the idea on the spot or pass it on to someone with the authority to do so
- Suggestion boxes are located in restroom stalls to guarantee confidentiality

- **Horizontal Communication**

Horizontal communication involves messages that are exchanged among individuals at the same hierarchical level in an organization. Often referred to as lateral communication, horizontal communication serves a number of important functions including problem solving, information sharing, task coordination between departments or teams, morale boosting, and conflict resolution. Resolution. For example, the information systems department may confer with the accounting software program, or a customer services representative may communicate with a salesperson to resolve a customer's complaint.

Some organizations particularly those from the classical perspective (Theory X), do not encourage frequent horizontal communication except through formal channels (memos, letters). Other organizations thrive on lateral messages as means of accomplishing their goals. This is especially true of business firms interested in a team approach to problem solving. In many organizations, horizontal communication is the best way to get the job done. People at the same hierarchal level can exchange ideas and information leading to a more productive work setting. For example, after learning that consumers prefer cloth table napkins rather than paper napkins in their franchise restaurants, employees in the marketing department can directly communicate this information to employees in the service department without using the chain of command. Employees may also communicate with peers and colleagues to pose questions with which they are hesitant to confront their boss, for fear of embarrassment. Horizontal communication is frequently more direct and rapid, yet less official, than using upward and downward modes of communication. Figure 2.1 shows how information can move horizontally.

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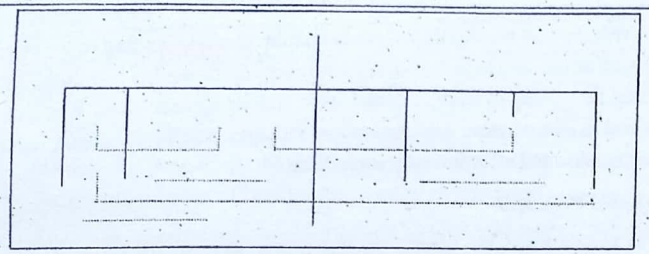

Figure. 2.1: Horizontal Communication

Organizations facilitate horizontal communication in different ways. First top management can create an atmosphere of open communication that encourages lateral communication among employees. The Indus Group, a management software manufacturer in San Francisco, encourages as much horizontal communication as possible. Electronic mail is used to keep everyone at all levels informed of the projects that employees are working on. Says Indus Group owner Bob Felton, "[Horizontal communication] helps short-circuit what happens in hierarchies, when you're not allowed to go and talk someone". Second, social activities can serve as a means for getting members of different departments together. Meeting on a social basis might break the ice for subsequent meetings related to organizational activities. Third committee meetings can be called that includes members from different departments to discuss important issues or problems. Fourth, quality circles might be formed for the purposes of addressing specific problems facing the company. Quality circles and cross functional team take members from different part of the organization to deal with the issues or projects that affect the entire company. For example, an accountant, an operation manager a public relations specialist, and an administrative assistant may form a team to solve a problem related to company benefits, such as insurance. Chrysler Corporation instituted cross functional teams that resulted in the cab forward design that became so popular. While some organizations encourage and foster horizontal communication, sometimes horizontal communication arises through informal networks.

10. INFORMAL MESSAGES AN GRAPEVINE

Informal messages are exchanged outside of official channels such as messages exchanged in the hallway, in the coffee room, at parties, or even in bars after work. Informal communication is frequently used to bypass formal channels. Routine and formalized channels of communication can be bypassed to ensure the information gets to the place where it is most needed.

In many organizations, communication networks form in places regular patterns of informal communication flourish. Informal networks are developed and sustained by special relationships formed by its members. Advice networks exist in order to

exchange information on solving problems or dealing with complex issues. Trust networks are formed when their members such as individuals of the personnel department, share sensitive information about the organization or other employees. Members of trust networks use each other as sources of support during trying times or crisis situations, such as planned relocation or when layoffs are feared. Task networks

Analyzing your messages

What have been your most frustrating experiences in trying to communicate with your fellow employees? Do most of your frustrations come from trying to communicate with your boss 9upward communication), or was it the grapevine that frustrated you? Write a short paper (two to three pages) that relates one of your most frustrating experiences. Include a section on how the communication situation could have been improved. Try to include material from this chapter that would inform your reader about how upward, downward or horizontal communication can be improved.

Are used by employees to exchange work-related information, as when advertisers inform the sales staff of a new promotional campaign. Social networks exists in which employees who share interests in politics, recreational activities, or sports meet in break rooms, at lunch or after work to chat.

The grapevine in an organization refers to a regular system of communication among employees that occurs outside the normal channels of communication. As an informal system of carrying messages, the grapevine is supported almost entirely through oral communication. Many employees find written communication too risky to send through the grapevine. Some people belong to certain grapevines and others do not. The braches of a grapevine can be found at all levels and in all departments of an organization. For example, a clerical person in public relations may have a friend on the grapevine who is a middle manager in the production department. This middle manager may have a grapevine partner in the transportation department.

The grapevine often caries the first word about personnel issues. Sensitive information can be "leaked" by someone who takes a call, makes a copy of a document, or faxes a letter. Such newsworthy items as promotions, raises, layoffs, extramarital affairs, substance abuse cases, and even changes in dress code policy can quickly become common knowledge through the grapevine.

Sometimes employees use the grapevine because the formal channels are either inconvenient, dangerous, or inaccessible, research over the past several years has revealed several interesting characteristics about the grapevine, the grapevine is

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fast, is accurate, carries a lot of information, gives an indication of employee attitudes an sentiment, is a common channel for rumors, and travels by clusters. The grapevine is often a key source of information during uncertain times, such as during organizational restructuring or flattening. Organizational leaders use this informal network to monitor communication that would otherwise nerve reach their level, such as fears, attitudes, and morale. One thing is certain: Grapevines exist in almost all organizations and serve a very important information carrying function. Grapevines are inevitable and should not be discouraged. However, they should be monitored to find out what kinds of messages are being bounced around

10. SPECIAL CHALLENGES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATORS

The following sections examine special challenges within the organization and the communication strategies needed to manage these challenges. The issues of mentors, sexual harassment in the workplace, open communication climate and empowerment are discussed in the section.

- **MENTORS**

One special type of relationship found in business is one between a mentor and a protégé. A mentor is an experienced, knowledgeable employee who serves as a role model for another employee (protégé). Mentor-protégé relationships benefit an organization because the protégé develops faster and learns valuable skills necessary to perform well for the company, and teamwork is developed. The protégé mentor influence powerful others, receiving recognition from the mentor, obtaining greater knowledge form the mentor, and receiving friendship form the mentor. Benefits to the mentor include satisfaction from helping, increased value to the organization, and exposure to new ideas and concepts.

- **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MENTOR AND PROTÉGÉ**

Mentors often hold a prestigious position in the organization, have worked fo the company for a considerable amount of time, and are normally older than protégé. The protégé is new to the organization, department, or group and is interested in advancement within the organization. Although some organization requires individual to form these relationship, voluntary formation of the mentor protégé relationship is usually more beneficial to the people and company.

The mentor protégé relationship depends on mutual understanding of the roles and characteristics of the people involved. Mentors possess knowledge and skills, and the protégé must be willing to learn, mentors must also be approachable, confident, secure and skilled in interpersonal communication. Protégés must be ambitious, loyal, energetic, open minded and effective communication.

- **MENTORING PHASES**

Like all relationships, the mentor-protégé relationship develops and changes over time. The four phases of relationship are initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition:

The initiation phase, at the beginning of the relationship, is a time in which mentor and protégé begin to learn about each other. The mentor shows support by teaching and coaching, and protégé demonstrates willingness, loyalty, energy and intelligence. Interpersonal bonding occurs during the cultivation phase the mentor begins to protect and promote protégé and mutual admiration increases. During the separation phase, the mentor and protégé drift apart either physically or emotionally. Several factors can cause this to occur, including transfers, business trips, promotions or increasing independence from the protégé. After a successful relationship, the mentor and protégé enter redefinition phase, in which they reshape their roles and relationship based on different criteria. The mentor may still provide advice and expertise, but both individuals are more likely to see each as peers, and they may now hold similar positions within the organization. Not all mentor-protégé relationships experience redefinition, because separation may prevent the reestablishing of the relationship.

- **FINDING A MENTOR**

It may be difficult for both women and minorities to establish a mentor-protégé relationship because these groups are presently not well represented in management. Also, the potential for controversy with male-female or cross-cultural mentoring relationships can restrict opportunities. Some professional organizations, such as the National Consortium for Black Professional Development and the American Society of Professional and Executive Women, provide mentorlike relationships and networking opportunities. However, the most beneficial mentoring relationships are established within the organization in which your work.

The following steps are useful in finding an appropriate mentor within your organization:

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Ask the personnel or human resources department about formal mentoring programs. If the organization does not have a formal mentoring program, ask your peers about previous mentor-protégé relationships or ask for the names of possible mentors.

Identify the people who have the same specialization or career track as you and determine whether they possess mentor characteristics.

Approach someone you consider to be a good candidate for a mentor and take an interest in what that person does. Ask questions and demonstrate your enthusiasm to learn. Disclose information about yourself and your interests, and ask him or her for expert advice to improve your productivity.

Build rapport with someone whom you would consider to be an effective mentor. Ask whether this person would like to sponsor you in a mentor-protégé relationship. Explain why you think he or she would be a good mentor, and describe your qualifications for fulfilling the responsibility of a protégé.

- **COMMUNICATION CLIMATE**

Message flow and the quality of communication are often affected by the open, closed, formal, or informal atmosphere of an organization the communication climate. If communication culture reflects norms and philosophies, communication climate is the atmosphere or mood of an organization that its members experience as they exchange messages, it reflects the communication and social processes occurring in the workplace. We've noted that while some organizations require strict compliance to the communication chain of command (formal climate), others encourage more relaxed and open communication (informal climate).

Climate may change over time if organizational communication systems are modified. While climate is usually an enduring quality, it is subject to modification depending upon the communication patterns of the organizational members. For example, a formal communication climate, such as that of IBM, may become less formal as a result of the informal communication style of a new manager.

The communication climate that promotes employee productivity and morale can be characterized by the following dimensions.

- Information accuracy and reliability
- Quality of upward and downward communication

- Supportiveness of co-workers
- Decision making at all levels
- Maintenance of rust, ethics, and integrity
- Promotion of free, honest, and open communication

Communication openness is a characteristic of communication climate. Communication openness refers to the exchange of messages and ideas in a receptive, sincere, and unobstructed atmosphere. How can communication openness be described? Table 2.2 lists some qualities that an organization with an open climate would possess.

Table 2.2

Qualities of Communication Openness

Open Communication Quality	Example
Superior acts on criticism.	A superior considers changing billing procedures when an employee suggests a simplified invoice.
Superiors listen to complaints	A disgruntled employee does not fear job loss for complaining
Employees ask supervisor's opinion.	A public relation specialist asks for an opinion on a proposed PR campaign.
Superiors follow up on employees opinions.	A superior asks employees whether the leave plan is more desirable than the old one.
Superior suggest new ideas	A superior recommends a new design for an architectural team working on a building design for a new client
Superiors ask for suggestions.	A superior asks for possible solutions to a contract dispute
Superiors listen to bad news	A superior deals with project delays
Co-workers listen to new ideas form colleagues	The sales team listens to new promotional ideas from the customer service department.

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(2) ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Superiors listen to new ideas	Superiors participate in a team session about a new project design
Superiors ask for personal opinions	A superior asks employees for likes or dislikes about company products
Employees listen to supervisors suggestions	Employees accept advice for improving a work procedure.

The potential advantages of open communication include improved performance, enhanced job satisfaction, improved understanding of job responsibilities, and having the right amount of information for your job if your are known as an open communication, you will likely be perceived as conscientious open-minded, friendly, and innovative.

Communication climate can be improved through skill training. Teaching employees how to communicate more effectively in a more open atmosphere is a goal of many organizations, Saturn corporation, GM's highly successful and innovative auto plant, emphasizes free-flowing, competent communication among its employees as a method of increasing productivity. Their commitment to an effective communication climate is so strong that half of the training time is spent on communication skills such as conflict management, problem solving, presentation skills, and interpersonal communication.

Some organizations have found that altering the physical setting has had a profound effect on the communication climate. By moving employees out of four-wall offices into open and flexible work areas, communication is more open and spontaneous.

- **EMPOWERMENT**

Employee empowerment can also have an impact on communication. Empowerment describes how organizations transfer authority, responsibility, and power to employees. When tasks are delegated to employees, empowerment gives them the necessary authority to get the job completed without unnecessary and time-consuming upward communication (getting approval from above). Texas instruments and British Airways, among many other companies, believe in the value of empowerment and have given decision-making responsibilities to lower ranking employees. For example, Texas instruments in Dallas once discouraged communication between co-workers and between subordinates and supervisors,

however, in an effort to stay competitive. Texas instruments created work teams, empowering them schedule their own jobs, order their own supplies, and communicate openly to discover problems before they occurred the result was a steady profit and an increased productivity rate of 30 percent.

Empowering workers bestows a greater sense of control and achievement and results in a higher level of "ownership" for the job being performed. Empowerment also improves the self-esteem and commitment of workers. Because they know that upper management trusts them with greater power and authority, empowered employees, are more comfortable communicating their plans and ideas to both colleagues and superiors. Zytec Corporation, a manufacturer of electronic equipment, authorizes each of its 700 employees to spend up to $1,000 to solve customer problems. Employees are not required to justify their expenditure, and getting the funds is a simple one-step process. Zytec's stratergy. Empower employees with the resources to confront and solve problems at their level. Communication is less formal and messages move about the organization more freely.

Managers have many communication options available for empowering others. These include allowing employees to run meetings, asking for input on issues and decisions, including contributor's names on written documents, and using the term we when discussing the work department. This type of shared communication encourages employees both to take risks and to assume responsibility for their work.

Empowerment also requires that managers discuss job concerns with each employee. Informal communication of this type encourages more direct contact between supervisor and employees. Empowerment also encourages an open atmosphere of communication by asking employees for suggestions on how to improve the organization, ad by seeking ways to collaborate with employees instead of direction them.

Many traditional organization operate from a pyramid (see Figure 2.3), with senior management at the top, service employees at the lowest level, and customers below the bottom level. In this scenario, employees are responsive to their boss and work to please their supervisor. If the pyramid were inverted, the customer would be outside and on top, service employee would be at the top level, and senior management would be on the bottom. In this scenario, managers would be responsive to their employees. The manager's job would be to help employees do what they cannot do for themselves. The customer would be well served because he or she is the most important factor in the organization.

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In 1992, corporate-owned Pepsi-Cola soft drink bottling plants completely reorganized their system with the "right side up" pyramidal system. Each employee wore a logo with an upside down pyramid on his or her sleeve, promoting the slogan "right side up the customer is why." The effect of this communication device (the logo) was to put decision making in the hand of the worker who dealt with the customer, rather than require each employee run to his or her manger for approval or authorization. The organizational structure is another way of emphasizing the customer while at the same time improving the flow of communication for all parties.

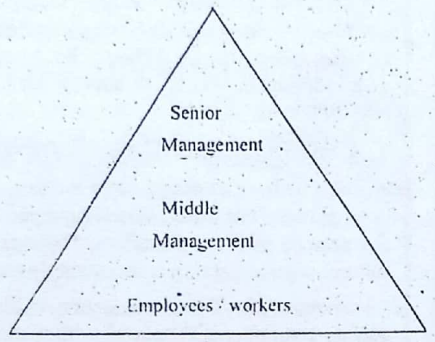

Figure 2.3 Traditional hierarchy

SUMMARY

Identify the important communication features of hierarchical structure. Tall organizations contain many layers of people and positions, making rapid communication more vertical and slower in nature. Flat organizations contain people who work at the same hierarchical levels communication is more free, flowing, direct, and rapid.

Differentiate between classical and humanistic organizational styles. Classical organizations conform to formalized rules and scientific training of workers. Humanistic organizations concentrate on people and their feelings as they do their work.

Describe how culture affects organizational communication. An organization's culture is composed of its values, language, artifacts, rites and rituals, and rules and norms. Strong cultures allow organizational members to understand the rules for communicating.

Explain how messages are exchanged in the organization (upward, downward, horizontal). The way that members of an organization communicate is determined largely by the organizational structure and organizational style of the organization. Downward messes travel from superiors to subordinates, whereas upward messages

are sent from subordinate to superiors. Upward messages provide information to management about what employees understand and how they feel about the organization. Horizontal, or lateral, communication refers, to message exchange among those at the same hierarchical level in an organization.

Describe the communicative importance of mentoring, sexual harassment, communication climate, and empowerment in organizations. Mentor-protégé relationships benefit and organization because the protégé develops faster and learns valuable skills necessary to perform well for the company, and teamwork is developed. Communication is at the heart of sexual harassment, and it is communication that helps to prevent such behavior. An open communication climate allows for a better exchange of information in the organization. Empowerment moves decision making, authority, and responsibility to all employees. Empowered employees are more comfortable communicating their plans and ideas to both colleagues and superiors.

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Chapter 3

COMMUNICATION ACROSS CULTURES & NON VERBAL

This Chapter covers

1. Cross-Cultural Communication – The New Norm
2. Understanding Cultural Diversity
3. Developing Awareness of Individual Cultures
4. Values, Beliefs, and Practices
5. Nonverbal Communication
   - Body Language
   - Eye Contact
   - Smiling
   - Gestures
   - Space
   - Touch
   - Spatial Arrangements
   - Time
6. Other Nonverbal Symbols
7. Oral Communication
   - Understatement and Exaggeration
   - Compliments
   - Silence
   - Voice Qualities
8. Writing to International Audiences
   - Learning More about International Business Communication

It's no secret that today's workplace is rapidly becoming vast, as the business environment expands to include various geographic locations and span numerous cultures. What can be difficult, however understands how to communicate effectively with individuals who speak another language, or who rely on different means to reach a common goal.

1. CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION – THE NEW NORM

The Internet and modern technology have opened up new marketplaces that allow us to promote our businesses to new geographic locations and cultures. And given that it can now be as easy to work with people remotely as it is to work face-to-face, cross-cultural communication is increasingly the new norm.

After all, if communication is electronic, it's as easy to work with someone in another country as it is to work with someone in the next town.

And why limit yourself to working with people within convenient driving distance when, just as conveniently, you can work with the most knowledgeable people in the entire world?

For those of us who are native English-speakers, it is fortunate that English seems to be the language that people use if they want to reach the widest possible audience. However, even for native English speakers, cross-cultural communication can be an issue: Just witness the mutual incomprehension that can sometimes arise between people from different English-speaking countries.

In this new world, good cross-cultural communication is a must.

Tip: This is just one of our many resources on working effectively in different cultures. See our Understanding Culture and Managing around the World sections for more on working with people from different cultures and backgrounds.

2. UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Given different cultural contexts, this brings new communication challenges to the workplace. Even when employees located in different locations or offices speak the same language (for instance, correspondences between English-speakers in the U.S. and English-speakers in the UK), there are some cultural differences that should be considered in an effort to optimize communications between the two parties.

In such cases, an effective communication strategy begins with the understanding that the sender of the message and the receiver of the message are from different cultures and backgrounds. Of course, this introduces a certain amount of uncertainty, makin communications even more complex.

Without getting into cultures and sub-cultures, it is perhaps most important for people to realize that a basic understanding of cultural diversity is the key to effective cross-cultural communications. Without necessarily studying individual cultures and

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languages in detail, we must all learn how to better communicate with individuals and groups whose first language, or language of choice, does not match our own.

3. DEVELOPING AWARENESS OF INDIVIDUAL CULTURES

However, some learning the basics about culture and at least something about the language of communication in different countries is important. This is necessary even for the basic level of understanding required to engage in appropriate greetings and physical contact, which can be a tricky area inter-culturally. For instance, kissing a business associate is not considered an appropriate business practice in the U.S., but in Paris, one peck on each cheek is an acceptable greeting. And, the firm handshake that is widely accepted in the U.S. is not recognized in all other cultures.

While many companies now offer training in the different cultures where the company conducts business, it is important that employees communicating across cultures practice patience and work to increase their knowledge and understanding of these cultures. This requires the ability to see that a person's own behaviors and reactions are oftentimes culturally driven and that while they may not match our own, they are culturally appropriate.

If a leader or manager of a team that is working across cultures or incorporates individuals who speak different languages, practice different religions, or are members of a society that requires a new understanding, he or she needs to work to convey this.

Consider any special needs the individuals on your team may have. For instance, they may observe different holidays, or even have different hours of operation. Be mindful of time zone differences and work to keep everyone involved aware and respectful of such differences.

Generally speaking, patience, courtesy and a bit of curiosity go a long way. And, if you are unsure of any differences that may exist, simply ask team members. Again, this may best be done in a one-on-one setting so that no one feels "put on the spot" or self conscious, perhaps even embarrassed, about discussing their own needs or differences or needs.

- **DEMAND TOLERANCE**

Next, cultivate and demand understanding and tolerance. In doing this, a little education will usually do the trick. Explain to team members that the part of the team that works out of the Australia office, for example, will be working in a different time zone, so electronic communications and/or return phone calls will experience a delay. And, members of the India office will also observe different holidays (such as Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday, observed on October 2).

Most people will appreciate the information and will work hard to understand different needs and different means used to reach common goals. However, when this is not the case, lead by example and make it clear that you expect to be followed down a path of open-mindedness, acceptance and tolerance.

Tip: Tolerance is essential. However, you need to maintain standards of acceptable behavior. The following "rules of thumb" seem universal:

Team members should contribute to and not hinder the team's mission or harm the delivery to the team's customer.

Team members should not damage the cohesion of the team or prevent it from becoming more effective.

Team members should not unnecessarily harm the interests of other team members.

Other factors (such as national law) are obviously important.

When dealing with people in a different culture, courtesy and goodwill can also go a long way in ensuring successful communication. Again, this should be insisted on.

If your starting point in solving problems is to assume that communication has failed, you'll find that many problems are quickly resolved.

- **KEEP IT SIMPLE**

When you communicate, keep in mind that even though English is considered the international language of business, it is a mistake to assume that every businessperson speaks good English. In fact, only about half of the 800 million people who speak English learned it as a first language. And, those who speak it as a second language are often more limited than native speakers.

When you communicate cross-culturally, make particular efforts to keeping your communication clear, simple and unambiguous.

And (sadly) avoid humor until you know that the person you're communicating with "gets it" and isn't offended by it. Humor is notoriously culture-specific: Many things that pass for humor in one culture can be seen as grossly offensive in another.

- **AND GET HELP IF YOU NEED IT**

Finally, if language barriers present themselves, it may be in every one's best interest to employ a reliable, experienced translator.

Because English is not the first language of many international businesspeople, their use of the language may be peppered with culture-specific or non-standard English phrases, which can hamper the communication process. Again, having a translator on hand (even if just during the initial phases of work) may be the best solution here. The translator can help everyone involved to recognize cultural and communication differences and ensure that all parties, regardless of geographic location and background, come together and stay together through successful project completion.

4. VALUES, BELIEFS, AND PRACTICES

Values and beliefs, often unconscious, affect our response to people and situations. Most North Americans, for example, value "fairness." "You're not playing fair" is a sharp criticism calling for changed behavior. In some countries, however,

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people expect certain groups to receive preferential treatment. Most North Americans accept competition and believe that it produces better performance. The Japanese, however. believe that competition leads to disharmony. Us business people believe that success is based on individual achievement and is open to anyone who excels. In England and in France, success is more obviously linked to social class. And in some countries, people of some castes or races are prohibited by law from full participation in society.

Many people in the united state value individualism. Other countries may value the group. In traditional classrooms, US students are expected to complete assignments alone, if they get much help from anyone else, they're "cheating". In Japan, in contrast, groups routinely work together to solve problems. In US work culture, quiet is a sign that people are working. In Japan people talk to get the work done.

Values and beliefs are influenced by religion. Christianity coexists with a view of the individual as proactive. In some Muslim and Asian countries, however, it is seen as presumptuous to predict the future by promising action by a certain date. The protestant work ethic legitimized wealth by seeing it as a sign of divine favor. In other Christian cultures, a simpler lifestyle is considered to be closer to God.

Religion affects what foods may be eaten and on what days businesses are open. For example, Hindus do not eat beef; Muslims consider pork unclean, orthodox Jews eat only kosher meats. In many Muslim countries, Friday, a day of Prayer, is an official holiday. During the ninth month of the Muslim lunar calendar, a devout Muslim may be on a pilgrimage to Mecca. An ordinary business day may be a holiday in the country you're visiting.

Even everyday practices differ from culture to culture. North Americas and Europeans put the Family name last, Asians put in first. North American and Europeans printing moves from top to bottom and from left to right. Arabic reads from right to left, but still from top to bottom. An American carpenter pushes a saw, Japanese pulls it. Light switches and door knobs turn opposite ways in Japan and in the United States.

The living and working in another country require being sensitive to religious beliefs and practices. Here, thousands of Muslims in Pakistan & India gather to attend a prayer service marking the last day of Islam's holy month of Ramadan.

5. NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Nonverbal communication- communication that doesn't use words-takes place all the time. Smiles, frowns, who sits where at a meeting, the size of an office, how long someone keeps a visitor waiting-all these communication pleasure or anger, friendliness or distance, power and status. Most of the time we are no more conscious of interpreting nonverbal signals than we are conscious of breathing.

Yet nonverbal signals can be misinterpreted just as easily as can verbal symbols (words). And the misunderstandings can be harder to clear up because people may not be aware f the nonverbal cues that let them to assume that they aren't liked, respected, r approved. An Arab student assumed that his US roommate disliked him intensely because the US student sat around the room with his feet up on the furniture, soles toward the Arab roommate. Arab culture sees the foot in general and the sole in particular as unclean; showing the sole of the foot is an insult.

Learning about nonverbal language can help us project the image we want to present and make us more aware of the signals we are interpreting. However, even within a single culture, a nonverbal symbol may have more than on meaning.

- **BODY LANGUAGE**

The Japanese value the ability to sit quietly. They may see the US tendency to fidget and shift as an indication of lack of mental or spiritual balance. Even in North America, interviewers and audiences usually respond negatively to nervous gestures such as fidgeting with a tie or hair or jewelry, tapping a pencil, or swinging a foot.

People from different cultures learn to walk differently. Carmen Judith Nine Curt observes that Caribbean people move the torso as thought it was made up of separable parts, while North American Anglos and Northern Spaniards carry the torso as if it were one piece. People from one culture of ten react negatively to another culture's walk. The French see the American walk as "uncivilized" Anglo Americans sometimes see the way African American men walk as threatening, although there is no evidence that the walk carry such meanings in the cultures where people have learned them.

- **EYE CONTACT**

North American whites see eye contact as a sign of honesty. But in many cultures, dropped eyes are a sign of appropriate deference to a superior. Puerto Rican children are taught not to meet the eyes of adults. The Japanese are taught to look at the neck in Korea, prolonged eye contact is considered rude. The lower ranking person is expected to look down firs.

Arab men in laboratory experiments looked at each other more than did two American men or two Englishmen. Eye contact is so important that Arabs dislike talking to someone wearing dark glasses or while walking side by side. It is considered impolite not to face someone directly. In Muslim countries, women and men are not supposed to have eye contact.

These differences can lead to miscommunication in the multicultural work place. Superiors may feel that subordinates are being disrespectful when the subordinate is being fully respectful-according to the norms of his or her culture.

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- **SMILING**

In the United States, smiling varies from region to region. Thirty years ago, Ray Birdwhistell found that "middle-class individuals" from Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois smiled more than did people from Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine, who is turn smiled more than did western Ney Yorkers. People from cities in southern and Border States-Atlanta, Louisville, Memphis, and Nashville-smiled most of all. Some scholars speculate that northeasterners may distrust the sincerity of southerners who smile a lot (like former president Jimmy Carter). Students from other countries who come to US universities may be disconcerted by the American tendency to smile at strangers-until they realize that the smiles don't "mean" anything. In Germany, smiles are reserved form friends. The Japanese smile not only when they are pleased or amused but also to say "That's none of your business" and to cover embarrassment, sadness, and even anger.

The Japanese learn o control their emotions. In situations of strong emotion, it is considered acceptable to smile or laugh, but not to frown or cry. In some US businesses, it is considered acceptable to frown, sear, and well, but not to cry. Yet both "anger" and "crying" may be expression of the same emotion frustration at not getting what we want.

- **GESTURES**

Americans Sometimes assumes that they can depend on gestures to communicate if language fails. But Birdwhistell reported that "although we have been searching for 15 years [1950-65], we have found no gesture or body motion which has the same meaning in all societies." In Bulgaria, for example, people may nod their heads to signify no and shake their heads to signify yes.

Gestures that mean approval in the United States may have very different meanings in other countries. The "thumbs up" sign, which means "good work" or "go ahead" in the United States ad most of Western Europe, is a vulgar insult in Greece. The circle formed with the thumb and first finer that means Ok in the Unites States is obscene in Southern Italy and can mean "you're worth nothing" in France and Belgium.

In the question period after a lecture, a man asked the speaker, a Puerto Rican professor, if shaking the hands up and down in front of the chest, as though shaking off water, was "a sign of mental retardation". The professor was horrified in her culture, the gesture meant "excitement, intense thrill." Studies have found that Spanish-speaking doctors rate the mental abilities of Latino patients much higher than do English-speaking doctors. The language barrier is surely part of the misevaluation of English-speaking doctors. Cultural difference in gestures may contribute to the

misevaluation. Similarly, Anglo supervisors in the workplace may underestimate the abilities of Hispanics because gestures differ in the two cultures.

- **SPACE**

Personal space is the distance someone wants between himself or herself and other people in ordinary, non intimate interchanges. Observation and limited experimentation show that most North Americans, North Europeans, and Asians want a bigger personal space than do Latin Americans, French, Italians, and Arabs. People who prefer lots of personal space are often forced to accept close contact on a crowded elevator or subway.

Even with in a culture, some people like more personal space than do others. One S study found that men took more personal space than women did. In many cultures, people who are of the same age and sex take less personal space than do mixed-age or mixed-sex groups. Latin Americans will stand closer to people of the same sex than North Americans would, but North Americans stand closer to people of the opposite sex. Similarly, Laotians of the same gender sit very close together, almost "on top of each other" according to the space norms of the United States. But people of the opposite gender sit a distance from each other.

- **TOUCH**

Repeated studies have shown that babies need to be touched to grow and thrive and that older people are healthier both mentally and physically if they are touched. But some people are more comfortable with touch than others. Each kind of person may misinterpret the other. A person who dislikes touch may see unfriendly to someone who's used to touching. A touchier may seem overly familiar to someone who dislikes touch. Studies in the United State have shown that touch s interpreted as power, more powerful people touch less powerful people. When the touchier had higher status than the recipient, both men and women liked being touched.

People who don't know each other well may feel more comfortable with each other if a piece of furniture separates them. For example, a group may work better sitting around a table than just sitting in a circle. In North America, a person sitting at the head of a table is generally assumed to be the group's leader. However, one experiment showed that when a woman sat at the head of mixed-sex group, observers assumed that one of the men in the group was the leader.

Lecterns and desks can be used as barricades to protect oneself from other people. One professor normally walked among his students as he lectured. But it before answering it.

- **SPATIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

In the United States, the size, placement, and privacy of one's office connote status. Large corner offices have the highest status. An individual office with a door that closes connotes more status than a desk in a common area. Japanese firms,

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however, see private offices as "inappropriate and inefficient" reports Robert Christopher. Only the very highest executive and directors have private offices in the traditional Japanese company, and even they will also have desks in the common areas.

- **TIME**

Differences in time zones complicate international phone calls, but even more important are different views of time and attitudes toward time.

Organizations in the United States-businesses, Government, and schools keep time by the calendar and the clock. Being "on time" is seen as a sign of dependability. Other cultures may keep time by the seasons and the moon, the sun, internal "body clocks" or a personal feeling that "the time is right".

North Americans who believe that "time is money" are often frustrated in negotiations with people who take a much more leisurely approach. Part of the problem is that people in many other cultures want to establish a personal relationship before they decide whether to do business with each other

The problem is made worse because various cultures mentally measure time differently. Many North Americans measure time in five minute blocks. Someone whose five minutes late to an appointment or a job interview feels compelled to apologize. If the executive or interviewer is running half an hour late, the caller expects to be told about the likely delay upon arriving. Some people won't be able to wait that long and will need to reschedule their appointment. But in other cultures, 15 minutes or half an hour may be the smallest block of time. To someone who mentally measures time in 15-minute blocks, being 45 minutes late is no worse than being 15 minutes late is to someone who is conscious of smaller units.

Edward T. Hall points out those different cultures have different lead times. In some countries, you need to schedule important meetings at least two weeks in advance. In other countries, not only are people not booked up so far in advance, but a date two weeks into the future may be forgotten. He advises scheduling appointment only three or four days in advance in Arab countries.

Hall also distinguishes between monochrome cultures, which focus on clock time, and polychromic cultures, which focus on relationship. When US managers feel offended because a Latin American manager also sees other people during "their" appointments, the two kinds of time are in conflict.

According to some scholars, Europeans schedule fewer events in a comparable period of time than do North Americans. Perhaps as a result, Germans and German Swiss see North Americans as too time-conscious.

6. OTHER NONVERBAL SYMBOLS

Many other symbols can carry nonverbal meanings, clothing, colors, age and height, to name a few. In North America, certain styles and colors of clothing are

considered more "professional" and more "credible." In Japan, clothing denotes not only status but also occupational group. Students wear uniforms. Company badges indicate rank within the organization. Workers wear different clothes when they are on strike than they do when they are working.

Colors can also carry meanings in a culture. In the United States, Mourners wear black to funerals, while brides wear white. In Japan, white is the color of death. Purple flowers are given to the dead in Mexico. In Korea, red ink is used to record deaths but nerve to write about living people. In the United States, the first place winner gets a blue ribbon. In the United Kingdom, the first-place ribbon is usually red.

Height connotes status in many parts of the world. Executive offices are usually on the top floors, the underlings work below. Even being tall can help a person succeed. Studies have shown that employers are more willing to hire men over 6 feet tall than shorter men with the same credentials. Studies of real world executives and graduates have shown that taller men make more money. In one study, every extra inch of height brought in an extra $1,300 a year. But being too big can be a disadvantage. A tall, brawny football player complained that people found him intimidating off the field and assumed that he "had the brains of a Twinkle".

7. ORAL COMMUNICATION

Effective oral communication requires cultural understanding. As Figure 3.1 shows, the purpose of and information exchanged in business introductions differs across cultures.

Learning at least a little of the language of the country here you hope to do business will help you in several ways. First, learning the language will give you at least a glimpse into the culture. In English, for example, we say that a dock "runs." The French say "Il marche," literally, "It is walking." Second, learning some of the language will help you manage the daily necessities of finding food and getting where you need to go while you're there. If you know enough, you'll even be able to sightsee and take advantage of the unique opportunities business travel can provide. Finally, in business negotiations, knowing a little of the language gives you more time to think. You'll catch part of the meaning when you hear your counterpart speak you can begin thinking even before the translation begins.

Figure 3.1 Cultural Contrasts in Business Introductions

	United States	Japan	Arab Countries
Purpose of introduction	Establish status and job identity, network	Establish position in group, build harmony	Establish personal rapport
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individual Information language	Independent Related to business Informal, friendly, use of first name Values openness, directness, action	Member of group Related to company Little talking Harmony, respect, listening	Part of rich culture Personal Formal expression of admiration Religious harmony hospitality, emotional support

If at all possible, take your own translator when you travel abroad on business. Brief him or her with the technical terms you'll be using, explain as much of the context of your negotiations as possible. A good translator can also help you interpret nonverbal behavior and negotiating strategies.

- **UNDERSTATEMENT AND EXAGGERATION**

To understand someone from another culture, you must understand the speaker's conversational style. The British have a reputation for understatement. Someone good enough to play at Wimbledon may say he or she "plays a little tennis".

Many people in the United States exaggerate. An American businessman negotiating with a German said, "I know it's impossible, but can we do it? The impossible cannot be done. The American saw "impossible" as merely a strong way of saying "difficult" and assumed that with enough resources and commitment, the job could in fact be done

- **COMPLIMENTS**

The kinds of statements that people interpret as compliments and the socially correct ways to respond to compliments also vary among cultures. The statement "you must be really tired" is a compliment in Japan since it recognized the other person has worked hard. The correct response is "Thank you, but I'm OK." An American who is complimented on giving a good oral presentation will probably say "Thanks you." Japanese, in contrast, will apologize "No, it wasn't very good".

Statements that seem complimentary in one context may be inappropriate in another. For example, women in business are usually uncomfortable if male colleagues or superiors compliment them on their appearance the comments suggest that the women are being treated as visual decoration rather than as contributing workers.

- **SILENCE**

Silence also has different meanings in different cultures and subcultures. Muriel Saville-Troike reports that during a period of military tension, Greek traffic controllers responded with silence when Egyptian planes requested permission to land. The Greeks intended silence as a refusal the Egyptians interpreted silence as consent. Several people were killed when the Greeks fired on the planes as they approached the runway..

- **VOICE QUALITIES**

Tone of voice refers to the rising or falling inflection that tells you whether a group of words is a question or a statement, whether the speaker is uncertain or confident, whether a statement is a sincere or sarcastic. Anyone who has written dialog with adverbs (" he said thoughtfully") has tried to indicate tone of voice.

When tone of voice and the meaning of words conflict, people "believe" the tone of voice. Jann Davis reports that one person responded to friends' "How are you?" with the word "Dying, and you?". Most of the friends responded "Fine." Because the tone of voice was cheerful, they didn't hear the content of the words.

Pitch measures whether a voice uses sounds that are low (like the bass notes on a piano) or high. Low-pitched voices are usually perceived as being more authoritative, sexier, and more pleasant to listen to than are high-pitched voices. Most voices go up in pitch when the speaker is angry or excited some people raise pitch when they increase volume. Women whose normal speaking voices are high may need to practice projecting their voices to avoid becoming shrill when thy peak to large groups.

Stress is the emphasis given to one or more words in a sentence. As the following example shows, emphasizing different words can change the meaning.

I'll give you a raise.

[Implication, depending on pitch and speed "Another supervisor wouldn't or " "I have the power to determine your salary."]

I'll give you a raise.

[Implication, depending on pitches and speed "you haven't earned it" or "OK, all right, you win. I'm saying 'yes' to get rid of you, but I don't really agree," Or "I've just this instant decided that you deserve a raise."]

I'll give you a raise.

[Implication "But nobody else in this department is getting one."]

I'll give you a raise.

[Implication "But just one."]

I'll give you a raise.

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[Implication "But you won't get the promotion or anything else you want."]

I'll give you a raise.

[Implication "you deserve it."]

I'll give you a raise!

[Implication "I've just this minute decide to act, and I'm excited about this idea. The raise wills pleas both of us."]

Speakers who use many changes in tone, pitch and stress as they speak usually seem more enthusiastic, often they also seem more energetic and more intelligent. Someone who speaks in a monotone may seem apathetic or unintelligent. Nonnative speakers whose first language does not use tone, pitch, and stress to convey meaning and attitude may need to practice varying these voice qualities when they give presentations in the United States.

Volume is a measure of loudness of softness. Very soft voices, especially if they are also breathy a high-pitched, give the impression of youth and inexperience. People who do a lot of speaking to large groups need to practice projecting their voices so they can increase their volume without shouting.

In some cultures, it is considered rude to shout loud voices connote anger ad imminent violence. In others, everyday conversations are loud.

8. WRITING TO INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCES

Most cultures are more formal than the United States. When you write to international audiences, use titles, not first names avoid contractions, slang, and sports metaphors. Do write in English unless you're extremely fluent in your reader's language.

Maria Sweezey, a manger at Digital Equipment Corporation, offers the following advice for sending e-mail to Japanese recipients.

1. Be clear but be adult. Don't write in second-grade English.
2. Use complete sentence
3. Write "Dear Last name-san" to begin your e-mail Dear Abo-san use form of address for both men and women. Also use this form to refer to your peers in a formal memo, such as a memo to that person's manager.
4. Tell your peers how to address you. Peers in Japan may write to you "Dear Smith-san" or "Dear Ellen-san." You may wish to invite them to call you by your first name. (The first time you correspond, let them know if you are a man or a woman so they know whether to use "Mr" or "Ms" when they address you formally.)
5. Be honest, friendly, and relaxed.

The patterns of organization that work for North American audiences may need to be modified in international correspondence. For most cultures, buffer negative messages and make requests more indirect. As figures 3.2 and 3.3 suggest, they style, structure, and strategies that would motivate a US audience may need to be changed for international readers. Make a special effort to avoid phrases that could seem cold and uncaring. Cultural mistakes made orally float away on the air those made in writing are permanently recorded.

Business people from Europe and Japan who correspond frequently with North American are beginning to adopt US directness and patterns of organization. If you know that your reader understands North American behavior, you can write just as you would to someone in the United States or Canada. If you don't know your reader well, it may be safer to modify your message slightly.

If you're faxing the message, use at least 12-point type. If the transmission has static or if your message is re-faxed to another reader, the larger type will make it easier to read.

In international business correspondence, list they day before the month

Not: April 8, 2000

But: 8 April 2000

Spell out the month to avoid confusion. A US professor wrote to the British library to reserve the books he would need for his visit on April 10th. However, he wrote "%" and the British assumed he wanted them on October 4th.

Figure 3.2 Cultural Contrasts in Written Persuasive Documents

	United States	Japan	Arab Countries
Opening	Request action or get reader's attention	Offer thanks apologize	Offer personal greetings
Way to persuade	Immediate gain or loss of opportunity	Waiting Modestly, minimize own standing	Personal connections, future opportunity
Style Closing	Shot sentences	Desire to maintain harmony	Elaborate expressions man, signatures Future relationship.
Values	Specific request Efficiency directness action	Politeness indirectness relationship	personal greeting Status Continuation

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Figure 3.3 Cultural Contrasts in Motivation

	United States	Japan	Arab Countries
Emotional appeal	Opportunity	Group participation company success	Religion nationalism admiration
Recognition based on	Individual achievement	Group achievement	Individual Status status of class/ society
Threats	Loss of job	Loss of group membership	Demotion, loss of reputation
Values	Competition risk taking freedom	Group harmony belonging	Reputation family security religion

- **LEARNING MORE ABOUT INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

Learning to communication with people from different background shouldn't be a matter of learning rules. Instead, use the examples in this chapter to get a sense for the kinds of factors that differ from one culture to another. Test these generalizations against your experience. And when in doubt, ask.

Chapter 4

COMMUNICATION STYLES

This Chapter covers

1. The Communication Styles Matrix
2. Direct Communication Style
3. Spirited Communication Style
4. Systematic Communication Style
5. Considerate Communication Style

- Examples of Communication for Each Style
- Direct Style
- Spirited Style
- Systematic Style
- Considerate Style

Each one of us has a style of communicating that is unique. Some of us are talkative and extroverted while others are quiet and reserved. Some of us are outspoken while others are less likely to share their opinions in public. Still others of us are formal and direct whil others are informal and like to take our time getting to the main point. So how do these different styles of communication impact us in the workplace?

> Communication style refers to the choices we tend to make when communicating to others. It involves two basic dimensions: the assertiveness level of our communication and the emotiveness level of our communication. We also use different styles depending on with whom we are communicating.
>
> Differences in communication style can lead to barriers in communication success.

When you work with someone who has a decidedly different communication style from

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your own, that difference can act as one of the barriers to effective communication. You may feel that someone is being aloof and cold while they feel that they are being quick and business-like. Or you might feel that someone is being too analytical and detailed, while they feel that you aren't recognizing the importance of the small things that can make a big difference.

There is a way to overcome these differences, however. It involves learning the basic characteristics of the different communication styles and how they influence the context in which your communication is happening. If you can learn to understand the other person's communication style and how it is manifesting itself in the way they communicate, you are learning your audience and what they need in order to understand your message. You can then encode your message in a way that they will be more likely to be able to decode it, thereby increasing the chance that your message will be delivered successfully.

To put it another way, imagine that you are in a foreign country. You can stumble about, using your own words for things and trying to communicate, with the result being that one or both parties may become frustrated - and with very little chance that you will get the result that you want.

But if you can speak the language of the person you want to speak with, suddenly you can communicate. You can ask for what you need, give them the information they need, and hopefully achieve the result that is the original aim of your message. When you employ this communication tool, you simply make the choice to communicate to your audience in their 'native tongue.'

So how do you start? You begin by studying the four basic communication styles and how they relate to each other. You identify your own personal communication style and what particular barriers you might face when communicating with the other styles. Then you learn some simple tools you can use to enhance your communication with others, no matter what communication style they are.

1. THE COMMUNICATION STYLES MATRIX

There are many different models that describe the ways in which we communicate. But one very useful model is based on the work of Dr. Eileen Russo. Her matrix is displayed in Figure 8 below. It shows that there are two different dimensions in communication styles: the level of expressiveness and the level of assertiveness.

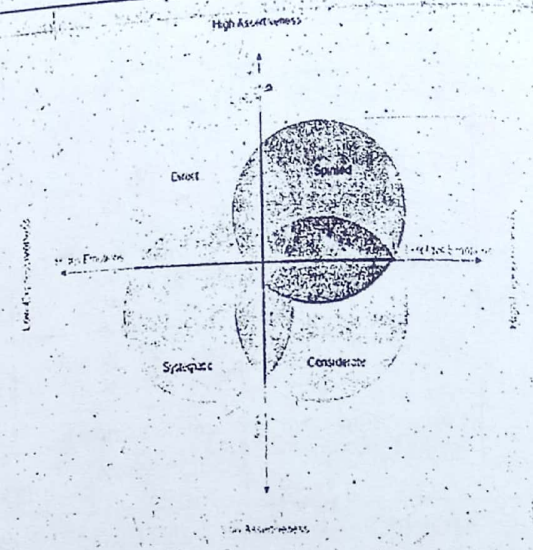

Figure: The Communication Styles Matrix

Each quadrant in Figure 8 represents a different communication style. People can fall anywhere within each quadrant, becoming more uniformly one style over the others as they move further from the center.

> The assertive communication styles tell others what to do while the less assertive styles ask others what should be done.
>
> The more expressive styles show emotion while the less expressive styles refrain from showing it.

Notice that the more assertive communication styles tend to 'tell' others what to do. The less assertive communication styles tend to 'ask' others what should be done. The more expressive communication styles tend to show their emotions in their face, speech, and tone. The less expressive styles will either not express their emotions or will work to hide them. The resulting four basic communication styles are shown in Figure 9. In the following sections, we'll look at the basic characteristics of each communication styles and some things you can do to help you communication well with each type.

Low Expressiveness + Low Assertiveness = Systematic

Low Expressiveness + High Assertiveness = Direct

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High Expressiveness + High Assertiveness = Spirited

High Expressiveness + Low Assertiveness = Considerate

Figure: The Four Basic Communication Styles

2. DIRECT COMMUNICATION STYLE

As indicated in the communication style matrix, people with the direct communication style are highly assertive and not expressive. They tend to tell others what to do instead of asking others what they think should be done, and they will not easily show emotions in their communications with others. Their communication style is meant to be expedient, though others may not always see it that way. They may appear terse and cold to others, who might take their style of communicating personally.

> People with direct communication styles are the 'go-getters' in the group. They will work hard and fast and will brook few questions or distractions.
>
> These people need to use caution to avoid appearing dictatorial or cold.
>
> If you are a direct style, you could probably use some practice with listening skills.

Direct communicators will try to tell you as little as possible before moving on to the next topic - not because they are trying to be evasive, but because they are trying to save time. They won't always stop to listen to others, even if the others have something valuable to contribute. They may seem impatient and overbearing at times, but it's not meant to be personal. They are attempting to focus on results rather than emotions. They will speak their minds, even if it could be off-putting to others. Don't expect them to talk about their personal lives - they like to keep business and personal issues separate. They don't back down from conflict, and at times could be seen as being aggressive rather than assertive in the way that they express their opinions. Figure 10 gives tips for you if you are a direct style, while Figure 11 gives you tips for working with others who are the direct style.

Tips for Communicating if You Have a Direct Communication Style

- Make an effort to listen fully to others and avoid interrupting
- Allow time for 'chatting' at the beginning of a meeting
- Recognize that others may feel the need to express their emotions about topics
- Recognize that brainstorming can be helpful and not just a 'time waster'
- Try to communicate your expectations for how a meeting will go - the length of time,

the topics to be covered, and the expected results - before a meeting occurs
- Take the time to show your appreciation for others' contributions
- Don't use email for sensitive or complicated topics
- Allow time in your schedule for questions and feedback

Figure: Tips for Communicating if You Have a Direct Communication Style

Tips for Communicating with People with a Direct Communication Style

- Ask if they have time to talk before jumping in
- Get to the point quickly - don't bore them with lots of background information
- Limit 'chatting' or conversation that is off-topic
- Use short, direct sentences
- Ask for a specific call to action or make a specific request
- Do not speak in the abstract
- Only promise what you are certain you can deliver
- Don't give or ask for information about personal issues unless they initiate it
- Don't sugar coat things - speak plainly

Figure: Tips for Communicating with People Who Have a Direct Communication Style

3. SPIRITED COMMUNICATION STYLE

People with the spirited communication style are very interested in the 'big picture'. They are the dreamers, the inventors, and the innovators in the group. Their communication may be full of grand ideas and hyperboles that tend to be very persuasive to others at first.

> People with the spirited communication style love to flesh out ideas, brainstorm, and talk about the big picture - as long as they get to do a lot of the talking!
>
> Spirited people can have a hard time nailing down the details in their wonderful ideas. They may also have a hard time sticking to an agenda or to one topic.

However, they are not always very good at discussing the details or the exact steps in the process. They will tend to go off on tangents in their conversations, and like to interject anecdotes into their dialogues in order to demonstrate or drive home a point.

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(4) COMMUNICATION STYLES

Keeping to an agenda is sometimes a challenge for those with the spirited communication style since both time management and remaining focused are challenges for this group. Their written or verbal communication may tend towards the dramatic. While they can be very entertaining, getting them to communicate clearly on specific topics may take the assistance of someone else to guide them through a conversation and keep them on track by bringing them back to the subject at hand. See Figures 12 and 13 for tips on communicating as or with a person with a spirited communication style.

Tips for Communicating if You Have a Spirited Communication Style

- When considering new ideas to share, also consider whether or not you have suggestions on how to put those ideas into action
- Respect agreed-upon agendas and time limits when in meetings
- Try to limit your sharing of personal anecdotes that take the group off-topic
- Make sure you are allowing others to contribute their ideas and suggestions - and that you are listening
- Be certain any requests you make are clear and that you convey the reason for asking
- Communicate your appreciation for others' work and input

Figure: Tips for Communicating if You Have a Spirited Communication Style

Tips for Communicating with People Who Have a Spirited Communication Style

- Use an agenda with time limits listed for each topic
- Praise them in front of other people
- Learn to gently redirect the conversation back to the topic at hand
- Understand that they may exaggerate
- Challenge them to break down their 'big ideas' into specific outcomes and steps
- Reaffirm with them what they have agreed to do
- Use check-lists or other written reminders as a way to help communicate what needs to be done

Figure: Tips for Communicating With People Who Have a Spirited Personality Style

4. SYSTEMATIC COMMUNICATION STYLE

Those with a systematic communication style like to focus on facts and details rather than opinions and possibilities. Expect to use and appreciate logic when you communicate with a systematic. They will appreciate facts and analysis rather than the 'big picture' ideas that have not yet been proved useful.

> People with a systematic communication style will focus on facts over opinions. Communication with tangible evidence is best for systematic. They will likely be uncomfortable expressing feelings and will tend to avoid confrontation.

They may be slower to respond to your communication, as they are probably analyzing the situation and constructing a logical, well thought-out response. Charts, graphs and trends are all useful tools for communicating with systematic as well.

Those with a systematic communication style are uncomfortable with expressing their feelings about things and do not like conflict. They may tend to shut down communication rather than dealing with emotional or confrontational situations. If you give them directions, you will need to be very thorough and precise in relaying them.

The more information you can give them, the happier they will be - as long as the information is relevant to the current discussion or is relevant background information. Figures 14 and 15 give you tips for communicating if you have a systematic communication style or if you as speaking with someone with a systematic communication style.

Tips for Communicating if You Have a Systematic Communication Style

- Recognize that not everyone follows linear thought processes and decision-making
- Realize that for good working relationships, consideration for others' feelings is important
- Learn to ask qualifying questions that will help you get the information you need
- Ask others questions about themselves if you want to build rapport
- Make sure you understand the scope of a project so that you don't waste time collecting information that is not going to be needed
- If you need to ask for more time for analysis, be able to explain the benefit of the information you are working on

Figure: Tips for Communicating if You Have a Systematic Communication Style

Tips for Communicating with People with a Systematic Communication Style

- Focus on the facts of the situation rather than individuals' opinions
- Speak with precision and accuracy rather than generalizations
- Be organized, on time, and on topic when you communicate with them
- Give logical reasons for your actions and for what you ask of them

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- Allow them time for research and analysis before decision-making
- Avoid personal topics unless they open the conversation

Figure: Tips for Communicating with People Who Have a Systematic Communication Style

5. CONSIDERATE COMMUNICATION STYLE

Those with the considerate communication style are very concerned about the feelings of others. They want to please other people and to be included in their peer group. They like to work with others, help others, and connect to others on a personal level. If there is conflict in your group, they will be the ones to attempt to mediate it. They want everyone to have the chance to speak their minds, have their turns, and receive recognition for their contribution. They are natural trainers and counselors, and enjoy helping others to succeed. They will encourage group collaboration and communication, though they are not always inclined to speak their own minds.

> People with a considerate communication style will be very interested in listening and in finding out how you and others are doing. They will want everyone to have a chance to speak, but might refrain from expressing their own opinions if they think it will displease others.

This is the major communication challenge for those with the considerate personality style - they may be reluctant to share an opposing opinion, even if it's important information, because they are concerned about keeping the peace and being liked.

They are also inclined to take direct communication as a personal matter. It's difficult for them to separate other peoples' opinions about a topic from their opinions about them, and so may feel that an opposing opinion is due to not liking them. There is also the possibility that they will be talked into something in order to preserve the peace rather than standing their ground. Figure 16 offers tips for communicating if you have a considerate communication style, and Figure 17 does the same for communicating with a person who has a considerate communication style.

Tips for Communicating if You Have a Considerate Communication Style

- Recognize that other people's opinions about a topic are separate from their opinions about you
- Realize that not everyone is comfortable discussing personal topics with work colleagues; allow others to open personal topics before asking questions

- Respect your own opinion as you respect others' opinions
- Recognize that you don't have to be friends with everyone, but you should treat others and be treated professionally

Figure: Tips for Communicating if You Have a Considerate Communication Style

Tips for Communicating with People Who Have a Considerate Communication Style

- When possible, reassure them that your opinions are not personal
- Express a sincere interest in their feelings, thoughts, and personal life
- Encourage them to ask questions and share their opinions
- Let them know that you appreciate their help
- Resolve any conflicts quickly

Figure: Tips for Communicating with People with a Considerate Communication Style

- **EXAMPLES OF COMMUNICATION FOR EACH STYLE**

It will take some time and practice to learn exactly what will work in communicating with the people in your work group. Hopefully you recognized the people in your office in the descriptions of the different communication styles in the last section. If not, you can pay more attention to how they communicate with you as a sign of their main communication style. Remember too that not everyone fits neatly into a category; some people will bridge more than one style, depending on with whom they are communicating. You may need to do some experimenting to determine which communication style works best with them.

It will also take practice for you to become comfortable in altering your own communication style or methods in order to best communicate with others. You will still be inclined to your natural communication style, which is to be expected. It will also be easier to do at first when you have the time to think about your communication ahead of time, such as when writing an email. However, over time, you will find that you can adjust faster and employ the tools that you need without thinking it out ahead of time.

- **DIRECT STYLE**

When communicating with someone who has the direct communication style, the key is to get to the main point of your communication as soon as possible, and to do so in as efficient as manner as possible. The first example below shows the type of communication that will not work with someone who has a direct communication style. In this example, Jane is the one with the direct communication style.

What is the main point of the communication? What is the requested action? How much of the communication is superfluous information?

A person with a direct communication style will not necessarily glean what you want them to do or by when. They will appreciate the accolade, but they won't appreciate the personal references or information.

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(4) COMMUNICATION STYLES

See the difference? The first one does eventually get around to the point, but it is too personal-sounding and doesn't give a clear request for the direct person to respond to. The second one still communicates approval and makes a request, but it does so in a much clearer way. If it seems curt to you, don't worry -the direct style person will appreciate it. It's a perfectly professional communication and there is much less chance for misunderstanding.

- SPIRITED STYLE

When communicating with someone who is spirited, it might be hard to even pin them down for communication in the first place. And once you have their attention, keeping it is another matter entirely. You will find that consistency is important in communicating with people who are spirited. If you can get them used to a particular format or method of communication, it will be easier to keep them communicating. This doesn't mean always choosing email or always choosing telephone. But it does mean always using follow-up questions or checking in on a regular basis to see if you are both still on the same page.

Also remember that a person with a spirited style may need more time to brainstorm and discuss ideas than the other communication styles. If you want them to come to the table with decisions already made, be sure to get their buy-in beforehand. Otherwise they may still find the need to discuss something that you already felt was decided.

Finally, you can go a long way towards relationship-building with a spirited style person if you give them the opportunity to shine. Does your team need to make a presentation? Let the spirited person know that you think they would be a good choice to lead. Complimenting them in a public arena is a good choice as well. Here's an example of a good written communication to a spirited person.

Why would this communication work for a spirited person? It is enthusiastic, complimentary, and would be flattering to Sally. She will be pleased that you noticed her first presentation and more pleased that you would like her to repeat it.

Or course, you're sure to have a very excited person on your hands at lunch. So be prepared. You could bring an outline of the topics you want to cover at the presentation. Ask for her input and make sure you've planned enough time to let her give it. Then help her narrow the ideas down and note them down for her. Sending a follow-up email or note will help ensure that you are both on the same page as well. Remember, the spirited person is very valuable for all their talents and enthusiasm - so with a little structure around your communications you can be successful in communicating without stifling the very qualities they bring to the table.

- SYSTEMATIC STYLE

When you need to communicate with a person who has the systematic communication style, remember that facts are what to emphasize. Opinions are not going to be very effective. Use logical, linear thinking and communicate in the same way. Step them through your thinking - don't jump ahead of any steps. It will save you time in the long run if you take the time to explain your argument or thoughts through the first time.

If you need a systematic to make a decision, let data do the talking for you as much as possible. Have

charts? Know some trends? Have examples to show how something works? All of these can be useful in communicating with a systematic person. If you are attempting to encourage a systematic to support an idea that is not supported by the data, you will be in for a bit of a challenge. However, you can still get their help if you can logically explain your position.

Remember too that systematic types are not prone to sharing personal information with work colleagues. You shouldn't take this personally - it's simply what they prefer. Yet if they do broach a

personal subject with you, you can usually take it as a sign that they feel more comfortable with you than others.

The example of how not to communicate with a direct communication style person is a good example of how not to communicate with someone of a systematic style as well. You could also avoid phrases like:

It's my opinion that

I believe that…

I feel that…

Instead, try using phrases like:

The data shows that…

The trends show that…

The results of the test show…

The chart below gives more suggestions for language that will work better with systematics:

INSTEAD OF…	USE…
Some, many, the majority of	**20%, three out of five, an average of 2.7**
Next week	Thursday at 3:00 p.m.
ASAP	**By tomorrow at noon**
In a timely manner	Within two weeks
They	**Gail, Amy, and Wes**
In upward trend	An increase of 12% over five years
Eventually	**When the following conditions have been met:**

Figure: Suggestions for Language to Use with Systematic

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- CONSIDERATE STYLE

To best communicate with someone who is a considerate communication style, remember that the person's feelings are going to be important. They will listen best when you make them feel as if their feelings are important to you, their opinion is important to you, and that you value them as a team member and a contributor. This doesn't mean that you have to become very emotionally expressive yourself, but showing in interest in them as an individual will go a long way. Why not start your communication with an inquiry into how their child is doing, or how their last vacation was? The small investment of your time can have a great return.

If you have something to communicate that will perhaps be perceived as a critical, you will need to tread cautiously in order to be effective. Let the person know that you appreciate their work, and name the aspects that you find valuable and good. Then note the changes that need to be made, explaining the reason for the changes as much as you can. Smile, and use open body language to let them know that there is nothing personal in what is being said. Whenever possible, use requests instead of imperatives in discussing the needed changes.

For considerate style people, the example of used as how not to speak to a direct style person is actually a good one to use for a considerate style. It builds to the point easily, it shows care for the other person, and it makes a request in a friendly, personal manner.

Chapter 5

BASIC LISTENING SKILLS

This Chapter covers

1. Self-Awareness
2. Understanding and Committing to the listening process
3. Active Listening
4. Becoming an Active Listener
5. Paralanguages Types
6. Listening in Difficult Situations

Good listeners are rare these days. Studies have shown that most listeners retain less than 50% of what they hear. Imagine what that means when it comes to a conversation that you might have with your boss, a colleague, or a customer. If you speak for ten minutes, chances are that you have only heard about half of that conversation - and so have they. No wonder miscommunications happen so frequently. Yet listening is one of the most vital skills that you need if you want to communicate effectively.

Listening allows you to 'decode' the messages that you are receiving, but it also allows you to help others communicate better. When you aren't certain of the message that you have heard the first time, listening well allows you to ask the questions that will clarify the message.

Of course, listening is important in more arenas than in the work place. We listen for multiple reasons:

To build relationships

To understand others

To be entertained

To learn

To show empathy

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(5) BASIC LISTENING SKILLS

- To gather information

With as much as listening can do for us, it's obvious that we can all benefit from improving our listening skills. We can become more productive at work, more connected in our relationships, and more efficient in everything that we do. But listening also helps us to persuade and negotiate with others. It can help us avoid misunderstandings and can just make life more conflict-free in general. All of these are very good reasons for learning more about how to be a better listener.

1. SELF-AWARENESS

An important tool for becoming a good listener is becoming aware of your own behavior, feelings, and habits when listening. Do you know whether or not you are a good listener? Are you only a good listener in certain situations, like when listening to a friend who is upset? Or can you also listen in a tense situation when you have to communicate with someone who is angry, stressed, or expressing an opposing opinion to your own?

Take time to become aware of your own listening behavior in different scenarios. At work, at home, with friends, with strangers, or with other groups that you communicate with, notice the following:

- Your body language - how are you standing or sitting? Are you tense or relaxed? In an open position or a closed one?
- Do you make eye contact? Do you keep it? Or do you look away, look down, or turn your eyes to other people or things in your environment?
- Are you following every word? Could you repeat what was just said verbatim? Or is your mind wandering off to lunch, that email you need to write, or that phone call you just had?
- Are you planning what you will say in return?

All of these behaviors make it difficult to be a good listener. You may be sending the message to the speaker that their message is unimportant - or worse, that they are unimportant. As you practice better listening skills, you'll need to be able to recognize when you're straying back to these old behaviors. Being self-aware will let you self-correct and get better and better at listening to others.

2. UNDERSTANDING AND COMMITTING TO THE LISTENING PROCESS

Listening is a combination of what you hear, what you understand and what you remember. Listening includes hearing or receiving aural stimuli from the environment, connecting or processing the stimuli into meaningful messages, and storing messages for immediate at delayed retrieval. You listen at different levels depending, on the message, Blaine-Goes, professor and noted authority on listening describes the listening process as a function of three levels signal processing, literal processing, and reflective processing. (See Figure 5.1)

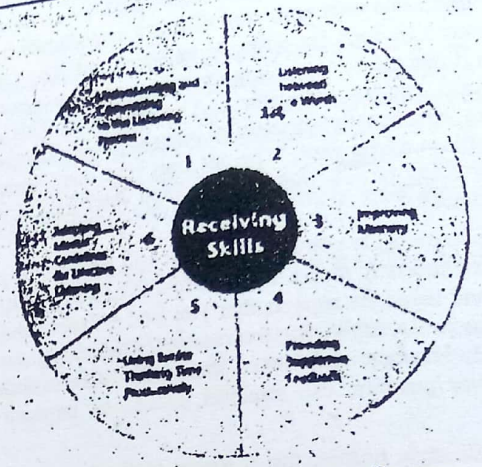

Figure: 5.1: Strategic Listening Process

Signal processing the most basic step in listening refers to processing and organizing the words of a message. Imagine meeting a client at a Thai restaurant and listening to the client and waiter discuss the menu in Thai. The discussion would more than likely sound like babble and you would have difficulty determining the logic of the words. Now imagine the same conversation in English you would have no problem understanding the discussion. Signal processing requires that you recognize the aural stimuli organization as language.

The literal processing of a message is the second level of the listening process. Literal processing involves decoding the denotative, or most basic, meaning of the massage. A simple request such as to close the door or water the plants, requires literal processing. Sometimes literal processing alone is not sufficient. Suppose that project manager asks his employees to burn the midnight oil until they complete a particular project. The manager's request might be misinterpreted by one employee to mean that he should stay up until midnight each night until the project finished; when actually the manager meant only that the team should work harder and more efficiently. An employee who is not very proficient in English might even believe that

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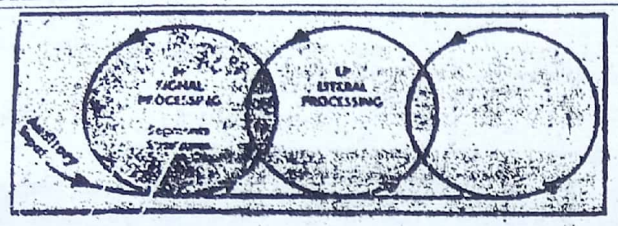

Figure 5.2 Model of Listening: Source: From "Listening as Information recessing" by Blaine Goss, Communication Quarterly, Vol. 80~ 1982, 'p. 805.

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ager wants the team to use an oil lamp. In this case, both employees are using only literal processing when the next level of listening; reflective processing is required.

Reflective processing requires listening for deeper meanings that are not readily reflected in the words. To do so, you need to understand the culture, environment, and personality in which the message originates: If the sender's culture, environment and personality are foreign to you listening between and beyond the words is difficult. In other words if we are unfamiliar with the environment we listen solely for the literal meaning of the spoken words. For example would you ask an employee who is unfamiliar with computer technology and has never used a computer to gather information for you .and your company about the latest innovations in computer software? While the employee might be very successful in customer relations, his' ability to reflectively process current computer software information might be difficult. Without a working knowledge base on computers and technology, the employee may feel overwhelmed and frustrated. The better you understand the sender and the environment, the more successful reflective processing is in helping you fully understand messages and their-meanings.

Good listeners are able to determine when reflective analysis is necessary and when it is not. Some messages require only the I first .two stages of listening

whereas others require the more time-consuming inquiry of reflective processing, The key to effective listening is to know the difference!

LISTENING BETWEEN THE WORDS

Effective listening requires more than listening to just the words. As President Bush so eloquently stated in the 1988 campaign, "Read my lips-no new taxes. The impact of the message was supported by his paralanguage or the way he said those six words. Later this statement caused Mr. Bush and his advisors much embarrassment when he broke his promise. Perhaps his critics and the voters would .not have remembered the original message so vividly if his paralanguage had-riot been 80 enforcing and memorable.

An effective listener does more than merely read lips or words. You must learn to listen for deeper meanings. Listeners' miss almost all of the emotional content of spoken messages when they fail to unravel the deeper meaning in what people say, paralanguage involves aspects of verbal communication that are unrelated to the words used: For example, suppose that after you have been working for weeks on a major project, your manager stops by your office and congratulates you on a job well done. You notice that her voice lacks enthusiasm .and excitement, and you begin to question her sincerity and genuine feelings. You wonder what your manager actually thought about the project. Tone of voice and loudness are some of the more obvious types of paralanguage but other less obvious elements of paralanguage exist. In this section, you will focus on identification of paralanguage types, stereotyping, and implications for business settings.

3. ACTIVE LISTENING

Becoming a better listener requires improving your active listening skills. What is meant by active listening skills? Most of us spend at least part of the time that we are listening waiting for the person to stop so that we can have our next turn. This is particularly true when a conversation is heated or when the information we are trying to convey is very important.

Active listening means being as attentive and involved in the conversation during the times that you are listening as when you are speaking. You must learn to be consciously attentive to the words that are being said, but in addition, to the whole message that the other person is attempting to relay to you. In order to do this you must pay close attention to the speaker.

This requires concentration and practice. It means being certain that you either eliminate or ignore the distractions surrounding you, and that you don't spend the whole time coming up with your response to what they are saying. This may sound difficult, but there are some simple tools you can use to make active listening a regular habit.

4. BECOMING AN ACTIVE LISTENER

There are five key aspects of becoming an active listener. You will probably already be employing some of them, but may need to practice others. However, once you are using these tools over time, you will find that they get easier and easier. Plus, you'll learn so much about others and have such better conversations that you will be positively reinforced each time you practice.

1. Pay close attention.

With this step, you learn to give the speaker your undivided attention. But you also let the speaker know that you are listening by using acknowledgements - types of verbal and non-verbal tools that help add proof that you are truly listening.

- Look the speaker in the eyes

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(5) BASIC LISTENING SKILLS

- Stop any mental chatter
- Don't start preparing your response or rebuttal while the other person is talking
- Make sure your environment doesn't distract you
- Notice the speaker's body language and tone of voice - what are the non-verbal messages telling you?
- If you are in a group, avoid side conversations

2. Demonstrate physically that you are listening.

Use non-verbal and verbal signals that you are listening to the speaker attentively.

- Nod from time to time, when appropriate
- Use appropriate facial expressions
- Monitor your own body language. Be sure you remain open and relaxed rather than closed and tense.
- Use small comments like uh-huh, yes, right.

3. Check for understanding.

As we learned in the last chapters, our personal experiences, our perceptions, and our feelings can all influence the way that we hear. It is possible for the message to get mistranslated or misinterpreted, so that we hear a message that was not intended. Before responding, it's important to check for understanding using these tools.

- Use reflecting and paraphrasing. Check that you heard the message correctly by saying things like "what I hear you saying is" or "If I'm hearing you correctly, you're saying" or "I think you're talking about".
- Ask questions that will help clarify the speaker's meaning. Suggestions include things like, "Can you tell me more about?" or "What did you mean when you said?" or "I think you're saying is that right?"
- Summarize what you've heard occasionally - don't wait until the end or you might not remember exactly what was said.

4. Don't interrupt!

There is nothing good that comes from interrupting the speaker. You will only be limiting your chance of understanding the message because you won't hear it all - and because the speaker will get frustrated!

5. Respond Appropriately.

When you are actively listening, you are showing your respect for the speaker, as well as gaining the information that you need to form your response. Once you have that information and have clarified it, it's time to form your reply. When expressing your thoughts:

- Be honest and open
- Be respectful
- Be thorough

Remember too that you are modeling excellent behavior for others when you use active listening. Don't be surprised to hear others start to use clarifying questions or reflecting phrases as well - which would be a good thing for everyone concerned!

5. PARALANGUAGE TYPES

Early researchers identified five types of paralanguage: voice set vocal qualities, local characteristics, vocal segregates, and vocal fillers. Here are the definitions, implications, and examples for each type of paralanguage.

Voice set refers to the personal characteristics of the speaker: height, weight, age, social status, and so on. For example, suppose you are a personnel recruiter at an ad agency. Your assistant brings in your next appointment, a candidate for an account executive position. When the candidate who is tall and heavyset, starts to speak, you are surprised that his voice is not as deep or deliberate as you had expected. His voice set violated your expectations: We expect tall, heavyset men to have deep, deliberate voices. When voice set expectations are violated, we often become curious, and suspicious of those who violate our expectations.

Vocal qualities refers to characteristics of speech such as pitch, tempo, volume, rhythm, and articulation. Managers and employees can better understand the personality, mood, or even disposition of others by paying attention to voice qualities: For example, when supervisors or employees speak more rapidly than normal, it could signal that they are excited about something. In everyday settings when people do not articulate clearly, it can be a sign of poor education, lack of interest in the topic, communication apprehension or possible physical problems.

Vocal characteristics refers to vocal sounds such as laughing, crying, snickering, whimpering, moaning, or yawning that convey meaning without the use of words. These vocal characteristics can express a state of mind a mood and even the emotional state of individuals. For example: during the presentation of a new product advertising slogan, Daniel Inka noted that his clients were yawning and snickering. Daniel interpreted the vocal characteristics of his clients to mean that they were unimpressed with his new slogan for their product. It came as no surprise when Daniel later learned that his clients had rejected his advertising slogan.

Because they tend to use vocal characterizations more frequently, women are sometimes characterized as more emotional than men. Male supervisors may avoid giving the same level and amount of constructive criticism to female and male

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employees, for fear of upsetting, the women and increasing vocal characteristics. As a result female employees often miss out on valuable input and mentoring necessary for

Vocal Quality	Stereotypes
Breathiness	1. Breathiness in male voices were described as young and artistic while breathiness in female voices were described as feminine, pretty, and petite.
Nasality	2. Nasal-sounding males and females were described as having unfavorable characteristics.
Throatiness	3. Throaty-sounding males were described as older and cantankerous, while throaty sounding females were described as less intelligent, more masculine, lazier, and ugly.
Pace	4. Males and females who talked rabidly, were perceived as being more animated and extroverted.
Variety	5. Males who used a variety of vocal pitches were described as more dynamic and feminine, whereas females using varying vocal pitches were perceived as dynamic and extroverted.

promotion.

Vocal segregates refers to vocal sounds that can substitute for words as in 'mm," "huh-uh" "sshhh," and "ummm. Although not part of the language system, focal segregates are usually readily understood by listeners and usually indicate informality; those using them are comfortable with one another Think about your usage of vocal segregates. You more than likely use vocal segregates when surrounded by individuals or groups with whom you feel secure and at ease such as friends, family, and other close associates.

Vocal fillers refers to vocalizations in which the speaker inadvertently breaks up his or her vocal pattern with non-language fillers (urn. ah, uh). Although some peoples use vocal fillers in much of their communication, for most people vocal fillers result from stress, emotional strain fatigue distraction, and boredom: An increase in vocal fillers used by managers clients, or employees may indicate one or more of these problems. For example, an advertising associate's statement, "I am, uh, quite hap-pleased with, urn, my performance, uh, on this, uh, public 'relations project" could be questioned as being unsure and unconvineing.

An increased amount of vocal fillers may result in a lack of trust between individual, which hinders the development of a productive working relationship and decreased

teamwork. Individuals may find themselves isolated form colleagues, which reduces opportunities for promotion and job satisfaction.

6. LISTENING IN DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Listening is particularly difficult when you are in a heated or emotionally charged situation. In order for your communication to be successful and productive, you may need to employ some additional tools in order to listen to others and to allow for the exchange of information despite your feelings. Some tips include:

- If possible, suggest that you move the discussion to a private location with no distractions.
- If tension is high, start by agreeing on what your goal of the discussion will be. Are you resolving a problem? Learning about what happened in a difficult situation? Deciding roles in an important project? Determining how to proceed in order to reach a deadline? Come up with a common goal that you can both agree to work towards and that you can both refer back to should the conversation go off-topic.
- If you need to, set ground rules. These could include agreeing that you won't bring up old events again, that you will keep personal comments out of the discussion, or that you will both keep your voices down.
- While listening, remind yourself of the active listening guidelines. Breathe slowly in and out in order to remain calm.
- If you can't seem to pay attention, try repeating to yourself in your mind every word that the other person says. Then you are 'hearing' the message twice and it has a better chance of getting through.

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Chapter 6

THE SEVEN CS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

This Chapter covers

1. Completeness
   - Provide All necessary Information
   - Answer All questions Asked
   - Give Something Extra, When Desirable
2. Conciseness
   - Include Only Relevant Material
   - Avoid unnecessary Repetition
   - Show Audience Benefit or Interest in the Receiver
   - Emphasize Positive, Pleasant Facts
3. Consideration
   - Put Action in Verbs, Not in Nouns
   - Sensory Appeal
   - Comparisons
   - Choose Precise, Concrete, and Familiar Words
4. Consideration
5. Clarity
6. Courtesy
7. Correctness

To compose effective written or oral messages, you must apply certain communication principles. These principles provide guidelines for choice of content and style of presentation, adapted to the purpose and receiver of your message. Called

the "seven Cs" they' are completeness, conciseness, consideration, concreteness, clarity, courtesy, and correctness, discussed in that order in this chapter.

Although we deal here with these principles on the sentence level, they are applicable to all forms of communication, from mere utterances and sentences to complete documents or presentations. To some extent the principles overlap because they are based on a common concern for the audience, whether that audience consists of listeners or readers.

1. COMPLETENESS

Message receiver –either listeners or readers desire complete information to their question

Your business message is complete when it contains all facts the reader or listener needs for the reaction you desire. Remember that communicator senders and receivers-differ in their mental filters, they are influenced by their backgrounds, viewpoints, needs, experiences, attitudes, status, and emotions. Because of these differences, communication senders need to assess their messages through the eyes of receivers to be sure they have included all relevant information.

Completeness offers numerous benefits. First, complete message are more likely to bring the desired result without the expense of additional messages. Second, they can do a better job of building goodwill. Messages that contain information the receiver needs show concern for others. Third, complete messages can help avert costly lawsuits that may result if important information is missing. Last, communications that seem inconsequential can be surprisingly important if the information they contain is complete and effective.

As you strive for completeness, keep the following guidelines in mind

- Provide all necessary information
- Answer all questions asked
- Give something extra, when desirable

• PROVIDE ALL NECESSARY INFORMATION

Answering the five W's helps make messages clear who, what, when, where, and why.

When you initiate a message, check to make sure you have provided all the information the reader needs for thorough, accurate understanding. One way to help make your message complete is to answer the five W questions –**who, what, when, where, why**-and any other essentials, such as how. The five question method is especially useful when you write requests; announcements, or other informative messages. For instance, to order (request) merchandise, make clear –what you want, when you need it, to whom ad where it is to be sent, and how payment will be made To reserve a hotel banquet room, specify the accommodations needed (what),

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location (**where**), sponsoring organization (**who**), date and time (**when**),event (**why**), and other necessary details (**how**).

- **ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS ASKED**

Look for questions: some may even appear buried within a paragraph, Locate implied, colleague or prospective customer reaction to an incomplete reply is likely to be unfavorable. The customer may think the respondent is careless or purposely trying to conceal a weak spot. In general, "omissions cast suspicions," whether you are answering n inquiry about your product of recommending a former employee from a new job. If you have no information on a particular question, say so clearly. If you have unfavorable information in answer to certain question, handle your reply with both tact arid honesty.

In one example, a software distributor when replying to a dealer letter answered only four of seven questions. Because the original questions were unnumbered and somewhat buried in five long paragraphs, the respondent apparently over looked or disregarded three of them. The reply, incomplete and unfriendly, caused the distributor to lose the business and good will of a potential customer.

Sometime before you can answer an inquiry, you need certain specific information from the inquirer. If so it is a good idea to list the needed details on a reply from that the inquirer can fill out and return to you. In this way both your answer and that of your respondent will be complete.

- **GIVE SOMETHING EXTRA, WHEN DESIRABLE**

The words "when desirable" in the above heading, are essential. Sometime you must do more than answer the customer' specific questions. They may not know what they need, or their questions may be inadequate. For example, suppose you are president of your local rotary club and receive the flowing inquiry from an out of town member.

I'm new to the city and would like to consider joining your club. As I will be visiting your club within the months will you please tell me where the next meeting will be held?

Use your good judgment in offering additional material if the senders message was incomplete

If you answered only this one question, your letter would be incomplete. Realizing that your reader is a newcomer to your city and to your. Rotary Club, you should include in your reply a welcome plus such needed details as direction for reaching the building, parking facilities day, date, and time of meeting and perhaps also the program for the next meeting. Your message will then have the "something extra" that a reader really needs and appreciates. In most cases the reason the communicator includes something extra will be obvious, whenever it is not completely clear, explain why you are including the additional information.

Checklist 6.1 Completeness

1. Remember the five Ws:
   Who? What? When? Where? Why?
2. Answer all questions:
   a) Stated questions from questioner
   b) Implied question from questioner
3. Give extra information, when desirable.

2. CONCISENESS

Conciseness is a prerequisite to effective business communication. A concise message saves time and expense for both sender and receiver. Conciseness contributes to emphasis by emanating unnecessary words you let important ideas stand out. When combined with a "you-view," concise messages are inherently more interesting to recipients. Finally, concise messages show respect from recipients by not cluttering their professional lives with lives with unnecessary information.

To achieve conciseness, observe the following suggestions

- Eliminate wordy expressions
- Include only relevant material
- Avoid unnecessary repetition

ELIMINATE WORDY EXPRESSIONS

The following are some concrete suggestions you can use to reduce Wordiness in your communication.

1. Use single-word substitutes instead of phrases whenever possible without changing meanings.

   Use single words in place of phrases, even Winston Churchill made extensive use of simple, one syllable words.

   Wordy: At this time

   Concise: Now

   Wordy: Due to the fact hat

   Concise: Because

   Wordy: Have need for

   Concise: Need

   Wordy: In due course

   Concise: Soon

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2. Omit trite, unnecessary expressions

   Wordy: Please be advised that your admission statement was received

   Concise: Your admission statement has been received

   Wordy: Allow me to say how helpful your response was

   Concise: your last response was helpful

3. Replace Wordy conventional statement with concise versions

   Wordy: please find attached the list your requested

   Concise: the list your requested is attached

   Wordy: Such refreshing comments are few and far between

   Concise: Such refreshing comments are scarce

4. Avoid overusing empty phrases

   Wordy: It was knows by Mr-Smith that we must reduce inventory

   Concise: Hr-Smith knew we must reduce inventory

   Wordy: there are four rules that should be observed

   Concise: Four rules should be observed

5. Omit "which" and "that" clauses whenever possible

   Wordy: She bought desks that are of the executive-type

   Concise: She bought executive-type desks

   Wordy: The receipt that is enclosed documents your purchase

   Concise: The enclosed receipt documents your purchase

Use your computer grammar check or let someone else check whether you have overused certain words dullness may result from the same word or idea being repeated too often.

6. Eliminate unnecessary prepositional phrases

   Wordy: The issue of most relevance is teamwork

   Concise: The most relevant issue is teamwork

   Wordy: In most cases the date of the policy is indicated in the upper right corner

   Concise: The policy date in the upper right corner

7. Limit use of the passive voice

   Wordy: The total balance due till be found on page 2 of this report

   Concise: the balance due is on page port

Wordy: The reports are to be submitted by employees prior to 5:00 at which time they will be received by Mr. Jones.

Concise: Please submit your reports to Mr. Jones by 5:00

In all attempts to reduce wordiness, your must be careful to not distort meaning. Conciseness reflects the thoughtful elimination of unnecessary words.

- **INCLUDE ONLY RELEVANT MATERIAL**

The effective, concise message should omit not only unnecessarily wordy expressions but also irrelevant statements. To be sure you include only relevant facts, observe the following suggestions.

1. Stick to the purpose of the message
2. Delete irrelevant words and rambling sentences

Communication Probe

Wordiness has been the bane of writers-and-speakers-since humans began to communicate. The word used to describe such circumlocution is tautology, or using two or more word to express a Simple and single thought. Often we have implied that business communication can be dull it tends to lack modifiers it avoids excessive use of superfluous-or-should-words. Yet, writers of reports or other forms of communication should follow the maxim, "once is often enough"

Alexander, D. & Rivett. A. (1995, spring). Once is often enough. Journal of Management Consulting, S, 32.

3. Omit information obvious to the receiver do not repeat at length what that person has already told you. If you feel it is important to remind the audience of know information, subordinate the familiar information.
4. Avoid long introduction, unnecessary explanation, excessive adjective and preposition, pompous words, gushy politeness.
5. Get to the important point tactfully and concisely

   Wordy: we appreciate your confidence

   Concise: we appreciate your confidence

   Wordy: At this time I am writing, to you to enclose an interview cards which has been post-paid for the purpose of arranging a convenient time when we might get together for a personal interview.

   Concise: Please return the enclosed interview card to set up a convenient time of ran interview

AVOID UNNECESSARY REPETITION

Unnecessary repetition leads to dullness

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Sometimes repetition is necessary for emphasis. But when the same thing is said two or three times without reason, the message becomes wordy and boring. Here are three ways to eliminate unnecessary repetition"

1. Use a shorter name after you have mentioned the long one once. Instead of the "North Central Company," use "North Central."
2. Use pronouns or initials rather than repeat long names. Instead of citing "American Association of Technical Analysts" again and again, use "it" or "they" or AATA. When using well-knows initials or acronyms, give the full reference first with the initials in parentheses. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is being debated in Congress.
3. Cut out all needles repetition of phrases and sentences. Sometimes it is possible to combine two or even more sentences by using subordinate clauses or phrases.

The following letter from a business executive to a firm the company had dealt with for 5 years shows unnecessary repetition at its worst.

Wordy: will you hip us sometime anytime during the month of October would be fines or even November if you are rushed (November would suit us just as well, in fact a little bit better) 300 of the regular 3-by 15-inch blue felt armbands with white sewn letter in the center.

Checklist 6.2 Conciseness

1. Use one word in place of phrases, one sentence in place of two. Read out loud to "listen" for wordiness.
2. Omit outdated trite expressions
3. Ask yourself: what material is really relevant?
4. Look for unnecessary repetition: does the same word or idea appear too often?

Concise: Please ship parcel post, before the end of November! 300 regular 3 x 15 inch blue felt armbands with white sewn letters in the center

3. CONSIDERATION

Consideration means preparing every message with the message receivers in mind try to put yourself in their place: You are considerate, you do not lose your temper, you do not accuse, you do not charge them without facts. You are, foremost, aware of their desires, problems, circumstances, emotions, and probable reactions to your request. Then handle the matter form their point of view. This thoughtful consideration is also called "you-attitude," empathy, the human touch, and understanding of human nature.

In a broad but true sense, consideration underlies the other six Cs of good business communication. You adapt your language ad message content to your

receivers needs when you make your message complete. Three specific ways to indicate consideration are:

- Focus on "you" instead of "I" and "we"
- Show audience benefit or interest in the receiver
- Emphasize positive, pleasant facts

FOCUS ON "YOU" INSTEAD OF "I" OR "WE"

Using "you" does help project you-attitude. But overuse can lead to a negative reaction.

To create considerate, audience-oriented messages. focus on how message receivers will benefit, what they will receive, and what they want or need to know. In some cases, this can be accomplished by emphasis, you might downplay your own feelings and emphasize a point, make an explicit reference, or use a direct quotation in responding to the request of anther individual. Creating a you-attitude may require avoiding telling other how they feel, assuming you know their needs.

We-Attitude: I am delighted to announce that we will be extending our hours to make shopping more convenient.

You-Attitude: We're sure you must be frustrated by the length of time is has taken to ship your order for Polish gargoyles.

We-Attitude: We're sure you must be frustrated by the length of time it has taken to ship your order for Polish gargoyles.

We-Attitude: We're sure you must be frustrated by the length of time it has taken to ship your order for Polish gargoyles.

You-Attitude: The polish gargoyle you ordered will reach you within a week

Showing consideration for the audience involves more than just using "you" instead of "I" or "we" messages that use "we" can be receiver-oriented if "we" includes the recipient of the message. Messages that use "you" can be insensitive in negative situations. In fact, sometimes avoiding "you" can reduce potential defensiveness or allow the recipient to save face. An extreme example of a negative situation is the collection letter surely lacks you-attitude. The use of "you" in receiver part of a group, or depersonalizing the situation.

Insensitive: You failed to enclose, your check in the envelope

Considerate: The check was not enclosed (passive voice)

Insensitive: Your contract tells you plainly that

Considerate: I'm always happy to discuss the contract terms with new employees (receiver as part of group)

Insensitive: your are completely off base in your proposal

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Considerate: we have differing interpretations of the utility of the proposal (sender-oriented with acceptance of responsibility)

Considerate: The proposed plan has three aspects that need clarifications (depersonalized)

- SHOW AUDIENCE BENEFIT OR INTEREST IN THE RECEIVER

Readers may react positively when benefits are shown

Whenever possible and true. Show how your receivers will benefit from whatever the message asks or announces. Benefits must meet recipients needs address their concerns, or offer them rewards. Most important, they must be perceived as benefits by the receiver. This means that you must identify the legitimate benefits of your position, policy, or product and then put yourself in the place of the receivers to assess their perspective.

Receivers will be more likely to react favorably and do what you suggest if where actual direct benefit are worth the effort and cost your ask of them. In situations message should at least show interest in and concern for the recipient's needs or viewpoints.

Merely inserting the word "you" does not ensure you-attitude, as shown in this sentence: "you will be glad to know that we now have a walk-up window open 7-9 A.M and 3-8 P.M every weekday. "Same readers wonder, "so what?" the following revised sentence includes reader benefit: "You can now take care of your banking needs at our new Walk-Up Window. It is open with a capable teller to serve you 7-9 A.M and 3-8 KM. Monday through Friday."

Reader-benefit appeals help collect payments on bills, soften the blow in a turndown, and sell products. Such appeals are desirable also in job applications, favor requests. and announcement to your customers, prospective buyers, stockholders, and employees. Whether you are writing to one person or to large numbers, try to personalize the reader benefits instead of stating them in a general way. Benefits that are realistic, inherent, and tailored to individuals help communicators achieve goals in effective, ethical ways.

- EMPHASIZE POSITIVE, PLEASANT FACTS

A third way to show consideration for your receivers is to accent the positive. This means stressing what can be done instead of what cannot e done, and focusing on words your recipient can consider favorably.

Negative – Unpleasant	Positive-Pleasant
It is impossible to open an account for you today	As soon as your signature card reaches use we will gladly open an
We don't refund if the returned item is	We refund when turned item is

soiled and unsalable.	resalable
When you travel on company expenses you will not receive approval for first class fare	When you travel on company expenses your approved for to tourist

Checklist 6.3 Consideration

1. See your material from your reader's point of view:
2. "You" is more desirable than "I" or "we" in most instance.
3. Readers like to see benefits. Be sure benefits are a prominent part of the message.
4. Consciously use positive words readers will react more favorably.

As a final note, true consideration is a result of integrity and ethics in communication. Because the topic of ethics and communication is so important, we treat it in a separate chapter.

4. CONCRETENESS

Misunderstandings of words have produced tragedies in both war and peace in business and non-business situations.

Communicating concretely means being specific, definite, and vivid rather than vague and general. Often it means using denotative (direct, explicit, often dictionary-based) rather than connotative words (ideas or notions suggested by or associated with a word or phrase). Thus the term female may appear in personnel folder as a part of a job description, yet widely different connotations may occur when using terms as wife, mother, widow, maiden, matron, or dowager. Each of these latter terms also refers to female but with wide-ranging associations.

Communication Probe

Some letter writers are completely absorbed in the things about which they are writing, about quantities and qualities, about dollars and delivery. To become intelligible and effective, they need to enrich their thoughts by spreading them out to include people. At the core of good writing is audience analysis, audience adaptation. Some persons will say that business is objective mechanical, dealing with commodities and services rather than with people. How absurd it is to say so whenever) businessperson knows that every sale, every purchase, every) contact, every financial deal, depends upon the word "yes" or "no" from some human being.

On writing clearly. (ND). Royal Bank of Canada letter, 38.7

The benefits to business professionals of using concrete facts and figures are obvious: your receivers know exactly what is required or desired. Using concrete

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language has some additional, less obvious advantages. When you supply specifics for the reader or listener, you increase the likelihood that your message will be interpreted the way you intended. Moreover, concrete message are more richly textured than general or vague messages thus, they tend to be more vivid dynamic, convincing message.

- Use specific facts and figures.
- Put action in your verbs
- Choose vivid, image-building words.

- **USE SPECIFIC FACTS AND FIGURES**

It is desirable to be precise and concrete in both written and oral business communication.

Whenever possible, use an exact, precise statement or a figure in place of a general word to make your message more concrete.

Vague, General, Indefinite	**Concrete, Precise**
Student GMAT scores are higher.	**In 1996 GMAT scores averaged 600; by 1997 they had risen to 610.**
Eastern Europe is making in 1990 investments in eastern progress in obtaining Europe were about US 30 million today that figure has increased by 12 %.	
She's a brain.	Her grade-point average in 1996 was 3.9 on a four point scale.

Note in the above examples that some of the vague words are opinion words. What is higher? What do we mean by progress? What does being a brain means? For example,

Slightly	**small**	**soon**	**early**	**high**	**about**
most	**a few**	**slow**	**very**	**almost**	**several**

Of course it is permissible-even desirable-to use general expressions. But note some exceptions to the "facts and figures" rule

1. When it is not possible to be specific; "You may not have the precise figures or facts."
2. When you wish to be diplomatic (considerate): "you have missed three invitations to my office" is harsh, you may be more tactful by saying "I've sent your several reminders to see me in my office."
3. When exact figures are unimportant, as in "more than half the committee was present."

- **PUT ACTION IN YOUR VOICE**

Verb can activate other words and help make your sentences alive, more vigorous. That is, to have dynamic sentence (1) use active rather than passive verbs ad (2) put action in your verbs rather than in nouns and infinitives.

- **USE THE ACTIVE VOICE**

When the subject performs the action described by the verb, the verb is said to be in the active voice, usually the active voice puts the verb up front. "The financial officer reported to the board." Here the subject (the financial officer reported the verb "reported" is active, is up front in the sentence.

Conversely, when he subject receives he action of the verb is in the passive voice; ("the report by the financial office was heard by the board.") A passive verb has three characteristics.

- The subject does not do the acting in a sentence.
- The verb consists of two or more words, one of which is in some form of "to be" (is, is being, am , are, was, were, will be, has, or have been, hail bee, or will have bee).
- The word "by" is expressed or implied (by whom or what).

Passive (Subject Receives Active the Action)	**Active (Subject Performs the Action)**
The tests were administered by the professors	Professors administered the tests
Grades of students will be send to you by the School	the school will send student their Grades.

Active verbs help make your sentence more

When the subject acts there is more life vividness.

1. **Specific.** "The dean decided" is more explicit than' A decision has been made".
2. **Personal.** "You will note is both personal and specific, It-will be noted" is impersonal."
3. **Concise.** "The passive requires more words and thus slows both writing and reading. Compare "Figures show" with "It is shown by figures."
4. **Emphatic,** Passive verbs dull action. Compare "The student held a contest" with "A contest was held by the students."

Sometimes, however, you may prefer the passive voice instead of the active as in the following situations:

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1. When you want to avoid personal, blunt accusations or comment. "The October check was not included" is more tactful than "you fail to include. "Attendance at the meeting is required" is less had than "you must attend.
2. When you want to stress the object of the action. In "your savings account is insured up to $100,000," you have intentionally stressed "your account"-not the firm that does the insuring. Also. "you are invited" is better than "we invite you."
3. When the doer isn't important in the sentence. In "three announcements were made before the meeting started," the emphasis is on the announcements, not on who gave them.

PUT ACTION IN VERB, NOT IN NOUNS

Verb propel thought, they move ideas in place of lower-moving nouns.

Seven verbs-be. give. have, hold. make, put, and take- (in any tense) might be designated as "deadly" when the action they introduce is hidden in a "quiet no in." The examples below show each deadly verb with the noun and preposition (all underlined) can be changed to an action verb that shortens the sentence.

Action Hiding in "Quiet" Noun	Action in the Verb
The function of this office in the collection of payments and the compilation of statement.	This office collects payments and compiles statements.
Professor H. will give consideration to the report.	Professor H. will consider the report
The proposal has a requirement for	The proposal requires that
Students held the meeting in the office	Student met in the office

PUT ACTION IN VERBS, NO IN INFINITIVE

Action Hiding In Infinitive	Action in the Verb
The duty of a secretary is to check all incoming. mail and to record it. In additions it is his or her responsibility keep the assignment book up to date	A secretary checks and records all incoming mail. mail and keeps the assignment book up to date.

CHOOSE VIVID, IMAGE-BUILDING WORDS

Business writing uses less figurative language than does the world of fiction. Among the devices you can use to make your messages forceful, vivid, and specific are sensory appeals, comparisons, figurative language, concrete nouns, and

well-chosen adjectives and adverbs. But use these devices with caution: business writing uses fewer descriptors than does a magazine article or fictional writing.

Checklist 6.4 concreteness

1. Were you precise in using facts and figures wherever possible?
2. Did you use the active voice more than the passive?
3. Is there action in verbs rather than in nouns or infinitives?
4. Did you try to occasionally use vivid. image-building words? But in business writing. use them sparingly.

SENSORY APPEAL

Concrete language often evokes a sensory response, in people, it appeals to one or more of the five senses. Such language tends to be more descriptive than conventional business language. For example, instead of saying "it was hot in the factory, "you-might appeal to both sight and touch by saying "Sweat trickled down the arms of the line workers", or "The secretary's face was wrinkled after squinting into the computer the entire day. Although sensory appeals are used primarily in marketing products, they also have a limited place in providing color and specificity in other forms of business communication.

COMPARISON

Analogies (either figurative or literal) or comparisons can make an unclear idea clear or make an idea more vivid. Compare the land images in the left column with those in the right column.

Bland Image	More Vivid Image
Proposals submitted this quarter were uninteresting	Too many simple sentences too many simplistic ideas gave the impression of the writing of a first-year student
This is a long letter	This letter is three times as long as you said it would be.

Figurative language

Use figures of speech with caution. When used sparingly they do make an idea move vivid. Consider die following three. Examples.

Literal (and Dull)	More Vivid. Figurative
Her work in Group was exemplary.	She could be called the spark plug of the group.
Some woman's were stopped in their promotions.	Many women faced the "glass ceiling" in their company.

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Communication Probe

In the ancient world, rhetoricians (teachers of oral communication) suggested that ornateness in language was a significant part of comminicaiton. Indeed, there were communication practitioners and theorists who argued that ornateness in words and their use within a sentence were core to effective communication.

Such heavy emphasis on ornate communication slowly disappeared in communication texts in the renaissance and later. Organization of ideas, Support for those ideas replaced the micro divisions and subdivisions of how to be more ornate in communication. Today ornateness in communication is more characteristic of honorary degree citations or keynote speeches at political conventions. Metaphors (implied comparisons between two things) are modern day uses of figures of speech thoroughly discussed in ancient communication texts. Business communication today uses few forms of ornateness.

Hildebrandt, H.W. (1988). Some influences of Greek and Roman rhetoric on early letter writing. The journal of Business Communication, 25(3), 7-26.

Literal (and Dull)	More Vivid figurative
Our budget analysis will begin soon	This is the first shot across your bow as we begin to review your budget for next year.

5. CLARITY

Getting the meaning from your head into the head of your reader-accurately-is the purpose of clarity. Of course, you know this is not simple. We all carry around our own unique interpretations, ideas, experiences associated with words.

- Choose precise, concrete and familiar words.
- Construct effective sentences and paragraphs

CHOOSE PRECISE, CONCRETE, AND FAMILIAR WORDS

Clarity is achieved in part through a balance between precise language and familiar language. When you use precise or concrete language, you select exactly the right word to convey your meaning. Precise words need not be pretentious. When you use familiar language, you select a word that is part of your personal repertoire, familiar to the audience, and appropriate for the situation. Familiar words, as between' two good friends, for example, are often conversational, and occasionally may be part of a speech or written communication.

When you have a choice between a long word and a short one, use the short, familiar word that your reader or listener will quickly understand. Also, use synonyms instead of Latin terms (L) if they, though short, may be unfamiliar to your audience.

When in doubt, use more familiar words; audiences will understand them better.

Familiar	Pretentious
About	Circa (L)
After	Subsequent
Home	Domicile
For example	e.g. (L)
Pay	Remuneration
Invoice	Statement for Payment

Notice how the following statement with unfamiliar words is expressed clearly in the revision using familiar words,

Unfamiliar: After our perusal of pertinent data the conclusion is that a- lucrative market exists for the subject property.

Familiar: The data we studied show that your property is profitable and in high demand.

Although it is appropriate to use technical terms and business jargon in some professional situations, avoid it when you communication ate' with a person who is not acquainted with the terminology. If you must use such terms, define them briefly and clearly. If you don't, you'll confuse, embarrass, or irritate the reader. You may even be forced to explain later, as in the following classic story:

A Plumber wrote the National Bureau of Standards to tell them hydrochloric acid is good for cleaning out clogged drains. (Before you go any further into the story, visualize the plumber. Assume you don't know him and have never exchanged correspondence. It is a pretty good guess he isn't a college graduate-maybe he didn't finish high school "But he probably is a good plumber-at least conscientious-became he's writing to the bureau to tell them something he thinks will help other people.)

In reply to the plumber message, a technical specialist of the bureau wrote:

The efficacy of hydrochloric acid is indisputable but the corrosive residue is incompatible with metallic permanence.

The plumber then wrote to thank the bureau for agreeing with him - when of course, the bureau was actually disagreeing with him. Sensing the plumber didn't understand, another member tried to set the man straight by writing:

We cannot assume responsibility for the production of toxic and noxious residue with hydrochloric acids and suggest you use an alternative procedure.

Again the plumber thanked the bureau, then, in desperation, the department

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(6) THE SEVEN CS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICAION

manager wrote:

Don't use hydrochloric acid. It eats hell out of the pipes.

As we have said and will say throughout the book, understanding the audience helps writers choose familiar words: those known by the speaker and the listener. Here are just a 'few examples.

Possibly unfamiliar	Familiar to the Layperson
assessed valuation	property value for tax purposes
charge to your principal	increase the balance of hour loan
easement for ingress and egress	allows passage in and out
buyouts	purchased by another company
scribbler's compacts	letters passed along to which readers

With the increased use of E-mail there is the tendency to be concise The danger is that you must know the meaning of the E-mail acronyms, which aid conciseness. For instance how many of the following abbreviations do you know? IMO, FAQ, LOL, MOTOS. Respectively: in my opinion, frequently asked question laughing out loud, member of the opposite sex.

Construct Effective Sentence and Paragraphs

At the core of clarity is the sentence. This grammatical statement, when clearly expressed: moves thoughts within a paragraph. Important characteristics to consider are length, unity, coherence, and emphases

Length

Try for an average sentence length of between 17 and of words,

Generally, short sentences are preferred. The suggested average sentence length should be about 17 to 20 words. Because variety in sentence length adds interest to writing, adopt a range of from 3 to 30 or more words. But when a sentence exceeds 40words, try to rewrite it into more than one sentence. Also, if all sentences are short (under 10 words), the result is primer like language-choppy and overly simple.

Unity

In a sentence-whether simple, compound or complex-unity means that you have one main idea, and any other ideas in the sentence must be closely related to it. "I like Jim, and the Eiffel Tower is in Paris" obviously is not a unified sentence.

Coherence

Ina coherent sentence the words are correctly arranged so that the ideas clearly express the intended meaning. Place the correct modifier as close as possible to the

word it is supposed to modify. In the following examples notice why each "unclear" sentence conveys a wrong meaning, and how it is corrected in the "clear" sentence

Longer Sentence Version		Shorter sentence Version
Number of words	271	265
Total sentences	5	21
Average Words Per sentence	54	12

Unclear: Being an excellent lawyer-, I am sure you can help us.

Clear: Being an excellent lawyer you can surely help us.

Clear: As you are an excellent lawyer-, I am sure you

Unclear: His report was about managers-, broken down by age and gender.

Clear: His report focused on age and gender of managers.

Clear: His report about managers focused on

Unclear: After planting 10,000 berry plants the deer came into our botanist's farm and crushed them-

Clear: After our botanist had planted 10,000 berry plants the deer came into his farm and crushed them-

Emphasis

Most often put main ideas up front with a sentence

The quality that gives force to important parts of sentences and paragraphs is emphasis. Writers must decide what needs emphasis, and then choose correct sentence structure. In a complex sentence the main idea should be placed in the

Checklist 6.5 Clarity

1. Choose as precise or as concrete a word as possible
2. Select words that have a high sense of appropriateness for the reder.
3. Opt for the familiar word, the one that is not pretentious.
4. Limited average sentence length to 17 to 20 words
5. Insert no more than one main idea into a sentence.
6. Arrange words so that the main idea occurs early in a sentence

main clause; the less important points are in subordinate (dependent) clauses or phrases

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For instance, in the first sentence below, the two ideas appear to be of equal value. In contrast, if the important idea is that the "airplane was difficult to control" the second sentence would be more meaningful and emphatic; its main idea is in the main clause.

Little emphasis: The airplane finally approached the speed of sounds and it became very difficult to control.

Better emphasis: As it finally approached the speed of sounds the airplane-became very difficult to control.

Little emphasis: Candidates should be motivated and have interest in static and dynamic testing of material and have those prerequisites and others:

Better emphasis: Prerequisites in candidates should include expertise in static and dynamic testing of material.

In addition to using the above methods for emphasis, the PCs of today and related software-allow innumerable ways to visually add emphasis to words. Though- it is impossible to list all of them, some visual procedures include: headings, tabulations, itemizations, graphs, line charts, pie charts, under linings, italics, indentations, colored capitals or italics or even wide or short margins. The visual innovations are endless.

6. COURTESY

Knowing your audience allows you to use statements of courtesy; be aware of, your message receiver.

True courtesy involves being aware not only of the perspective of others but also their feelings. Courtesy stems from a sincere you-attitude. It is not merely politeness with mechanical insertions of "please" and "thank you," although applying socially accepted manners is a form of courtesy. Rather, it is politeness that grows out of respect and concern for others.

In addition to following the guidelines **discussed** under "Consideration." courteous communicators generate a special tone in their writing and speaking. The following are suggestions for generating a courteous tone:

- Be sincerely tact.ful, thoughtful, and appreciative,
- Use expressions that show respect.
- Choose nondiscriminatory expressions,

Be Sincerely Tactful, Thoughtful, and Appreciative Tact

Though few people are intentionally abrupt or blunt, these negative traits are a common cause of discourtesy, Sometimes they stem from a mistaken idea of conciseness, sometimes from negative personal attitudes, sometimes from not

knowing the culture of a country or even groups of people. Avoid expressions like those in the left-hand column below; rephrase them as shown in the right hand column.

Tactless, Blunt	More tactful
Stupid letters I can't understand any of it	It's my understanding
Cleary you did not read my latest fax	Some time my working is not precises let me try again
I rewrote that letter three times the point was clear	I'm sorry the point was not clear here is another version.

E-mail messages are short and often informal

Writing a letter to a customer outside the company requires 'more "niceties" than writing an E-mail within your company, A one-sentence internal E-mail to a colleague could be this short:

Phile give me a call at #41279 and give me the number of the report you're sending along to the VP.

A fax or letter to a foreign company would not be as short, or blunt; instead, add a few more tactful words:

It was kind- of you to write and extend holiday greetings.

Here in the States the Christmas season is a high point of the year. Thank you for your regards

Because our. Company, receives many reports from China and your company, we need the number of the report you sent us in October. We need this in order that our electronic files can easily find it in the system. We then wish to send the report along to our Vice President of Marketing.

Thoughtfulness and Appreciation

Writers who send" cordial, courteous messages of deserved congratulations and appreciation (to persons. both inside -and outside the firm) help build goodwill. The value of goodwill or public esteem for the firm may be worth thousands (or millions) of dollars. Be especially thoughtful and courteous when communicating with Asian cultures: they like the soft, more polite approach in both oral and' written communication.

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Use Expressions That Show Respect

No reader wants to receive messages that offend. Such expressions are discussed in two groups: irritating expressions and questionable humor.

Omit Irritating Expressions

Following is a consensus list; that is, it includes a list of expressions many people find irritating. Avoid these expressions, particularly used with "you" or "your"

Contrary to your inference delinquency (delinquent)	you are delinquent
I do not agree with you if you care	You are probably ignorant of the fact that
I'm sure you must realize	you claim that you did not tell us you failed to
Inexcusable	you forgot to
Irresponsible	your have to
Obnoxious	you leave us no choice
obviously you overlooked owing to your questionable credit we are unable to	you neglected to (overlooked) you say
simply nonsense	you should know
surely you don't expect	you surely don't expect
we are amazed you can't	your apparent disregard of our previous request leaves us
we don't believe	no alternative
we find it difficult to believe that	your complaint
we must insist	Your failure to
we take issue	Your insinuation
why have you ignored	Your neglect

Omit Questionable Humor

When in doubt as to the relevance of humor, leave it out

Laughter one person is disgust for another; each of us has a different sense of humor.

A flippant attitude can be in 'poor taste, as seen in the following note. When in doubt be more formal. The, second note is also informal, but courteous.

NOTE: 1 OFFENSIVE

Hey man what's' this I hear about the good news? You sure pulled a fast one this past weekend-and then didn't tell any of us about it.

Give my regards to the little lady and wish her the best she'll need it.

NOTE 2 MORE COURTEOUS

Warm congratulation on your wedding.

Wells you certainly took us by surprise. In facts just of us even suspected you were taking off to get married. But even though we didn't hear about it until, later we-my wife and I wish you the best. Give our warm regards to your new partner

Choose Nondiscriminatory Expressions

Another requirement for courtesy is the use of nondiscriminatory language that reflects equal treatment of people regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, and physical features. The suggestions selected here can be particularly useful for your written and oral business communication.

SEXIST TERMS "MAN" WORDS

In western culture there is more concern than in other cultures about using the term man as part of a compound noun.

For a long period of time man was accepted to denote not only a male person but, genetically, humanity at large. Today many people in the United States connect man with a "male human being." Thus the English language-more so than other languages-uses alternative expressions for man that are neuter in form. Some examples are

Questionable	More Desirable
Freshman	Entering student first year students
Manpower	Workers, employees, work force personnel
Man-made the best man for the position	Manufactured, constructed, built the best person, the best candidate for the postion

SINGULAR PRONOUNS

English lacks a neuter singular pronoun signifying "he" or "she." Previously we accepted-and some persons still do-masculine pronouns in expressions as "anyone he" or "each customer' his bill." The trend today is to avoid using he him and his when referring to the hypothetical person or humanity in general

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Questionable	More Desirable
Anyone who comes to class late will get his grade reduced	Students who come late to class will have their grade reduced **(Reworded to omit unnecessary pronouns)**
Each customer will have the new changes noted on his bill	Customer will have the new changes noted on their bills. **(Reworded into the plural)**
"Our Criteria are firm, he is to be a scholar, and he is to be a good teacher."	Our criteria suggest he or she is to be a good scholar and a good teacher **(Reworded to include both genders)**
"You guys should all be concerned about she issued."	Both men and women all of you should be concerned about the issue. (Recorded to include both genders)
The executives may benefit from the stock options. He will	The Executives may benefit from the stock options. Each executive may. **(Reworded to repeat noun or a similar noun if a few words intervene)**

In sum, use good judgment. Some companies use the masculine the quite freely, know the culture of the company before making a final decision when writing.

Recognize that the emphasis on gender neutrality is more common in the United States than in other countries.

Names

When using names, treat each gender with respect, use names in parallel form

Checklist 6.6 Courtesy

1. Ask yourself: Does the communication have a sincere you-attitude?
2. Have some else look at your statement if you have doubts about whether it is tactful. Another opinion may cause you to reconsider making a statement.
3. Be cautious in using humor in communication. Mere too it pays to have someone else review your words.
4. Be careful in using discriminatory language, this means being aware of gender, race, age, color, creed, sexual preferences or ethnic origins.

7. CORRECTNESS

At the core of correctness is' proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling principles relating to each of these qualities art' in Appendix A.

However, a message may be perfect grammatically and mechanically but still insult or lose a customer. The term correctness, as applied to business messages, also means the Following three characteristics:

- Use the right level of language.
- Check accuracy of figures, facts, and words.
- Maintain acceptable writing mechanics.

Use the Right Level of Language

We suggest that there are three levels of language: formal, informal, and substandard, Take it quick guess: What kind of writing is associated with each level? What is the style of each?

Formal writing is often associated with scholarly writing: doctoral dissertations, scholarly articles, legal documents, top-level government agreements, and other materials where formality in style is demanded. The style is unconvecsational, usually impersonal, and often contains long and involved sentence.

Informal writing is more characteristic of business writing: Here you use words that are short, well-known, and conversational. as in this comparison list:

Informal writing is more characteristic of business that writing occurs in an E-mail message

More Formal	Less Formal
Participate	Join
Procure	Get
Endeavor	Try
Ascertain	Find out
Deem	Think (believe)
Edifice	Building
Utilize	Use
Interrogate	Question

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Avoid substandard language. Using incorrect words, incorrect grammar faulty pronunciation all suggest an inability to use good English. Some examples follow:

Su bstaridard	More Acceptable
ain't	isn't aren't
can't hardly	ca~ hardly
aim at proving	aim to prove.
desirous to	desirous of
irregardless	regardless
stoled	stolen
brung	brought
should of	should have

Check Accuracy of Figures, Facts, and Words

It is" impossible to convey meaning precisely. through words, from the head of the sender to a receiver. Our goal is to be as precise as possible, which means checking and double-checking to ensure that the figures, facts, and words you use are correct.

Figures and Facts

A good check of your data is to have another person read and comment on the validity of the material.

- Verify your statistical data.
- Double-check your totals.
- Avoid guessing at laws that have an impact on you; the sender, and your message receiver.
- Have someone else read your message if the topic involves data.
- Determine whether a "fact" has changed over time.

In other words, there are accepted measures for statistical analysis just as there are rules for good grammar. At the bottom of all our suggestions, however, is this prescription: Be alert to accuracy because of changing rates, regulations, laws, and conditions locally and even internationally.

Words That Confuse

Our English language is constantly changing. In fact, even dictionaries cannot keep up with the rapid change in our language. But the dictionary is still major source for locating correct words and their intended meanings. The following list includes only a sample of the many words often confused in usage:

a, an	Use a before consonants and consonant sounds or a long "u" sound. Use (a before vowels or a silent "h."
accept, except	Accept is a verb and means to receive. Except is a verb or a preposition and relates to omitting or leaving out.
anxious: eager	Anxious implies worry; eager convey keen desire.
between. among	Between involves two people or two groups: among, three or more.
biannually. biennially	Biannually means "two times a year" or "every 2 years"; biennially, "every 2 years."
continual, continuous	Continual means "recurring regularly (like lapping ocean waves). Continuous means "without -stopping."
counsel, council.	Counsel means (as a verb) "to advise and (as a noun) "lawyer," "advice Council . (noun) is an advisory a governing group.
effect. affect	In business usage only, effect is a noun; it means "result," "condition," a "influence." Both words are verbs- effect is "to bring about"; to affect is of influence."
eminent, imminent	Eminent means "high in station, merit esteem," "prominent." Imminent mean "about to happen," "threatening" (sail especially of a danger or catastrophe).
farther, further	Farther is more used to express distance in space; further for distance in time quality, or degree.

Checklist 6.7 Correctness

1. Select the right level of language for your communication: either formal or informal.
2. Realize that informal language is most often used in business communication.
3. Check-often. by letting another person read your material-for correct figures facts, and words.

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5. Apply the principles of accepted mechanics to your writing

imply, infer	Imply means "to insinuate" or "suggest" infer means "to conclude." A writer implies; the reader infers.
lay laid, laid	A person or a sheet lies (rests) on the bed, but a person lays the book on the-table or lay's himself or herself on the bed. If you can substitute placers) and answer what? Use the proper tense of lay.
lie, lay, lain	Principal, as an adjective, means "chief," "main"; as a noun, it means "sum of money" or "head of a school." Principle means "rule" or "basic truth."
principal, principle	That refers to persons or things; who, to people; which, only to things.
which, that, who	Use who as the subject of a verb-"When will win?" Use whom as the object a verb or a preposition-"Whom can you trust?"
who, whom	(Yon can trust him or her, not he or she) "For whom will you vote?"

Maintain Acceptable Writing Mechanics

All the material discussed in Appendix A relating to mechanics, word processing, and appearance of business messages is relevant here. With the various packages available for computers, both grammar-checks and spell-checks have made your editing tasks easier. Yet we recommend careful attention to the mechanical part of every well-written document.

SUMMARY

Knowing the seven C's, and using them, will help you become a better . communicator: the principles for these seven criteria for good communication are core to this 'book, and we hope will be your criteria for good communication in the future.

Be complete in giving your message receiver. all necessary information. One' way to remember this suggestion is to think of the five Ws: who, what, when, where, and why.

Apply the second C, conciseness, through eliminating wordy expressions, including only relevant material, and avoiding unnecessary' repetition.

Consistently ask this question: Which word, sentence, or paragraph may be eliminated without omitting relevant material?

Prepare your messages with the audience in mind. Consideration means' putting yourself in their place. Focus on "you" in place of "I" or "we." Stress the positive in your messages.

Insert specific, definite, and vivid words to make your messages concrete, the fourth C principle. Use specific facts and figures; put action in your Verbs: and choose vivid: image-building words.

Think of clarity as using words that are familiar to the message receiver. Additionally, use sentences that average 17 to 20 words, contain one main idea, are coherent, and give emphasis to ideas more often in the beginning of a sentence.

Respect your message receiver. The sixth C principle, courtesy, means being tactful, thoughtful, and appreciative. Such writing also implies using expressions that show respect and use nondiscriminatory language.

Review all your communication for correctness. This last of the seven Cs focuses on correctness in grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Additionally, give thought to the right level of language and the checking of figures, facts and words.

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Chapter 7

COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY

This Chapter covers

1. Tools that Facilitate Oral Communication
2. Tools that Facilitate Written Communication
3. Tools that Facilitate Electronic Communication
4. Tools that Facilitate Gathering and Management
5. Collaborative Communication
6. Ramification of Technology

During the past ten years, technology has advanced faster than at any time in history. These changes in technology are moving business and industry in new and exciting directions. The future of technology will allow you, at any time, to send and receive information from anywhere in the world. You will no longer be confined to the office as a place of work. You will use video telephones, choose from five hundred television stations, and read books on a video screen from libraries around the world. You may even find that you would prefer to read a book on Cp-ROM.

However, while technology has immeasurable benefits, it presents many challenges for the business communicator. These challenges come from two areas. The first challenge is to understand the rapid advancement and implementation of technologies in your organization. The second, challenge is to learn to use the available technology to maximize and enhance your communication skills. You will modify and adapt your communication skills according to the limitations and opportunities presented by new technology.

Which communication technologies do you currently use? Which ones are you unfamiliar with? Which communication technologies do you anticipate using in your future occupation?

1. TOOLS THAT FACILITATE ORAL COMMUNICATION

A great deal of oral communication goes on in businesses: committee meetings, conferences, interviews, and group discussions. Chances are that you will spend

more time involved in oral communication than in any other form of communication. This section covers some of the technology tools that will facilitate these types of oral communications.

• TELEPHONES

The most widely used piece of oral communication technology is the telephone. Today, thousands of hours are spent on the telephone as people communicate from all corners of the globe, much as if they were in the same room. Initially, many small businesses start out with such basic telephone communication needs as a telephone line, a telephone, and an answering machine. But as businesses grow" so do the companies' communication needs. To meet their growing communication needs, companies and organizations often add additional oral communication tools to their existing telephone sets. Such tools include conference calling, call waiting, three-way calling; can forwarding, speed calling, repeat call, return call, priority call, voice mail, and Caller ID. Caller ID now allows an employee to screen a call and then place it into voice mail if he or she does not wish to speak with the caller, directly or immediately. These tools provide a variety of ways to improve the clarity, efficiency, and productivity of every oral communication. In addition, these tools can open up access to the company, improve sales and service efficiency, save time, cut expenses, promote internal productivity and teamwork, and accelerate information flow.

• CELLULAR PHONES

The cellular telephone has begun to weave its way into our society much as the original telephone did one hundred years ago. Businesses and individuals alike are now using cellular technology to facilitate their oral communications. It is quite likely that there will be 1 billion cellular phone users by the first part of the, 21st century.

Combining the technology of radio and telephone communication, the cellular phone has increased the flexibility and mobility of the communicator to unprecedented levels. The greatest advantage of cellular phones is that they allow you to stay in touch even when you are out" of the office. For example Teresa Bosh owner to a nationwide real estate company, explains that her sales agents spend the majority, of each working day-away from their offices. To keep in touch with both actual and potential customers each agent is assigned a 'cellular' telephone. According to Teresa,' customers 'don't like to wait. When they call, they expect a quick response or they may move on to a competitor. With a cellular phone, Teresa's & ales agents are always within reach of customers-wherever business takes them. A cellular technologies increase, more and more companies and individuals will take their offices on the road with them. The future of business phones probably lies with PCS (personal communication systems) technology, which allows employees to roam their office complex carrying their phone with them so that they never miss that important call. Even during air travel, cellular technology-will-allow your colleagues to call or fax you wherever you are. Even if you

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are in a "quiet zone" such as concerts, church, or elevators, cellular phones can alert the owner of an incoming call by vibration instead of a ring.

- **TIPS ON USING TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION**

You have been using the phone for years and may wonder why you need 'guidance on using the phone as a business communication device, however, is quite different from using it as a personal communication device. Follow these steps to enhance your effectiveness as a business communicator.'

Using Voice Mail More businesses have discovered that voice mail is an inexpensive and convenient way to handle messages when employees are unable to take calls. As a caller, when you hear a recorded voice indicating that you can leave a message in a "mailbox." remember to state your name, your position, your organization's name, the date and time you called, a brief message, your telephone number, and when you can be reached. You may want to repeat your name and phone number at the end of the message so that the recipient does not have to play back your entire message to obtain this-information. With some people receiving hundreds of voice mail messages each week; you want to be succinct so that your message will receive the attention it deserves.

In managing your mailbox, it is a good idea to give the caller an idea of whether you are in the office that day or available at another telephone number. It is also important to change your greeting message daily. This gives callers specific information about your availability and serves to notify callers that you are attentive to your voice messages.

Timing of Calls. The best time to reach people is just before their lunch hour and just before 5:00 P.M. Many people are in the office at those times. But if you have difficulty reaching someone, try calling before 8:00 A.M., at lunch time, or after 5:00 P.M. Much of the business "hustle" does not take place during these times and the individual maybe in his or her office working alone. As always, remember to be sensitive to time zone differences.

Telephone Tag: Leaving messages helps to reduce telephone tag, that annoying process of people calling back and forth without reaching the desired party. When you leave messages, indicate when and where you will be and ensure that you are at that number when you say you will be.

- **TELECONFERENCING**

Teleconferencing, is another tool that can be used to facilitate oral communications. Teleconferencing, simply put, is a conference meeting over the telephone. You and colleagues from different parts of the' country or world can link up via telephone speaker systems and communicate as if you were in a meeting together. Suppose that you are the president of the Johnson Technology Corporation, which builds and markets computer chips. The company has offices in eight states. Each state pas a vice-president who oversees all the operations in that state. Your company is about to introduce a new product and you want to get feedback from all the vice-presidents. In the past, you would either fly all the

people to one location or you would talk to each person on the phone-one- at a time. With teleconferencing, you can call the vice-presidents at the same time and discuss the best way to introduce the product. Teleconferencing is not only more economical and able to generate better decisions, but it also enables the people involved to feel that they have more input into the decisions being made. In addition, employees can participate in the conversation whether they are in their home offices or on the road.

Thus teleconferencing saves both time and money, the biggest pitfall of teleconferencing is the loss of face-to-face contact. Teleconferencing should be used to augment interpersonal communication, not replace it. For tips on effective teleconferencing, go to http://ohair.swcollege.com and click on Chapter 4.

Videoconferencing

Technology has also- made it possible for you to see other people during your conference call via video. Videoconferencing facilitates oral communication by allowing participants to receive and respond to nonverbal communication cues made visible through video. There are usually some delays in the video image when participants at different sites begin to speak, and the images may appear jerky, but improved- quality in the technology will eventually minimize these technical problems. Videoconferences are becoming more popular among businesses due to their long-term cost savings. For example BankAmerica Corp uses video conferences to trim its travel budgets. In addition, its customer service personnel use videoconferencing to improve responsiveness with customers. The long-term outlook for videoconferencing is very promising. With- long distance travel costs mounting each year, it does not take long for a videoconferencing system to pay for itself. The additional benefit is less wear and tear on employees who previously traveled extensively for their company.

There will always be employees who prefer human contact as a means of conducting business. Technology cannot replace subtle nonverbal cues such as eye contact, shrugs, glances and certain facial expressions. Nor can this type of technology substitute for shaking-hands talking informally at breaks, or going to lunch with one another.

- **PLANNING A TELECONFERENCE**

Write an agenda for a teleconference. Imagine that you must submit the agenda to your boss. Be sure to include information about the participants, schedule, and goals of the meeting. Describe the tools needed to communicate with branch offices of your company located in Germany and Japan. Develop a plan of action and organize the communication event so that others in your organization can easily understand and follow your agenda.

2. TOOLS THAT FACILITATE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Not all communications conducted orally. As technology advances, many businesses use increasing amounts of written communication. Written communication

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differs from oral communication. For instance, written communication is likely to involve more creative thinking effort and usually requires more time in terms of both message preparation and feedback. Written communication offers a major advantage of providing documentation and allows receivers to review information several times before responding. The following section covers some useful tools that will help you facilitate your written communications.

- **FAX MACHINES.**

Faxes facilitate written communication through their speed and convenience. Through existing telephone lines, a written message such as a contract can be sent signed, and faxed back within minutes, Time is no longer wasted using the mall system or finding a common meeting ground. A fax provides fast and accurate hard-copy communication any time of the day or night. This makes it possible for you to send documents-complete with charts, graphs, photographs or illustrations-to your customers and colleagues quickly and conveniently. New technology has also provided a way to fax the same message to multiple locations at the same time. In addition, faxes facilitate written communication through their cost-effectiveness. The average fax machine can send a ten-page document for the same cost of a five-minute daytime call from New York to Los Angeles. In addition, considerable long-term cost savings are realized when a fax is used instead of overnight mail. And you can even send faxes after business hours to take advantage of lower telephone rates. Moreover, faxes can use existing letterheads and forms, saving both time and money. Faxes are also popular because they allow people to use their favorite medium-paper.

New technology is constantly improving the fax machine's communication abilities. For example, you can now get "fax waiting" for your fax machine. If your fax line is busy, a second incoming fax is electronically stored. When your machine is clear, the stored fax will be sent through. You can also get a fax mailbox to control when and where you receive your faxes. Every fax sent to you is kept in a private, confidential mailbox. You access your faxes by calling from any touch-tone phone and entering your personal code. Faxes can then be reviewed, stored, deleted, or sent to any machine you choose-for printing. In addition, some fax machines use cellular technology. As the price of cellular fax machines decreases, more wireless faxes will be used. Furthermore, many personal computers now include the capacity to send and receive electronic faxes, eliminating the burden of using and receiving paper.

- **COMPUTERS**

Perhaps the biggest technological advancement in the business world has been the introduction of the computer. The computer has facilitated written communication in a way that has, thus far, remained unmatched. The first electronic computer was invented in the 1950s and filled an entire room. These early computers were used mostly to perform statistic', and other complex math functions. Since 1983, the number of computers in United States businesses has increased by 25 million. Today, computers come in all shapes and sizes, but they can be grouped into two major categories.

mainframes and microcomputers.

- **MAINFRAMES**

A mainframe is a large cabinet-sized computer used for storing large amounts of data (written. communications) and processing extensive computer programs. Most major corporations and universities have mainframe computers that manage electronic mail systems and network gateways, store complete company records, interact with financial institutions, and perform several other functions. The end user (someone who uses the computer) logs in on a terminal and uses the central mainframe to process all information and run programs,

- **Microcomputers**

Since its introduction in 1971, the microcomputer has dramatically changed the way we work and play. The function of microcomputers and how you choose to use them is changing rapidly. Soon, all microcomputers will be linked through extensive computer networks that will facilitate collaboration and access to several sources of information, improving productivity. You will have instant access to information from around the world. Recent technological developments have transformed the microcomputer into a powerful workstation capable of organizing your voice mail, faxes, and e-mail, while at the same time providing adequate computational power to execute several programs simultaneously in different open "windows" (this process is often referred to as multitasking). Likewise, microcomputers are equipped with digital cameras that facilitate desktop video conferencing (see the preceding section); document scanners convert printed text and pictures into a digital form that can be stored on disk, viewed onscreen, or transmitted to other computers, and CD-ROM, digital audiotape (DAT), and Zip drives accommodate the storage and transporting of large amounts of data .

As computers have become standard equipment in the workplace, so has the study of ergonomics. See Figure 7.1 for some tips on preventing computer-related health problems.

Make sure that you have a comfortable fit with your computer and its accessories. This fit is referred to as ergonomics, or the relationship between user and machine. The human body was not originally designed to type, use a mouse, or sit in front of a computer monitor for eight hours a day. Prolonged typing and use of a mouse can cause under stress on the hands and wrists that can result in carpal tunnel syndrome. Carpal tunnel syndrome is a condition in which the tendons in the hand become overstretched and do not properly. The Symptoms include pain in the hands, wrist, arms, and shoulders of the person. Although this ailment is treatable, it is best to prevent carpal tunnel syndrome by using a keyboard that allows your wrist to remain straight when typing moving your entire hand when reaching for distant keys, and using a mouse or trackball that is the shape of your hand.

Prolonged exposure to poorly designed monitors can cause impaired vision.

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You can limit these problems with several devices. You might use a monitor that has tilt and swirl features so that it can be adjusted, use indirect lighting around the screen, and use a stand for your papers so that they are closer to the level of the monitor. Thus, you would avoid moving your head excessively. The best way to avoid problems brought on by computer work is to use equipment that conforms to your body instead of equipment that your body must conform to your body instead of equipment that your body must conform to.

Source: "Healthy Computing." (1993). PC World (November).

Figure 7.1 Increasing Your Comfort Level

- **SOFTWARE**

Software is arguably the most important part of a computer system. Without some type of software a computer cannot operate. You have a wide variety of software choices to facilitate your written communication. Over 200,000 software titles are available, 'ranging in price from a few dollars to tens of thousands, depending on what they do. Software is upgraded, or updated, frequently as computer software companies develop products to meet the needs of users

In general, the software you choose for your computer will reflect your own needs, but one program is critical for every computer the operating system. This software tells the computer how to run and handle all of its other programs. These will most likely include a word processor" a spreadsheet application" and perhaps even desktop publishing software. Other programs allow the user to reformat documents, compare data, and draw graphics.

Although these applications are: meant to enhance communication, incompatible software programs impede communication transfer between communicators. Not upgrading your programs may result in decreased productivity and job frustration. For example, two commonly used e-mail applications are Eudora, and Microsoft Outlook. However, Eudora is unable to decode attachments received by Outlook in a readable format. Instead, the receiver gets a screen full of garbage.

Although "freeware" and "shareware" attachment decoder software programs are available for download from the Internet, there is no guarantee that the attachment will convert into a readable format. Upgrading your software is the best bet.

- **BACKUP SOFTWARE PROTECTING YOUR FILES**

A general rule of thumb is to back up your 'work every fifteen minutes or after the completion of every page. A few seconds is all it takes to protect you from losing valuable data. Yet many computer users fail to take the time to back up and ultimately regret it. Just ask anyone who has lost a major piece of work. Some computer programs have automatic backup functions. These systems will notify you approximately every fifteen minutes that it is time to back up your work, and with your approval, will back up your work on the computer's hard drive. If you are forgetful or a procrastinator, it would be to your benefit to invest in an automatic backup system for your

computer. To further ensure your protection, you should also back up your work on floppy disks, and alternate these disks in case one disk should become lost, infected by a virus, or damaged in some other way.

- **A WORD ABOUT COMPUTER VIRUSES**

Computer viruses have become one of the biggest problems facing computer users today. A computer virus is a small program that someone writes to "infect" a computer. Once a computer is infected, several things can happen depending on the type of virus. A computer virus can have two forms. The first type, non-malicious viruses, are normally nondestructive and just make the computer act oddly (strange noises, constant beeps, and so on). The second type, malicious viruses, can cause information and data loss by erasing whole disk drives, corrupting RAM, and scrambling file information.

Several virus detection and correction programs (virus scanners) are available (Norton Anti-Virus, Thunder byte, SAM, McAfee Virus Scan, Disinfectant, and so on). The best security is to never install software on your computer before scanning it to ensure it is virus free, because even some commercial programs get infected by a virus before being shipped. (The company creating the program is normally unaware that it is sending a virus.) You can even get a virus from opening certain e-mail attachments or from downloading files from the Internet. The most practical solution is to install a virus scanner on your computer. Check your computer often and scan all disks that you insert, since viruses are often transferred from one computer to another through floppy disks. K clean (virus-free) backup is also a good thing to keep around. In case your computer contracts a virus and loses large amounts of information, you will still be able to restore the lost information.

3. TOOLS THAT FACILITATE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

At the beginning of the chapter, market development engineer Robert Brum made it clear that business professionals will have greater access to other people through advanced communications technology. In this section, you will learn of the most common tools that will enhance your ability to communicate with other people electronically.

- **REMOTE COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

Many businesses find it necessary to communicate with employees at a moment's notice regardless of where they are. Remote communication devices such as pagers and personal digital assistants provide that type of communication access.

Pagers, Despite the popularity of cellular phones, one of the biggest criticisms of the telephone as a communication device is that it is often difficult to reach the person you want to speak with. An estimated 88 percent of business phone calls are not received by the desired party; people are already on the phone, they are not to be interrupted, they are out of the office, in a meeting, or away from their desks.

Many professionals have responded to the difficulty of telephone communication by carrying 'pagers that alert them to calls or messages from employers, clients, subordinates, or even family members. Pagers facilitate oral communication by pro- viding instant contact with an individual, regardless of the

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individual's location. For example, Mason & Hanger operates the Pantex nuclear weapons facility for the United State's Department of Energy. Digital pagers are assigned to all personnel who would be needed to respond in the event of a facility emergency. Emergency personnel carry their pagers 24 hours a day in order to respond immediately to possible crisis situations.

Pagers are a newer technology that developed from the "beeper." Beepers simply send an audio signal to a user to have him or her call in for a message. Pagers, on the other hand, allow complete messages to be communicated to the receiver. The most advanced pagers can receive data, voice, and even graphical information' uploaded directly from a personal computer. Some pagers will even vibrate when activated so that the beeper sound is avoided. Although pagers are a one-way communication device, newer technology already on the horizon allows two-way communication, much like a cellular phone. Professionals can send and receive voice, data, and graphical information from anywhere in the world.

- **PERSONAL DIGITAL ASSISTANTS**

The personal digital assistant (PDA) has begun to revolutionize the way we work. Here's how this device works: You your message on a PDA and push a button. The PDA, using a message system, does the rest. If the system decides that the person you are trying to reach is not logged onto an e-mail network, it will try the phone. If it gets no answer at one number, it will try another. It can also try a designated co-worker or supervisor, or the person's pager. Then, once it finds the recipient of your message, it delivers the message by the best method possible over a wire or the airwaves; by digitized voice over the phone; by fax, personal computer, pager, or 'another PDA. And it sends back a confirmation that the message reached its destination.

In 1993, Apple' Computer released a PDA called the Newton; which has handwriting recognition, cellular communication abilities, computer programs, and several organizer functions. PDA technology is now moving toward smaller and more functional devices. Within the next couple of years, a PDA will be able to send a fax from anywhere in the world, call someone on the phone, print notes on a remote printer" access the user's computer for e-mail and business transactions, and countless other things beyond most people's imagination. The PDA will put the power of the world in your hand and it will be no larger than a remote control device. It has been speculated that by 2005, descendants of today's PDAs will have evolved into small, lightweight computers focusing on communication. Carnegie Mellon University is designing a wearable PC that consists of a headband with a see-through visor and a necklace like video input device. Other researchers and computer scientists are developing devices using a combination of voice activation and wireless video phones. By 2005, personal computers will likely be used primarily for communication rather than computation.

- **NETWORKS**

Networks can also facilitate your data gathering and management. A network is two or more

computers linked together physically or via telecommunications for the purpose of electronically sharing resources such as files, programs, and peripheral devices. With the goal of efficient sharing of information, a network connects people to people and people to data. Two types of networks are the local area network (LAN) and the wide area network (WAN). LANs generally are located in a single building or city, whereas WANs can span thousands of miles. Both LAN and WAN computer networks allow information that once flowed through bureaucratic hierarchies to pass directly between employees. Sun Microsystems, a $10 billion company with offices in 150 countries, provides network business solutions for corporations. According to Bill Raduchel, chief information officer of Sun Microsystems "Networking is a major cultural event-it changes the way you run the organization," Robert Walker, chief information officer of Hewlett-Packard, agrees. He explains, "With the ability to share information broadly and fully without filtering it through a hierarchy, we can manage the way we always wanted to". At Hewlett-Packard, this means all employees have access to a shared database whenever an employee works in a file, it is instantly updated for all other employees to see and utilize.

Since several people are able to access your computer system security is a concern when using a computer network. It is important that you and your organization take safety precautions to ensure that data are not stolen or deleted. Several programs allow you to encrypt data. Encryption is hiding a piece of data with a password. If someone tries to avoid the password, the program or piece of data is restricted or converted into an unsolvable puzzle. By taking some simple precautions, you and your company can protect yourself from theft and data corruption. It is estimated that computer hackers (people who break into computer systems) cost companies billions of dollars each year.

When work is carried out through networks an organization's structure changes. There is less supervision of the content of the work and more supervision of a person's overall performance. In other words, people are left on their own a lot. In this type of situation, leadership becomes more important than management, and communication more urgent than command. John Karlsten, a Hewlett-Packard manager, explains. "I have to rely on the professionalism and commitment of my people rather than direct supervision."

E-Mail one of the biggest services offered by LANs and WANs is electronic mail (e-mail). As you well know, traditional forms of communication, such as face-to-face, postal service, and telephones present problems in terms of feasibility, availability, and rapidity. E-mail provides a solution to this problem. Because e-mail is cheaper than a telephone call and faster than the postal service (fondly referred to as snail mail), electronic mail became a popular communication medium of the 1990s. E-mail can be defined as person-to-person communication of information from one computer terminal to another. E-mail is a message service that uses electronics and telecommunications to deliver your information. The Electronic Mail Association estimates that 30 to 50 million people use e-mail and the number are growing more than 25 percent per year. In the United States businesses maintain

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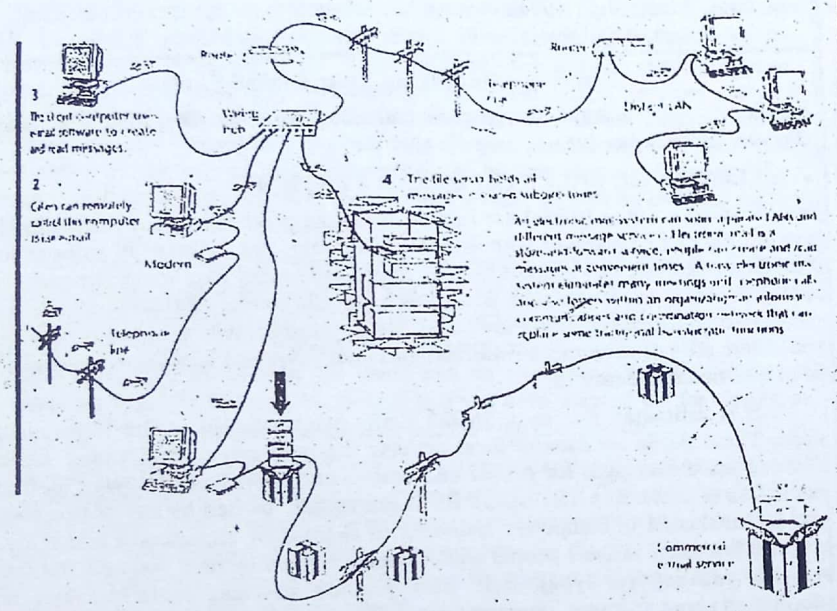
some 28 million electronic mailboxes. Two types of e-mail are commonly used in organizations: in-house and public. Every month at Hewlett-Packard alone their employee's exchange 20 million e-mail messages within the company (in-house) and 70, 000 more outside the company (public). E-mail is big business and is rapidly becoming the dominant form of business communication. In-house electronic mail stays within the organization. This is mail that you would normally drop off at someone's office or mail it through the internal mailroom. For example, suppose you have just completed the finance report that your boss wanted.



You could send it to her by dropping it by her office or the mailroom. Instead you e-mail it to her. The mail server records the time you sent your report and the time it was received. Two hours later, when your boss calls and wants to see your report, you tell her that you e-mailed it to her. Your boss checks her mail and finds that you indeed sent the report two hours earlier. In most cases, you can create document in a particular software program arid then attach it to your e-mail message. The recipient simply detaches or launches the attachment and reads it.

Another reason that e-mail systems are so popular is that you can send letters and memos to many individuals at once. In addition, when you use e-mail, a record is made of the time you send your communication and the time it is received and read. Therefore, no one can falsely accuse you of failing to send information. Furthermore,

"telephone tag" can be eliminated by-mail since the person does not have to be home or in the office to receive a communication.

Public e-mail systems are primarily used for communicating with people around the world over computer networks. Unlike in-house e-mail, there are no restrictions on who can and cannot access the system. With public e-mail you can meet people and communicate with colleagues from all over the world without ever leaving your office. For example, Lotus Development software writers in Asia and Europe use e-mail to work almost concurrently with their counterparts in America. As a result, Lotus can release a Chinese version of a new software product within three to four weeks of its English-language release. Figure ---- provides an illustration of how e-mail communication works.

If you haven't used e-mail in the past, you will find that it is relatively simple. You will need to subscribe to a provider system (or host) that will send and receive your e-mail messages. You will be assigned a user name that becomes your address for messages. Your user name is followed by "@" and the host's domain-name. The last part of your address is the suffix that the host uses; it is separated from the host's domain name by a period. For example, let's say that you have been assigned the user name student your host's name is stateu (short for State University), and since this is an educational institution, it is automatically assigned the suffix edu. Your full e-mail address would be student@stateu.edn. Hosts may select their own domain name unless it is being users by someone else but suffixes are determined according to their function and purpose. A partial list of suffix types and designations follows:

edu	educational institution
com	commercial institution
int	international institution
gov	government organization
mil	military organization
net	networking organization
org	professional and nonprofit organizations

In addition, you will find a different domain designation for communicating electronically with people in other countries. Here are a few examples:

au	Australia
ca	Canada
dk	Denmark
fr	France
de	Germany
uk	Great Britain.

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Most e-mail programs provide a template for composing a message that resembles a memo format, as shown here:

TO: (recipient's name)

FROM: (your user name, your host's domain. name, suffix)

SUBJECT: (the nature of your message)

CC: (other recipients of this message)

(Space for written message)

See Figure ------ For some guidelines for communication via e-mail.

Although e-mail is protected under existing privacy laws, organizations can monitor and read employees' e-mail. Keep in mind that, like voice mail, e-mail messages can be saved on-your organization's central memory disk indefinitely. Someone who is so inclined can search for your old e-mail messages, save them in his or her own files, or print them out. Recent surveys estimate that at least 36 percent of employers search through employees e-mail messages and of those surveyed, 70 percent felt that it was the right of the employers to read any electronic communication by an employee. With new e-mail monitoring software becoming available, it will become easier and cheaper for employers to monitor the e-mail of their employees. When using your organization's computer for e-mail, remember that your communications could be read by other people.

While e-mail allows you to leave messages for someone, it is also possible to talk to others on the Internet in real time; through a computer. IRC (Internet Relay Chat) software allows people to connect their computers and have conversations by typing. While

You can improve your e-mail style by understanding the important factors to keep in mind regarding e-mail etiquette and politics.

- Don't flame. A flame is an inflammatory remark that contains insensitive language or impetuous negative responses.
- Respect e-mail confidentiality.
- Make your messages as brief as possible Protect yourself against e-mail break-ins.
- Be careful about copyrights and licenses:
- Eliminate sexist language from your e-mail. Eliminate masculine pronouns.
- Be culturally aware for international e-mail.
- Avoid using all capital letters or all small letters.
- Check your e-mail regularly.
- Know when not to use e-mail. If the message is very important, controversial, or

- Confidential, consider the telephone or a face-to-face meeting.
- Use the SUBJECT: line in a way that gives the reader an exact indication of the intent of your message.
- Avoid, sending copies of your message (To/CC) to people who do not need it or want it.
- Never send unsolicited advertisements via e-mail,

Sources: O'Rourke, J. S. (1993). Presentation delivered to the Executive Conference, Sisters of St. Francis Health Services. South Bend. Indiana.

Figure ---: Improving Your E-Mail Skills

It may not replace actual voice communication over the telephone IRC can be effective and inexpensive.

- **ELECTRONIC BULLETIN BOARD SYSTEMS**

Bulletin board systems (BBSs) are located throughout the country. In using a BBS, you are typically presented with a menu of newsgroups (sources of information). You then select the newsgroups-you are interested in and read the postings for that newsgroup. Use net is one such BBS. It is important to realize that Borne BBSs are moderated (information is reviewed for its appropriateness by system operators) and others are not moderated (information is not reviewed and some material may be of questionable content).

It is estimated that over 36,000 BBSs are operating in the United States alone. These BBSs are usually local systems that you can contact with a modem. You can leave messages for people and upload and download shareware (software that is free to users on a trial basis). BBSs are usually owned by one or two people who are interested in computers and want to share their experiences and those of others. It is a place to meet people without being judged by how you look but rather by what you say (or type). BBS scan provide business communicators with information about software, computer problems or business experiences.

- **THE INTERNET**

The Internet is the largest computer network in the world, with over 30 million users. Usage is increasing so rapidly it is predicted that within the next few years 100 million people will be tapping into it. It has become the "information superhighway" that keeps popping up in the news. The comparison of the Internet to a highway system is actually an accurate one. Like a highway, the Internet experiences rush-hour traffic tie-ups, construction delays, and- an Occasional closed bridge or other delay. The Internet was originally a Department of Defense project designed to help people at research and education institutes interact and share information. Since its inception it has exploded into the largest information resource in the world.

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• CONNECTING TO THE INTERNET

You may connect either directly or .by dial-up, although buying a direct connection is quite expensive. Many large corporations hook up their networked computers through direct connections. However, for most users, especially those not connected with large organizations, the dial-up connection is the best. You simply dial up an Internet service provider (ISP) using your computer's modem. The most common way to access the Internet is with a commercial online service such as America Online or CompuServe. You can use the features of the service to send and receive e-mail either on the Internet or within the service itself. Commercial online services not only offer e-mail but can also include up-to-date news and weather electronic shopping malls (much like ordering from a catalog), games, business information, and special-interest forums. Most online 'services charge a start-up fee and a monthly access fee. Be careful of costs. With online charges, you have to think of using the Internet as you would long-distance phone service. While you are school, however, you may be able to connect to the Internet at a very low cost. Many colleges, campuses provide access to the Internet for their students by charging the low flat rate included in their tuition or fees.

Once you understand the Internet, you can communicate with someone from any country in the world, read the novels of Charles Dickens and Mark Twain, and join discussion groups (sometimes referred to as chat rooms) ranging in topics from Star Trek to gardening to artificial intelligence. The Internet can be used to find computer programs, access the libraries of the world and do countless other thing You can download files from the Internet, but be sure that you have scanned the for viruses, as discussed earlier in the chapter, before adding them to your own system

A recent technological breakthrough in software development allows real time voice communication over the Internet using the Internet Phone (I phone) developed by VocalTec, an Israel-based company. The technology has been compare to a ham radio for the Internet that provides users with long-distance service for the cost of Internet access. Computer users can send voice transmissions over the Internet and broadcast sound too many people at the same time over the Internet.

• THE WORLD WIDE WEB (WWW)

The World Wide Web (WWW) is the graphical realm of the Internet. Wel browsers such as Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer make traveling the Internet easier and more vivid. A Web browser downloads the text of Web document (referred to as a Web page or home page), which you are able to read as incoming images, video, and audio files-load in the background.

Much like e-mail addresses, locations on the Web each have a specific address. The format for Web addresses (also called Uniform Resource Locators, or URLs) first involves specifying the protocol for Web communication, which is most commonly http://www. This designation is followed by the sites domain name and suffix, such as

statue edu. Since each Web site may have multiple Web pages, the specific Web page you are interested in would follow, in our simplified example, with front slash (/) and the Web page's address. This is typically followed by the suffix html, which; stands for Hyper Text Markup Language, the computer formatting language used for Web sites; For example, your own student Web page would most likely have the address http://www:stateu.edu/student.html.

Web technology is being used increasingly to- advertise. Once set up, home pages can become very inexpensive advertisements that Web users can seek out. In addition. many services sell advertising space on their pages in the form of banner ads that appear to everyone who uses the service through a graphical browser. Web browser technology can give advertisements the capability to connect the user with the company advertised. Many advertisements include links that allow the user to send e-mail messages requesting more information or connect to the company's home page and out more information. No longer is advertising necessarily passively viewed. Users can immediately become an active part of the advertising communication.

Web advertising has become so common that many advertising agencies now have divisions dedicated to Web advertising or are completely devoted to Web advertising. Even small businesses on a limited budget can design their own advertising for a Web page using simple word processing and then have it converted to hypertext language by an inexpensive vendor.

One of the most widely used applications of the Web is its use for research. A great deal of information is available through the use of search engines. A search engine is service that searches Web pages, newsgroups, or e-mail directories for specified information. Most services are free for all to use, or costs are paid by advertisers, either way the services are usually free to the user, although some services do charge. Some services are business-specific, such as the Internet Business library (http://www.bschool.ukans.edu/intbuslib/). Fee-oriented services such as Lexis/Neis are also available to members.

• INTRANETS

One of the most recent uses of World Wide Web technology is the use of **intranets**. Intranets use the same graphical interface technology as the World Wide Web to improve internal communication within an organization. Intranet use becoming increasingly popular because it is easy to use and many employees already familiar with Web browsers. Intranet technology is used by setting up internal web, over a WAN or a LAN. An organization sets up its own server a builds web pages that serve different communication needs of the organization. This web is often accessible only to employees though sometimes it may be connected the Internet. In addition to being easy for employees to use intranet technology cost-effective, integratable with corporate databases, well-suited for multimedia applications, and relatively easy to manage.

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4. TOOLS THAT FACILITATE DATA GATHERING AND MANAGEMENT

All businesses require a certain amount of data gathering and management. To effectively gather and manage business data, you will need the assistance technology. This sections covers the technology tools that will help you gather a manage business data.

- **CD-ROMS**

CD-ROMs (compact disk-read only memory) are becoming very popular data gathering and management tools. CD-ROMs look like regular compact disks, but instead of holding music, they play computer programs, computer video, and computer sounds. The biggest advantage of CD-ROMs is that they hold more information in a smaller format. The average CD-ROM can hold over 300,000 pages of text. That is enough to hold a full encyclopedia set, a dictionary, an atlas, and thesaurus on a CD that you can carry in your pocket.

Many criminal courtrooms are now using computer systems that contain laser disc players and CD-ROM. The CD-ROM functions in much the same way as a court reporter by recording and managing the volumes of motions evidence, and testimony that occur during the trial. Digitally enhanced TV screens are then provided for jurors, lawyers, the judge, the clerk and the bailiff. So, for example, if a deliberating jury wants to review testimony, it does not need to depend on the court reporter. Instead, it can use the CD-ROM system to get instant transcripts, video and graphics. According to superior court Judge George Trammell, the CD-ROM system not only saves time but helps the court perform its fundamental duty, discerning the truth. You may remember that this type of system was installed for the criminal court case involving O.J. Simpson. In comparison can you think of ways that business communications (presentations, conferences, interviews) could benefit from the use of CD-ROMs?

- **SPREADSHEETS**

Electronic spreadsheets facilitate-both data gathering and data management. They are specifically designed to gather and manage lists of numbers, whether the list is total

Figure ------ Simple Spreadsheet"

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Salesperson	April	May	June	Quarterly Total"
2	Rankin	2.310.500.0	2.194.975.0	2.085.226.0	6.590.701.0
3	Perez	120.350.00	129.978.00	140.376.00	390704.00
4	Su-Tai	2 190.150.0	2.064.997.0	1.944.850.0	6.199.997.0

number of sales, a quarterly budget, or a plant supply inventory. In the past, analyzing

most of this information was handled with paper, pencil, and calculator. While this is a common analytic method, it is not the most effective one. A spreadsheet program easily analyzes data in more efficient ways it can spot trends over time and make predictions of future information. For example, in only a few seconds, you could use a spreadsheet to calculate next year's profits if sales decreased by 5 percent and operating costs increased by 8 percent. In conjunction with a presentation graphics program, you could then use the spreadsheet to chart the information on pie charts or line graphs to make the information understandable to anyone who needs it.

A spreadsheet, which is set up like a graph, is based on a series of rows and columns. The boxes of these intersecting rows and columns are called cells. The cell is normally identifiable with a cell code that is based on a number from the row and an alpha character from the column. These cells can contain either some form of data, such as numbers or labels, or a formula for calculating some information. Examine Figure ---- as an illustration of a spreadsheet. For example, cell G7 might contain the formula "G3 + B9 x 085," which would calculate sales tax of 8.5 percent based on the totals from cells G3 and B9. The spreadsheet would then automatically update cell G7 any time a change is made, ensuring the most up-to-date and accurate information.

A new trend is the use of multidimensional spreadsheets, which allow the user to analyze information in more ways than a traditional spreadsheet. For example, suppose you want to chart sales in your district against eight other district, around the country by month, salesperson, and product. Using a normal spreadsheet you would include rows showing salespeople columns showing months, and cells showing dollar amounts sold. You would then create a spreadsheet like this for every product sold for the comparison. But with a multidimensional spreadsheet you could enter all this data on one spreadsheet and then view the information in a number of different ways: by sales and month, salesperson and month, and product and salesperson. Multidimensional spreadsheets make data analysis easier and more effective. The drawback of these -spreadsheets is that they are extremely complex to learn and use. However companies are finding that it is worth the extra training involved to have this form of data analysis available.

By combining and viewing raw numbers in various ways, spreadsheets will help you communicate about numbers. However, keep this important thought in mind. Numbers very rarely, if ever, speak by themselves. As a result you will always want to give basic but meaningful interpretations of your number analysis in order to communicate effectively.

- **DATABASES**

The most important computer operation for a business is accessing data in a clear and understandable way. This information could be about employees, inventory, sales, or product development. The needs to view, update & maintain, and report these data in a logical, concise manner is vital to the success of a business.

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Database software facilitates data management and gathering by organizing information and allowing it to be updated and retrieved in a number of different formats. Once the information is entered into the computer, the software can generate a list of for example, inventory sold each day, employees who live in Chicago, or anything else the company may want to know. Databases that use flat files, or long lists of information contained in a single database, include programs like R:BASE and dBASE.

The new databases-Microsoft Access, Lotus Approach, FoxPro, and AskSam for DOS-are relational databases. Relational databases store information in a series of smaller files and link the information together using common information in the file, resulting in faster and more complex searches. Because you can sort information in a variety of different ways, a relational database allows you to compare not just the records of one database but across databases. This makes the information used even more valuable.

A database program essentially eliminates the need to go through hundreds files locating information. It allows large volumes of information to be stored on a computer, and to be easily sorted and accessed. But saving time is not the only reason that databases are so popular. Reliability is also a key issue. As long as the information in the database is accurate, the information contained in any report generated by the database will also be accurate.

A final reason for using databases is data protection and security. You must have a password or code to access a database. This prevents someone from entering the system and accidentally or intentionally deleting or altering information.

Databases have a reputation for being difficult to master, since you must learn a new language to perform the program's functions. However, the computer, industry has begun to standardize database language, making it easier to search for data.

- **SPECIAL APPLICATIONS**

This section provides additional information about technology that will enhance your ability to communicate. Some technologies, such as group decision support systems (GDSSs), computer-mediated communication (CMC), telecommuting, and electronic workstations are currently being used in the business world. Other newly developing technologies, such as voice recognition and artificial intelligence, have only just begun to find their way into the business community.

5. COLLABORATIVE COMMUNICATION

The use of networks has created several interactive communication methods in recent years that take full advantage of computer technology. These interactive systems are based on networks, either LANs or WANs, in which the participants share information at the same time in order to work as a group on a given project. Collaborative communication systems of this type have several benefits. The first is economic; it is

more economical to have people work in their own offices than to fly them to a central location. The second, benefit is resources; people working from their own offices are more likely to have several resources available to them that they may not have at other meeting locations. A final benefit of computer communication is a more equitable system of sharing ideas and information without face-to-face contact, communicators are less intimidated by their peers or superiors, and more comments; criticism, and suggestions can be made when communicators are interacting from remote locations. The most popular types of interactive systems are group decision support systems (GDSSs) and computer-mediated communication (CMC).

- **GROUP DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

Group decision support systems (GDSSs) are software packages that transform any size group into a productive work team that can resolve issues and reach decisions in an effective and efficient in-manner. GDSSs combine computer technology, video, audio, and telecommunications systems, and are sometimes referred to as expert systems because they can perform such tasks as planning, decision making, idea generation, problem solving, and issue discussion-negotiation, conflict resolution, systems analysis and design, and document preparation. A GDSS can range from the most complex to the simplest forms of data communication. The advantages of a system such as this include (1) handling routine matters normally left to group members; (2) more balanced participation among members, (3) high speed textual and data processing, and (4) bringing remote members of a group together through a common communication channel.

Computer-Mediated Communication. People often think of e-mail as computer mediated communication. E-mail is a passive activity performed by the computer. In e-mail the computer moves data from one location to another at the instruction of the sender. In a true computer-mediated communication (CMC) system, the computer uses a series of algorithms and text searches to filter the information to the right people in the organization. Suppose you wrote a report that has information needed by the marketing, advertising and accounting divisions. The CMC system would interpret the report and send each department only the information it needs, thus assuring that unneeded information does not become a distraction.

CMC systems are often custom-programmed for companies and cost tens of thousands of dollars. However, as the speed of computers increases and as information becomes more electronic, CMC systems should become less expensive and more common.

6. RAMIFICATIONS OF TECHNOLOGY

As you consider the effects of technology on your professional and personal life, remember that the life span of these devices is short. Technological sophistication builds on itself making some technologies virtually obsolete the moment they are first implemented in the workplace. It was not long ago that

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(7) COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY

robots, automatic teller machines, and electronic tax returns were new technologies. Now we consider these and other devices as necessities.

Technological innovations are remarkable and inevitable facets of business communication. However, they are not without their potential shortcomings. Business communicators should use caution when "buying in" to each and every technological innovation. The prudent business communicator understands that technology is simply a tool that enhances the flow of messages from one person to another. Unfortunately, we become so familiar with technology and dependent on its help that we forget the dangers involved with errors or breakdowns. This is know as invisible technology: after we become accustomed to an innovation we take it for granted, causing it to disappear or become "invisible." When this happens, there is a tendency to forget about safeguards. Take the example of computers and the accompanying safeguards from manufacturers about saving or backing up work. Many people forget or ignore this safeguard because they take for granted the computer's reliability. Because the computer is reliable, it is only after a problem occurs (power failure, disk damage, and so on) that we realize how addicted to and dependent we are on invisible technology.

Another potential problem for organizations and companies is the inability to implement technology. A company may decide that a new information system package is needed to speed up the processing of customer billing. If employees in the company do not develop the necessary skills to use the new system, the organization will have to either wait for the employees to catch up or implement the system more slowly than anticipated. Both solutions create a problem for the organization in implementing the system.

Technology has a tendency to alter the dealings some workers have toward themselves, their co-workers, and the organization. In office settings, many professionals develop text and graphics on their own computers, send the job to a central laser printer over the network, and notify clerical assistants to deliver the job to their mailbox. However, in the past, clerical assistants were part of the creation, as they were asked to type material, find some supporting artwork or figures, and put it all together. Many of these clerical personnel feel that they have been reduced to a status of "flunkies" with the same pay. Their self-worth has been tarnished, affecting their morale and job satisfaction.

Telecommuting, teleconferencing, and e-mail have impacts on interpersonal relationships, causing professionals to feel isolated from the real world when they are expected to spend most of the working hours in front of a computer screen. The dynamics of face-to-face communication that most of us enjoy have been reduced to coffee break. It is important for employees to feel valued and involved at work company should be careful that its technology does not demoralize the worker in attempting to create a more productive environment.

One last caution involves the way that technology can change communication

among people. In particular, computer communication such as e-mail filters out important nonverbal cues that are normally provided in face-to-face interactions. When communicating electronically, we often do not know the gender, status, occupational level, mood, or disposition of those with whom we communication. Informal, disorganized, abrupt, and even rude interactions are more likely to occur when we do not have this information.

Like information, technology is only as good as our ability to use and manipulate it. There must be a fit between the communicator and the technology. How do you go about finding the technology that's best for you and you communication goals? The following guidelines will be helpful as you make you decision:

- Are your goals compatible with this technology?
- Are you willing to invest some time in learning the new technology? How much?
- How quickly will this technology become obsolete? What will you do then?
- What are the payoffs-for using this technology compared to the alternatives?
- How much will this technology increase your communication effectiveness?

Remember that technology is only a tool to enhance productivity. It is not a savior to all your work needs or problems. Advanced technology almost always results in greater efficiency and productivity. This is especially the case with communication technologies. Your professional and personal life will experience continuous changes as technology advances. A positive attitude will go a long way toward successful technology implementation.

SUMMARY

1. **Describe the tools that facilitate oral communication.** Telephones are a common communication technology that has incorporated cellular technology to increase its use in business. In teleconferencing, several people communicate in a phone conversation at the same time, which saves an organization time and money
2. **Describe the tools that facilitate written communication.** Fax machines are becoming popular ways to send paper documents because of the relatively inexpensive cost, and a fax machine is faster than postal services. Computers are used in business for a wide range of activities from communications to data manipulation. Word processors and desktop publishing (DTP) software allow a person to type information, make corrections, format text, and proof a document easily before printing it.
3. **Describe the tools that facilitate electronic communication.** Remote communication devices such as pagers and PDAs allow communication

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Some listening errors happen because the hearer wasn't paying enough attention to a key point. After a meeting with a client, a consultant waited for the client to send her more information, which she would use to draft a formal proposal to do a job for the client. It turned out the client thought the next move was up to the consultant. The consultant and the client had met together, but they hadn't remembered the same facts.

Take notes when you can. In addition,

- As early as possible, make a mental or paper list of the questions you have. When is the project due? What resources do you have? What is the most important aspect of this project, from the other person's point of view? During a conversation, listen for answers to your questions.
- At the end of the conversation, check your understanding with the other person. Especially check who does what next.
- After the conversation, write down key points that affect deadlines or how work will be evaluated.

Many listening errors are errors in interpretation. In 1977 when two Boeing 747 jumbo jets ran into each other on the ground in Tenerife, the pilots seemed to have heard the control tower's instructions. The KLM pilot was told to taxi to the end of the runway, turn around, and wait for clearance. But the KLM pilot didn't interpret the order to wait as an order he needed to follow. The Pan Am pilot interpreted his order to turn off at the "third intersection" to mean the third unblocked intersection. He didn't count the first blocked ramp, so he was still on the main runway when the KLM pilot ran into his plane at 186 miles an hour. The planes exploded in flames; 576 people died.

To reduce listening errors caused by misinterpretation,

- Don't ignore instructions you think are unnecessary. Before you do something else, check with the order given to see if there is a reason for the instruction.
- Consider the other person's background and experiences. Why is this point important to the speaker? What might he or she mean by it?
- Paraphrase what the Speaker has said, giving him or her chance to correct your understanding.

Listening to people is an indication that you're taking them seriously. Acknowledgment responses – nods, uh huhs, smiles, frowns – help carry the message that you're listening. However, listening responses vary in different cultures. Research has found that US whites almost always respond nonverbally when they listen closely, but that African Americans respond with words rather than nonverbal cues. This difference in response patterns may explain the fact that some whites think that African Americans do not understand what they are saying. Studies in the mid-1970s showed that white counselors repeated themselves more often to black clients than to white clients. Similarly, black supervisors may miss verbal feedback when they talk to white subordinates who only nod.

In active listening, receivers actively demonstrate that they've heard and understood a speaker by feeding back either the literal meaning or the emotional content or both. Five strategies create active responses:

- Paraphrase the content. Feed back the meaning in your own words.
- Mirror the speaker's feelings. Identify the feelings you think you hear.
- State your own feelings. This strategy works especially well when you are angry.
- Ask for information or clarification.
- Offer to help solve the problem.

Instead of simply mirroring what the other person says, many of us immediately respond in a way that analyzes or attempts to solve or dismiss the problem. People with problems need first of all to know that we hear that they're having a rough time. Ordering and interrogating both tell the other person that the speaker doesn't want to hear what he or she has to say. Preaching attacks the other person. Minimizing the problem suggests the other person's concern is misplaced. Even advising shuts off discussion. Giving a quick answer minimizes the pain the person feels and puts him or her down for not seeing (what is to us) the obvious answer. Even if it is a good answer from an objective point of view, the other person may not be ready to hear it. And sometimes, the off the-top-of-the-head solution doesn't address the real problem. Active listening takes time and energy. Even people who are skilled active listeners can't do it all the time. Furthermore, as Thomas Gordon and Judith Gordon Sands point out, active listening works only if you genuinely accept the other person's ideas and feelings.

Active listening can reduce the conflict that results from miscommunication, but it alone cannot reduce the conflict that comes when two people want apparently inconsistent things or when one person wants to change someone else?

2. GROUP INTERACTIONS

Groups can focus on three different dimensions. Informational messages focus on content: the problem, data, and possible solutions. Procedural messages focus on method and process. How will the group make decisions? Who will do what? When will assignments be due? Interpersonal messages focus on people, promoting friendliness, cooperation, and group loyalty. Different kinds of communication dominate during the four stages of the life of a task group: orientation, formation, coordination, and formalization.

During orientation, when members meet and begin to define their task, groups need to develop some sort of social cohesiveness and to develop procedures for meeting and acting. Interpersonal and procedural comments reduce the tension that always exists in a new group. Insistence on information in this first stage can hurt the group's long-term productivity.

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among employees regardless of time or location. Networks allow communication between computers. E-mail is used for transmitting documents, messages, and information over an electronic network. Electronic bulletin boards, commercial online services, and the Internet are all networks that allow people to communicate with each other, but these networks are not confined to a given business and are therefore open to the public.

4. **Describe the tools that facilitate data gathering and management.** CD-ROMs store and organize large amounts of data. Spreadsheets are used for formatting and reporting large sets of numbers or information in rows or columns. Many of these programs also have charting features to make the data easier to understand. Databases are electronic filing cabinets that allow complex searches for information and sophisticated report generation.

5 **Explain how special communication technology enhances work.** Group decision support systems help groups interact in the decision-making process by using artificial intelligence to help generate and sort ideas produced by the group. Computer-mediated communication filters the correct electronic information in an organization to the correct people. Telecommuting is a trend in which people work from their homes and electronically commute to work by using telephones, fax machines, and computers with modems.

6 **Explain the ramifications of communication technology.** Technology is just a tool; while it has many benefits, several problems can arise from its use. These include loss of morale and job satisfaction, loss of interpersonal interaction, and loss of information security. It is important to understand the role and effects of technology before implementing it, and be flexible in your use of technology for the greatest benefit.

Chapter 8

WORKING IN GROUPS

This Chapter covers

1. Listening
2. Groups Interactions
3. Working in Diverse Groups
4. Conflict Resolution
5. Effective Meetings
6. Collaborative Writing

Teamwork is crucial to success in an organization. Some teams produce products, rovide services, or recommend solutions to problems. Other teams perhaps in addition to roviding a service or recommending a solution-also produce documents. Interpersonal ommunication is communication between people. Interpersonal skills such as listening nd dealing with conflict are used in one to-one interchanges, in problem-solving groups. nd in writing groups. These skills will make you more successful on the job, in social roups, and in community service and volunteer work. In writing groups, giving careful ttention to both group process and writing process improves both the final product and embers' satisfaction with the group.

LISTENING

Listening is crucial to building trust. However, listening on the job may be more fficult than listening in classes. Many classroom lectures are well organized, with gnposts and repetition of key points to help hearers follow. But conversations usually ander. A key point about when a report is due may be sandwiched in among statements out other due dates for other projects. Finally, in a classroom you're listening primarily r information. In interchanges with friends and co-workers, you need to listen for elings, too. Feelings of being rejected or overworked need to be dealt with as they arise. ut you can't deal with a feeling unless you are aware of it.

To receive a message, the receiver must first perceive the message, then decode it hat is, translate the symbols into meaning), and then interpret it. In interpersonal mmunication, hearing denotes perceiving sounds. Listening means decoding and terpreting them correctly.

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Groups are often most effective when they explicitly adopt ground rules. Figure 7.2 lists some of the most common ground rules used by workplace teams.

During formation, conflicts almost always arise when the group chooses a leader and defines the problem. Successful leaders make the procedure clear so that each member knows what he or she is supposed to do. Interpersonal communication is needed to resolve the conflict that surfaces during this phase. Successful groups analyze the problem carefully before they begin to search for solutions.

Coordination is the longest phase and the phase during which most of the group's work is done. While procedural and interpersonal comments help maintain direction and friendliness, most of the comments need to deal with information. Good information is essential to a good decision. Conflict occurs as the group debates alternate solutions.

In formalization, the group seeks consensus. The success of this phase determines how well the group's decision will be implemented. In this stage, the group seeks to forget earlier conflicts.

- **ROLES IN GROUPS**

Individual members can play several roles in groups. These roles can be positive or negative. Positive roles and actions that help the group achieve its task goals include the following:

- **Seeking information and opinions:** asking questions, identifying gaps in the group's knowledge.
- **Giving information and opinions:** answering questions, providing relevant information.
- **Summarizing** restating major points, pulling ideas together, summarizing decisions.
- **Evaluating** comparing group processes and products to standards and goals.
- **Coordinating** planning work, giving directions, and fitting together contributions of group members.

Positive roles and actions that help the group build loyalty, resolve conflicts, and function smoothly include the following:

- **Encouraging participation:** demonstrating openness and acceptance, recognizing the contributions of members, calling on quieter group members.
- **Relieving tensions:** joking and suggesting breaks and fun activities.
- **Checking feelings:** asking members how they feel about group activities and sharing one's own feelings with others.

- **Solving interpersonal problems:** opening discussion of interpersonal problems in the group and suggesting ways to solve them.
- **Listening actively:** showing group members that they have been heard and that their ideas are being taken seriously.

Negative roles and actions that hurt the group's product and process include the following:

- **Blocking:** disagreeing with everything that is proposed.
- **Dominating:** trying to run the group by ordering, shutting out others, and insisting on one's own way.
- **Clowning:** making unproductive jokes and diverting the group from the task.
- **Withdrawing:** being silent in meetings, not contributing, not helping with the work, and not attending meetings.

Some actions can be positive or negative depending on how they are used. Criticizing ideas is necessary if the group is to produce the best solution, but criticizing every idea raised without ever suggesting possible solutions blocks a group. Jokes in moderation can defuse tension and make the group more fun. Too many jokes or inappropriate jokes can make the group's work more difficult.

Leadership in Groups

You may have noted that "leader" was not one of the roles listed above. Being a leader does not mean doing all the work yourself. Indeed, someone who implies that he or she has the best ideas and can do the best work is likely playing the negative roles of blocking and dominating.

Effective groups balance three kinds of leadership, which parallel the three group dimensions:

- Informational leaders generate and evaluate ideas and text.
- Interpersonal leaders monitor the group's process, check people's feelings, and resolve conflicts.
- Procedural leaders set the agenda, make sure that everyone knows what's due for the next meeting, communicate with absent group members, and check to be sure that assignments are carried out.

While it's possible for one person to do all of these responsibilities, in many groups, the three kinds of leadership are taken on by three (or more) different people. Some groups formally or informally rotate or share these responsibilities, so that everyone and no one is a leader. Several studies have shown people who talk a lot, listen effectively, and respond nonverbally to other members in the group are considered to be leaders.

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Decision-Making Strategies

Probably the least effective decision-making strategy is to let the person who talks first, last, loudest, or most determine the decision. Voting is quick but may leave people in the minority unhappy with and uncommitted to the majority's plan. Coming to consensus takes time but results in speedier implementation of ideas. Two strategies that are often useful in organizational groups are the standard agenda and dot planning.

The standard agenda is a seven-step process for solving problems:

1. Understand what the group has to deliver, in what form, by what due date. Identify available resources.
2. Identify the problem. What exactly is wrong? What question(s) is the group trying to answer?
3. Gather information, share it with all group members, and examine it critically.
4. Establish criteria. What would the ideal solution include? Which elements of that solution would be part of a less-than-ideal but still acceptable solution? What legal, financial, moral, or other limitations might keep a solution from being implemented?
5. Generate alternate solutions. Brainstorm and record ideas for the next step.
6. Measure the alternatives against the criteria.
7. Choose the best solution.

Dot planning offers a way for large groups to choose priorities quickly. First, the group brainstorms ideas, recording each on pages that are put on the wall. Then each individual gets two strips of three to five adhesive dots in different colors. One color represents high priority, the other lower priority. People then walk up to the pages and affix dots by the points they care most about. Some groups allow only one dot from one person on anyone item; others allow someone who is really passionate about an idea to put all of his or her dots on it.

Characteristics of Successful Student Groups

A case study of six student groups completing class projects found that students in successful groups were not necessarily more skilled or more experienced than students in less successful groups. Instead, successful and less successful groups communicated differently in three ways.

First, in the successful groups, the leader set clear deadlines, scheduled frequent meetings, and dealt directly with conflict that emerged in the group. In less successful groups, members had to ask the leader what they were supposed to be doing. The less successful groups met less often, and they tried to pretend that conflicts didn't exist.

Second, the successful groups listened to criticism and made important decisions together. Perhaps as a result, everyone in the group could articulate the group's goals. In

the less successful groups, a subgroup made decisions and told other members what had been decided.

Third, the successful groups had a higher proportion of members who worked actively on the project. The successful groups even found ways to use members who didn't like working in groups. For example, one student who didn't want to be a "team player" functioned as a "freelancer" for her group, completing assignments by herself and giving them to the leader. The less successful groups had a much smaller percentage of active members and each had some members who did very little on the final project.

Rebecca Burnett has shown that student groups produce better documents when they disagree over substantive issues of content and document design. The disagreement does not need to be angry: a group member can simply say, "Yes, and here's another way we could do it." Deciding among two (or more) alternatives forces the proposer to explain the rationale for an idea. Even when the group adopts the original idea, considering alternatives rather than quickly accepting the first idea produces better writing.

Kimberly Freeman found that the students who spent the most time meeting with their groups had the highest grades on their individual as well as on group assignments.

Peer Pressure and Groupthink

Groups that never express conflict may be experiencing group think. Group-think is the tendency for groups to put such a high premium on agreement that they directly or indirectly punish dissent.

Many people feel so much reluctance to express open disagreement that they will say they agree even when objective circumstances would suggest the first speaker cannot be right. In a series of experiments in the 1950s, Solomon Asch showed the influence of peer pressure. People sitting around a table were shown a large card with a line and asked to match it to the line of the same length on another card. It's a simple test: people normally match the lines correctly almost 100% of the time. However, in the experiment, all but one of the people in the group had been instructed to give false answers for several of the trials. When the group gave an incorrect answer, the focal person accepted the group's judgment 36.8% of the time. When someone else also gave a different answer-even if it was another wrong answer-the focal person accepted the group's judgment only 9% of the time.

The experimenters varied the differences in line lengths, hoping to create a situation in which even the most conforming subjects would trust their own senses. But some people continued to accept the group's judgment, even when one line was seven inches longer than the other.

Groups that "go along with the crowd" and suppress conflict ignore the full range of alternatives, seek only information that supports the positions they already favor, and fail to prepare contingency plans to cope with foreseeable setbacks. A business suffering

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from groupthink may launch a new product that senior executives support but for which there is no demand. Student groups suffering from group think turn in inferior documents.

The best correctives to group think are to consciously search for additional alternatives, to test one's assumptions against those of a range of other people, and to protect the right of people in a group to disagree.

3. WORKING IN DIVERSE GROUPS

In any organization, you'll work with people whose backgrounds differ from yours. Residents of small towns and rural areas have different notions of friendliness than do people from big cities. Californians look, talk, and dress differently from people in the Midwest. Advertising executives and truck drivers have different lifestyles.

Even people who come from the same part of the country and who have the same jobs may differ in personality type. Savvy group members play to each other's strengths and devise strategies for dealing with differences.

In addition, differences arise from gender, class, race and ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, and physical ability. A growing body of literature shows that ethnically diverse teams produce more and higher-quality ideas. One problem without awareness of difference, however, is that when someone feels shut out, he or she can attribute the negative interaction to prejudice, when other factors may be responsible. Conversational style and nonverbal communication are two of the areas that may cause miscommunication.

Conversational Style

Deborah Tannen uses the term conversational style to denote our conversational patterns and the meaning we give to them: the way we show interest, politeness, appropriateness. Your answers to the following questions reveal your own conversational style:

- How long a pause tells you that it's your turn to speak?
- Do you see interruption as rude? Or do you say things while other people are still talking to show that you're interested and to encourage them to say more?
- Do you show interest by asking lots of questions? Or do you see questions as intrusive and wait for people to volunteer whatever they have to say?

Tannen concludes that the following features characterize her own conversational style:

- Fast rate of speech.
- Fast rate of turn-taking.
- Persistence – if a turn is not acknowledged, try again.

- Preference for personal stories.
- Tolerance of, preference for simultaneous speech.
- Abrupt topic shifting.

Different conversational styles are not better or worse than each other, but people with different conversational styles may feel uncomfortable without knowing why. A subordinate who talks quickly may be frustrated by a boss who speaks slowly. People who talk more slowly may feel shut out of a conversation with people who talk more quickly. Someone who has learned to make requests directly ("Please pass the salt") may be annoyed by someone who uses indirect requests ("This casserole needs some salt").

In the workplace, conflicts may arise because of differences in conversational style. Generation Xers often use a rising inflection on statements as well as questions. Xers see this style as gentler and more polite. But baby boomer bosses may see this speech pattern as hesitant, as if the speaker wants advice which they then proceed to deliver. Thomas Kochman claims that blacks often use direct questions to criticize or accuse. If Kochman is right, a black employee might see a question ("Will that report be ready Friday?") as a criticism of his or her progress. One supervisor might mean the question simply as a request for information. Another supervisor might use the question to mean "I want that report Friday."

Daniel N. Maltz and Ruth A. Borker believe that differences in conversational style (Figure 7.4) may be responsible for the miscommunication that often occurs in male-female conversations. Certainly conversational style is not the same for all men and for all women, but research has found several common patterns in the US cultures studied so far. For example, researchers have found that women are much more likely to nod and to say yes or mm hmm than men are. Maltz and Borker hypothesize that to women, these symbols mean simply "I'm listening; go on." Men, on the other hand, may decode these symbols as "I agree" or at least "I follow what you're saying so far." A man who receives nods and mms from a woman may feel that she is inconsistent and unpredictable if she then disagrees with him. A woman may feel that a man who doesn't provide any feedback isn't listening to her.

Nonverbal Communication

Posture and body movements connote energy and openness. North American open body positions include leaning forward with uncrossed arms and legs, with the arms away from the body. Closed or defensive body positions include leaning back, sometimes with both hands behind the head, arms and legs crossed or close together, or hands in pockets. As the labels imply, open positions suggest that people are accepting and open to new ideas. Closed positions suggest that people are physically or psychologically uncomfortable, that they are defending themselves and shutting other people out.

People who cross their arms or legs often claim that they do so only because the position is more comfortable. But notice your own body the next time you're in a

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perfectly comfortable discussion with a good friend. You'll probably find that you naturally assume open body positions. The fact that so many people in organizational settings adopt closed positions may indicate that many people feel at least slightly uncomfortable in school and on the job.

Even within a culture, a nonverbal sign may have more than one meaning. A young woman took a new idea into her boss, who sat there and glared at her, brows together in a frown, as she explained her proposal. The stare and lowered brows symbolized anger to her, and she assumed that he was rejecting her idea. Several months later, she learned that her boss always "frowned" when he was concentrating. The facial expression she had interpreted as anger had not been intended to convey anger at all.

Misunderstandings are even more common when people communicate with people from other cultures or other countries. A white teacher sends two African American students to the principal's office because they're "fighting." US whites consider fighting to have started when loud voices, insults, and posture indicate that violence is likely. But the US African American culture does not assume that those signs will lead to violence: they can be part of nonviolent disagreements.

Knowing something about other cultures may help you realize that a subordinate who doesn't meet your eye may be showing respect rather than dishonesty. But it's impossible to memorize every meaning that every nonverbal sign has in every culture. And in a multicultural workforce, you can't know whether someone retains the meanings of his or her ancestors or has adopted the dominant US meanings. The best solution is to state an observation: "I see you're wearing black." The other person's response will let you know whether the color is a fashion statement or a sign of mourning.

4. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflicts are going to arise in any group of intelligent people who care about the task. Yet many of us feel so uncomfortable with conflict that we pretend it doesn't exist. However, unacknowledged conflicts rarely go away: they fester, making the next interchange more difficult.

- To reduce the number of conflicts in a group,
- Make responsibilities and ground rules clear at the beginning.
- Discuss problems as they arise, rather than letting them fester till people explode.
- Realize that group members are not responsible for each others' happiness.

Once a conflict arises, groups may need to reopen discussions about responsibilities and confront a troublesome group member.

	Debating	Relating
Interpretation of questions	See questions as requests for information	See questions as way to keep a conversation flowing.
Relation of new comment to what last speaker said	Do not require new comment to relate explicitly to last speaker's comment. Ignoring previous comment is one strategy for taking control.	Expect new comments to acknowledge the last speaker's comment and relate directly to it.
View of aggressiveness	See aggressiveness as one way to organize the flow of conversation.	See aggressiveness as directed at audience personally, as negative, and as disruptive to a conversation.
How topics are defined and changed	Tend to define topics narrowly and shift topics abruptly. Interpret statements about side issues as effort to change the topic.	Tend to define topics gradually, progressively. Interpret statements about side issues as effort to shape, expand, or limit the topic.
Response to someone who shares a problem	Offer advice, solutions.	Offer solidarity, reassurance. Share troubles to establish sense of community.

Figure 7.4 Different Conversational Styles

Often the symptom arises from a feeling of not being respected or appreciated by the group. Therefore, many problems can be averted if people advocate for their ideas in a positive way. As Nancy Schullery and Beth Hoger point out, the best time to advocate for an idea is when the group has not yet identified all possible options, seems dominated by one view, or seems unable to choose among solutions. A tactful way to advocate for the position you favor is to recognize the contributions others have made, to summarize, and then to hypothesize: "What if ...?" "Let's look six months down the road." "Let's think about to see how comfortable you are with conflict."

Steps in Conflict Resolution

Dealing successfully with conflict requires both attentions to the issues and to people's feelings. This four-step procedure will help you resolve conflicts constructively.

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1. **Make sure the people involved really disagree.**

Sometimes someone who's under a lot of pressure may explode. But the speaker may just be venting anger and frustration; he or she may not in fact be angry at the person who receives the explosion. One way to find out if a person is just venting is to ask, "Is there something you'd like me to do?".

2. **Check to see that everyone's information is correct.**

Sometimes different conversational styles, differing interpretations of symbols, or faulty inferences create apparent conflicts when no real disagreement exists. During a negotiation between a US businessman and a Balinese businessman, the Balinese man dropped his voice and lowered his eyes when he discussed price. The US man saw the low voice and breaking of eye contact as an indication of dishonesty. But the Balinese believe that it is rude to mention price specifically. He was embarrassed, but he wasn't lying.

Similarly, misunderstanding can arise from faulty assumptions. A US student studying in Colombia quickly learned that only cold water was available for his evening shower. Since his host family washed dinner dishes in cold water, he assumed the family didn't have hot water. They did. Colombians turn off the water heater in the morning after everyone has bathed; washing later in the day is done with cold water. He could have hot water for his showers if he took them in the morning.

3. **Discover the needs each person is trying to meet.**

Sometimes determining the real needs makes it possible to see a new solution. The presenting problem that surfaces as the subject of dissention mayor may not be the real problem. For example, a worker who complains about the hours he's putting in may in fact be complaining not about the hours themselves but about not feeling appreciated. A supervisor who complains that the other supervisors don't invite her to meetings may really feel that the other managers don't accept her as a peer. Sometimes people have trouble seeing beyond the presenting problem because they've been taught to suppress their anger, especially toward powerful people. One way to tell whether the presenting problem is the real problem is to ask, "If this were solved, would I be satisfied?" If the answer is no, then the problem that presents itself is not the real problem. Solving the presenting problem won't solve the conflict. Keep probing until you get to the real conflict.

4. **Search for alternatives.**

Sometimes people are locked into conflict because they see too few alternatives. At one data-entry Company, productivity fell because women employees took time off to visit their children at day care. Men on the board wanted to solve the problem by docking pay. The one woman on the board

proposed installing software to let mothers check on their children online. That solved the problem.

5. **Repair bad feelings.**

Conflict can emerge without anger and without escalating the disagreement, as the next section shows. But if people's feelings have been hurt, the group needs to deal with those feelings to resolve the conflict constructively. Only when people feel respected and taken seriously can they take the next step of trusting others in the group.

Responding to Criticism

Conflict is particularly difficult to resolve when someone else criticizes or attacks us directly. When we are criticized, our natural reaction is to defend ourselves-perhaps by counterattacking. The counterattack prompts the critic to defend him- or herself. The conflict escalates; feelings are hurt; issues become muddied and more difficult to resolve.

Just as resolving conflict depends on identifying the needs each person is trying to meet, so dealing with criticism depends on understanding the real concern of the critic. Constructive ways to respond to criticism and get closer to the real concern include paraphrasing, checking for feelings, checking inferences, and buying time with limited agreement.

Paraphrasing

To paraphrase, repeat in your own words the verbal content of the critic's message. The purposes of paraphrasing are (1) to be sure that you have heard the critic accurately, (2) to let the critic know what his or her statement means to you, and (3) to communicate the feeling that you are taking the critic and his or her feelings seriously.

Criticism: You guys are stonewalling my requests for information.

Paraphrase: You think that we don't give you the information you need quickly enough.

Checking for feelings

When you check the critic's feelings, you identify the emotions that the critic seems to be expressing verbally or nonverbally. The purposes of checking feelings are to try to understand (1) the critic's emotions, (2) the importance of the criticism for the critic, and (3) the unspoken ideas and feelings that may actually be more important than the voiced criticism.

Criticism: You guys are stonewalling my requests for information.

Feeling check: You sound pretty angry.

Always ask the other person if you are right in your perception. Even the best reader of nonverbal cues is sometimes wrong.

Checking for inferences

When you check the inferences you draw from criticism, you identify the implied meaning of the verbal and nonverbal content of the criticism, taking the statement a step

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further than the words of the critic to try to understand why the critic is bothered by the action or attitude under discussion. The purposes of checking inferences are (1) to identify the real (as opposed to the presenting) problem and (2) to communicate the feeling that you care about resolving the conflict.

Criticism: You guys are stonewalling my requests for information.

Inference: Are you saying that you need more information from our group?

Inferences can be faulty. In the above interchange, the critic might respond, "I don't need more information. I just think you should give it to me without my having to file three forms in triplicate every time I want some data."

Buying time with limited agreement

Buying time is a useful strategy for dealing with criticisms that really sting. When you buy time with limited agreement, you avoid escalating the conflict (as an angry statement might do) but also avoid yielding to the critic's point of view. To buy time, restate the part of the criticism you agree to be true. (This is often a fact, rather than the interpretation or evaluation the critic has made of that fact.) Then let the critic respond before you say anything else. The purposes of buying time are (1) to allow you time to think when a criticism really hits home and threatens you, so that you can respond to the criticism rather than simply reacting defensively, and (2) to suggest to the critic that you are trying to hear what he or she is saying.

Criticism: You guys are stonewalling my requests for information.

Limited agreement: It's true that the cost projections you asked for last week still aren't ready.

DO NOT go on to justify or explain. A "Yes, but ..." statement is not a time-buyer.

You-attitude in conflict resolution

You-attitude means looking at things from the audience's point of view, respecting the audience, and protecting the audience's ego. The you statements that many people use when they're angry attack the audience; they do not illustrate you-attitude. Instead, substitute statements about your own feelings. In conflict, I statements show good you-attitude!

Lacks you-attitude: You never do your share of the work.

You-attitude: I feel that I'm doing more than my share of the work on this project.

Lacks you-attitude: Even you should be able to run the report through a spelling checker.

You-attitude: I'm not willing to have my name on a report with so many spelling errors. I did lots of the writing, and I don't think I should have to do the proofreading and spell checking, too.

5. EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Meetings have always taken a large part of the average manager's week. Although e-mail has eliminated some meetings, the increased number of teams means that meetings are even more frequent.

Meetings can have any of at least six purposes:

- To share information.
- To brainstorm ideas.
- To evaluate ideas.
- To make decisions.
- To create a document.
- To motivate members.

When meetings combine two or more purposes, it's useful to make the purposes explicit. For example, in the meeting of a university senate or a company's board of directors, some items are presented for information. Discussion is possible, but the group will not be asked to make a decision. Other items are presented for action; the group will be asked to vote. A business meeting might specify that the first half hour will be time for brainstorming, with the second half hour devoted to evaluation.

Intel's agendas also specify how decisions will be made. The company recognizes four different decision-making processes:

- Authoritative (the leader makes the decision alone).
- Consultative (the leader hears group comments, but then makes the decision alone).
- Voting (the majority wins).
- Consensus (discussion continues until everyone can buy into the decision).

Specifying how input will be used makes expectations clear and focuses the conversation.

Formal meetings are run under strict rules, like the rules of parliamentary procedure summarized in Robert's Rules of Order. Motions must be made formally before a topic can be debated. Each point is settled by a vote. Minutes record each motion and the vote on it. Formal rules help the meeting run smoothly if the group is very large or if the agenda is very long. Informal meetings, which are much more common in the workplace, are run more loosely. Votes may not be taken if most people seem to agree. Minutes may not be kept. Informal meetings are better for team-building and problem solving.

Planning the agenda is the foundation of a good meeting. A good agenda indicates.

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- Whether each item is presented for information, for discussion, or for a decision.
- Who is sponsoring or introducing each item.
- How much time is allotted for each item.

Many groups put first routine items on which agreement will be easy. If there's a long list of routine items, save them till the end or dispense with them in an omnibus motion. An omnibus motion allows a group to approve many items together rather than voting on each separately. A single omnibus motion might cover multiple changes to operational guidelines, or a whole slate of candidates for various offices, or various budget recommendations. It's important to schedule controversial items early in the meeting, when people's energy level is high, and to allow enough time for full discussion. Giving a controversial item only half an hour at the end of the day or evening makes people suspect that the leaders are trying to manipulate them.

Pay attention to people and process as well as to the task at hand. At informal meetings, a good leader observes nonverbal feedback and invites everyone to participate. If conflict seems to be getting out of hand, a leader may want to focus attention on the group process and ways that it could deal with conflict, before getting back to the substantive issues.

If the group doesn't formally vote, the leader should summarize the group's consensus after each point. At the end of the meeting, the leader must summarize all decisions and remind the group who is responsible for implementing or following up on each item. If no other notes are taken, someone should record the decisions and assignments. Long minutes will be most helpful if assignments are set off visually from the narrative.

If you're planning a long meeting, for example, a training session or a conference, recognize that networking is part of the value of the meeting. Allow short breaks at least every two hours and generous breaks twice a day so participants can talk informally to each other. If participants will be strangers, include some social functions so they can get to know each other. If they will have different interests or different levels of knowledge, plan concurrent sessions on different topics or for people with different levels of expertise.

6. COLLABORATIVE WRITING

Whatever your career, it is likely that some of the documents you produce will be written with a group. Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford found that 87% of the 700 professionals in seven fields who responded to their survey sometimes wrote as members of a team or a group. Collaboration is often prompted by one of the following situations:

1. The task is too big or the time is too short for one person to do all the work.
2. No one person has all the knowledge required to do the task.
3. A group representing different perspectives must reach a consensus.

4. The stakes for the task are so high that the organization wants the best efforts of as many people as possible; no one person wants the sole responsibility for the success or failure of the document.

Collaborative writing can be done by two people or by a much larger group. The group can be democratic or run by a leader who makes decisions alone. The group may share or divide responsibility for each of the eight stages in the writing process.

Research in collaborative writing is beginning to tell us about the strategies that produce the best writing. Rebecca Burnett found that student groups that voiced disagreements as they analyzed, planned, and wrote a document produced significantly better documents than those that suppressed disagreement, going along with whatever was first proposed. A case study of two collaborative writing teams in a state agency found that the successful group distributed power in an egalitarian way, worked to soothe hurt feelings, and was careful to involve all group members. In terms of writing process, the successful group understood the task as a response to a rhetorical situation, planned revisions as a group, saw supervisors' comments as legitimate, and had a positive attitude toward revision. Ede and Lunsford's detailed case studies of collaborative teams in business, government, and science create an "emerging profile of effective collaborative writers": "They are flexible; respectful of others; attentive and analytical listeners; able to speak and write clearly and articulately; dependable and able to meet deadlines; able to designate and share responsibility, to lead and to follow; open to criticism but confident in their own abilities; ready to engage in creative conflict.

Planning the Work and the Document

Collaborative writing is most successful when the group articulates its understanding of the document's purposes and audiences and explicitly discusses the best way to achieve these rhetorical goals. Businesses schedule formal planning sessions for large projects to set up a time line specifying intermediate and final due dates, meeting dates, who will attend each meeting, and who will do what. Putting the plan in writing reduces misunderstandings during the project.

When you plan a collaborative writing project.

- Make your analysis of the problem, the audience, and your purposes explicit so you know where you agree and where you disagree.
- Plan the organization, format, and style of the document before anyone begins to write to make it easier to blend sections written by different authors.
- Consider your work styles and other commitments. A writer working alone can stay up all night to finish a single-authored document. But members of a group need to work together to accommodate each other's styles and to enable members to meet other commitments.
- Build some leeway into your deadlines. It's harder for a group to finish a document when one person's part is missing than it is for a single writer to

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(8) Working in Groups

finish the last section of a document on which he or she has done all the work.

Composing the Drafts

Most writers find that composing alone is faster than composing in a group. However, composing together may reduce revision time later, since the group examines every choice as it is made.

When you draft a collaborative writing project.

- Use word processing to make it easier to produce the many drafts necessary in a collaborative document.
- If the quality of writing is crucial, have the best writer(s) draft the document after everyone has gathered the necessary information.

Revising the Document

Revising a collaborative document requires attention to content, organization, and style. The following guidelines can make the revision process more effective:

- Evaluate the content and discuss possible revisions as a group. Brainstorm ways to improve each section so the person doing the revisions has some guidance.
- Recognize that different people favor different writing styles. If the style satisfies the demands of Standard English and the conventions of business writing, accept it even if you wouldn't say it that way.
- When the group is satisfied with the content of the document, one person probably the best writer-should make any changes necessary to make the writing style consistent throughout.

Editing and Proofreading the Document

Since writers' mastery of Standard English varies, a group report needs careful editing and proofreading.

- Have at least one person check the whole document for correctness in grammar, mechanics, and spelling and for consistency in the way that format elements, names, and numbers are handled.
- Run the document through a spell checker if possible.
- Even if you use a computerized spell checker, at least one human being should proofread the document too.

Making the Group Process Work

All of the information in this chapter can help your collaborative writing group listen effectively. run meetings efficiently, and deal with conflict constructively. The following suggestions apply specifically to writing groups:

- Give yourselves plenty of time to discuss problems and find solutions. Purdue students who are writing group reports spend six to seven hours a week outside class in group meetings-not counting the time they spend gathering information and writing their drafts.
- Take the time to get to know group members and to build group loyalty. Group members will work harder and the final document will be better if the group is important to members.
- Be a responsible group member. Attend all the meetings; carry out your responsibilities.
- Be aware that people have different ways of experiencing reality and of expressing themselves.
- Because talking is "looser" than writing, people in a group can think they agree when they don't. Don't assume that because the discussion went smoothly, a draft written by one person will necessarily be acceptable.

SUMMARY

- Interpersonal communication is communication between people.
- In interpersonal communication, hearing denotes perceiving sounds. Listening means decoding and interpreting them correctly.
- To avoid listening errors caused by inattention. Be conscious of the points you need to know and listen for them.
- At the end of the conversation, check your understanding with the other person.
- After the conversation, write down key points that affect deadlines or how work will be evaluated.
- To reduce listening errors caused by misinterpretation,
- Don't ignore instructions you think are unnecessary.
- Consider the other person's background and experiences. Why is this point important to the speaker?
- Paraphrase what the speaker has said, giving him or her a chance to correct your understanding.
- In active listening, receivers actively demonstrate that they've heard and understood a speaker by feeding back either the literal meaning or the emotional content or both.
- Effective groups balance information leadership, interpersonal leadership, and procedural group management.

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- The standard agenda is a seven-step process for solving problems. In dot planning the group brainstorms ideas. Then each individual affixes adhesive dots by, the points or proposals he or she cares most about.
- A case study of six student groups completing class projects found that students in successful groups had leaders who set clear deadlines, scheduled frequent meetings, and dealt directly with conflict that emerged in the group; an inclusive decision-making style; and a higher proportion of members who worked actively on the project.
- Students who spent the most time meeting with their groups got the highest grades.
- Groupthink is the tendency for groups to put such a high premium on agreement that they directly or indirectly punish dissent. The best correctives to group think are to consciously search for additional alternatives, to test one's assumptions against those of a range of other people, and to protect the right of each person in the group to disagree.
- Conversational style denotes our conversational patterns and the meaning we give to them: the way we show interest, politeness, and appropriateness.
- To resolve conflicts, first make sure that the people involved really disagree. Next, check to see that everyone's information is correct. Discover the needs each person is trying to meet. Constructive ways to respond to criticism include paraphrasing, checking for feelings, checking inferences, and buying time with limited agreement.
- Use statements about your own feelings to own the problem and avoid attacking the audience. In conflict, I statements are good you-attitude!
- To make meetings more effective:
- State the purpose of the meeting at the beginning.
- Distribute an agenda that indicates whether each item is for information, for discussion, for action, and how long each is expected to take.
- Allow enough time to discuss controversial issues.
- Pay attention to people and process as well as to the task at hand.
- If you don't take formal votes, summarize the group's consensus after each point. At the end of the meeting, summarize all decisions and remind the group who is responsible for implementing or following up on each item.
- Collaborative writing means working with other writers to produce a single document. Writers producing a joint document need to pay attention not only to the basic steps in the writing process but also to the processes of group formation and conflict resolution.

Chapter 9

COMMUNICATIONS INSTRUMENTS: CHOICE OF VISUAL AIDS

This Chapter Covers

1. When we Use Visuals
2. Designing Visuals
3. Integrating Visuals in your Text
4. Using Visuals in your Presentation

Visuals help make numbers meaningful and thus help communicate your points in telecasts, oral presentations, memos, letters, reports, and meetings. This chapter shows you how to turn data into graphs and other visuals.

Visuals can present numbers dramatically. The Consumer Federation of America crystallized discontent with high interest rates on consumer loans by issuing a simple three-page study with a graph showing that while the prime rate was going down, interest on consumer loans was going up. Dan Rather showed the graph and discussed the report on the evening news; the publicity helped persuade Congress to pass laws requiring fuller disclosure and some caps on interest rates. Numbers are no more "objective" than words are: both require interpretation and context to have meaning. On November 1, 1990, both **The Wall Street Journal and The Columbus Dispatch** carried stories about General Motors' third quarter loss, which had been announced the day before. **The Dispatch's** headline was negative: "GM's $2 Billion Quarterly Loss Biggest Ever." *The Wall Street Journal*, in contrast, saw the loss as a positive strategic move: "Smaller Giant: Huge GM Write-Off Positions Automaker to Show New Growth. The two headlines come from and suggest very different ways to view the loss and GM's potential.

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The same numbers can be presented in different ways to create very different impressions. In 1999, a pharmaceutical company announced that, in a yearlong clinical test, people taking its anti-obesity drug lost 50% more weight than people receiving a placebo. That statement is true but isn't a reason to rush to a doctor to get a prescription. People in the group getting only the placebo lost an average of 13 pounds. People taking the drug lost an extra 6 pounds in a year.

1. WHEN TO USE VISUALS

The ease of creating visuals by computer may make people use them uncritically. Use a visual only to achieve a specific purpose. Never put in numbers or visuals just because you have them; instead, use them to convey information the audience needs or wants.

In your rough draft, use visuals

- **To see that ideas are presented completely.** A table, for example, can show you whether you've included all the items in a comparison.
- **To find relationships.** For example, charting sales on a map may show that the sales representatives who made quota all have territories on the East or the West Coast. Is the central United States suffering a recession? Is the product one that appeals to coastal lifestyles? Is advertising reaching the coasts but not the central states? Even if you don't use the visual in your final document, creating the map may lead you to questions you wouldn't otherwise ask.

In the final presentation or document, use visuals

- **To make points vivid.** Readers skim memos and reports; a visual catches the eye. The brain processes visuals immediately. Understanding words written or oral takes more time.
- **To emphasize material** that might be skipped if it were buried in a paragraph. The beginning and end are places of emphasis. However, something has to go in the middle, especially in a long document. Visuals allow you to emphasize important material, wherever it logically falls.
- **To present material more compactly and with less repetition than** words alone would require. Words can call attention to the main points of the visual, without repeating all of the visual's information.

The number of visuals you will need depends on your purposes, the kind of information, and the audience. You'll use more visuals when you want to show relationships and to persuade, when the information is complex or contains extensive numerical data, and when the audience values visuals. Some audiences and discourse expect oral presentations and reports to use lots of visuals. Other audiences may see visuals as frivolous and time spent making visuals as time wasted. For these audiences, you'd sharply limit the number of visuals you use but you'd still use them when your own purposes and the information called for them.

2. Designing Visuals

Use these six steps to create good visuals:

1. Check the source of the data.
2. Determine the story you want to tell.
3. Choose the right visual for the story.
4. Follow the conventions for designing typical visuals.
5. Use color and decoration with restraint.
6. Be sure the visual is accurate and ethical.

Let's discuss each of these briefly.

- **Check the Source of the Data.**

Your chart is only as good as the underlying data. Check to be sure that your data come from a reliable source.

You may be able to use data based on assumptions and definitions in careful titles or notes: "Under the Fast-Growth Scenario, Sales Will triple." "Over One-Fourth of Small Businesses Last Eight Years under Original Owners." If the data themselves are unreliable, you're better off not using visuals. The visual picture will be more powerful than verbal disclaimers, and the audience will be misled.

- **Determine the Story You Want to Tell:**

Every visual should tell a story. Stories can be expressed in complete sentences that describe something that happens or changes. The sentence also serves as the title of the visual. Stories that tell us what we already know are rarely interesting. Instead, good stories may

- Support a hunch you have.
- Surprise you or challenge so-called common knowledge.
- Show trends or changes you didn't know existed.
- Have commercial or social significance.
- Provide information needed for action.
- Be personally relevant to you and the audience.

To find stories,

1. Focus on a topic (purchases of cars, who likes jazz, etc.).
2. Simplify the data on that topic and convert the numbers to simple, easy-to understand units.
3. Look for relationships and changes. For example, compare two or more groups: do men and women have the same attitudes? Look for changes over time. Look for items that can be seen as part of the same group, For example, to find stories about entertainers' incomes; you might compare the number of writers, actors, and musicians in three rankings.

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Process the data to find more stories. Find the average and the median. Calculate the percentage change from one year to the next. When you think you have a story, test it against all the data to be sure it's accurate.

Some stories are simple straight lines: "Sales Increased." But other stories are more complex, with exceptions or outlying cases. Such stories will need more nuanced titles to do justice to the story. And sometimes the best story arises from the juxtaposition of two or more stories. In Figure 16.1, *Business Week* uses three paired graphs to tell a complex story.

Gene Zelazny points out that the audience should be able to *see* what the message says:

> [D]oes the chart support the title; and does the title reinforce the chart? So if I say in my title that "sales have increased significantly" I want to see a trend moving up at a sharp angle, if not, if the trend parallels the baseline, it's an instant clue that the chart needs more thinking.

Almost every data set allows you to tell several stories. You must choose the story you want to tell. Dumps of uninterrupted data confuse and frustrate your audience; they undercut the credibility and goodwill you want to create. Sometimes several stories will be important. When that's the case, you'll need a separate visual for each

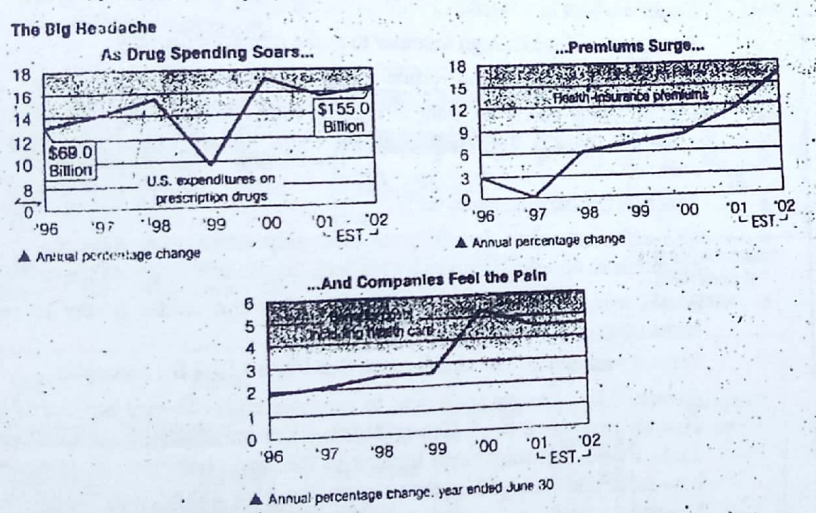

Figure 9.1 a complex story using graphs

Choose the Right Visual for the Story.

Visuals are not interchangeable. Good writers choose the visual that best matches the purpose of presenting the data.

- Use a table when the reader needs to be able to identify exact values. (See Figure 9.2a.)
- Use a chart or graph when you want the reader to focus on relationships.

- To compare a part to the whole, use a pie chart. (See Figure 9.2b.)
- To compare one item to another item, use a map or a bar chart. (See Figure 9.2c.)
- To compare items over time, use a bar chart or a line graph. (See Figure 9.2d.)
- To show frequency or distribution, use a line graph or bar chart. (See Figure 9.2e.)
- To show correlations, use a bar chart, a line graph, or a dot chart. (See Figure 9.2f.)
- Use photographs to create a sense of authenticity or show the item in use. If the item is especially big or small, include something in the photograph that can serve as a reference point: a dime, a person.
- Use drawings to show dimensions or emphasize detail.
- Use sketches to show processes in an interesting way.
- Use maps to emphasize location.

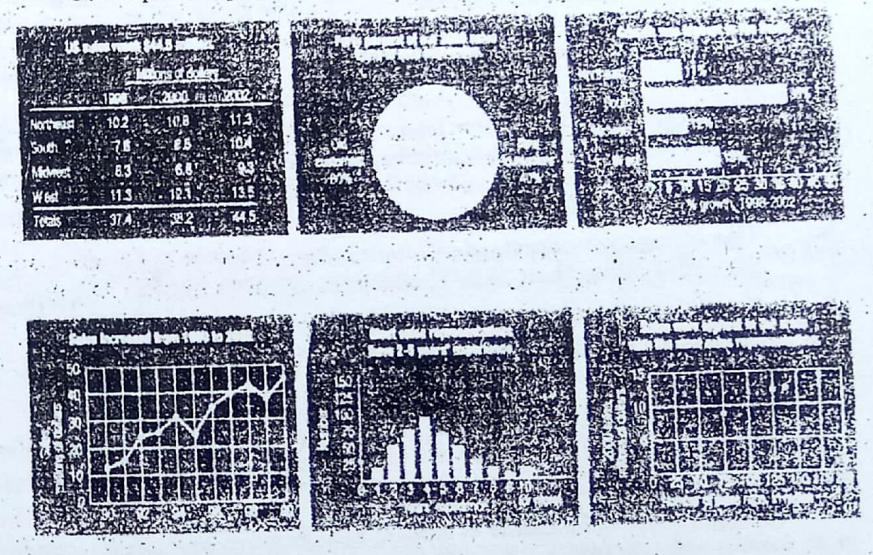

Figure 9.2 choose the visual to fit the story

Follow the Conventions for Designing Typical Visuals.

Every visual should contain six components:

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1. A title that tells the story that the visual shows.
2. A clear indication of what the data are. For example, what people *say* they did is not necessarily what they really did. An estimate of what a number will be in the future differs from numbers in the past that have already been measured.
3. Clearly labeled units.
4. Labels or legends identifying axes, colors, symbols, and so forth.
5. The source of the data, if you created the visual from data someone else gathered and compiled.
6. The source of the visual, if you reproduce a visual someone else created.

Formal visuals are divided into tables and figures. **Tables** are numbers or words arrayed in rows and columns; figures are everything else. In a document, formal visuals have both numbers and titles, e.g., "Figure 1. The Falling Cost of Computer Memory, 1990-2000." In an oral presentation, the title is usually used without the number: "The Falling Cost of Computer Memory, 1990-2000." The title should tell the story so that the audience knows what to look for in the visual and why it is important. **Spot visuals** are informal visuals that are inserted directly into the text; they do not have numbers or titles.

Tables

Use tables only when you want the audience to focus on specific numbers. Graphs convey less specific information but are always more memorable. Figure 15.3 illustrates the basic structure of tables. The **boxhead** is the variable whose label is at the top; the **stub** is the variable listed on the side.

- Use common, understandable units. Round off to simplify the data (e.g., 35% rather than 35.27%; 44.5 million rather than 44,503,276).
- Provide column and row totals or averages when they're relevant.
- Put the items you want readers to compare in columns rather than in rows to facilitate mental subtraction and division.

When you have many rows, screen alternate entries or double-space after every five entries to help readers line up items accurately.

Pie charts

Pie charts force the audience to measure area. Research shows that people can judge position or length (which a bar chart uses) much more accurately than they judge area. The data in any pie chart can be put in a bar chart.

Therefore, use a pie chart only when you are comparing one segment to the whole. When you are comparing one segment to another segment, use a bar chart, a line graph, or a map-even though the data may be expressed in percentages.

- Start at 12 o'clock with the largest percentage or the percentage you want to focus on. Go clockwise to each smaller percentage or to each percentage in some other logical order.
- Make the chart a perfect circle. Perspective circles distort the data.
- Limit the number of segments to no more than seven. If your data have more divisions, combine the smallest or the least important into a single "miscellaneous" or "other" category.
- Label the segments outside the circle. Internal labels are hard to read.

Bar charts

Bar charts are easy to interpret because they ask people to compare distance along a common scale, which most people judge accurately. Bar charts are useful in a variety of situations: to compare one item to another, to compare items over time, and to show correlations. Use horizontal bars when your labels are long; when the labels are short, either horizontal or vertical bars will work.

- Order the bars in a logical or chronological order.
- Put the bars close enough together to make comparison easy.
- Label both horizontal and vertical axes.
- Put all labels inside the bars or outside them. When some labels are inside and some are outside, the labels carry the visual weight of longer bars, distorting the data.
- Make all the bars the same width.
- Use different colors for different bars only when their meanings are different: estimates as opposed to known numbers, negative as opposed to positive numbers.
- Avoid using perspective. Perspective makes the values harder to read and can make comparison difficult.

Several varieties of bar charts exist. See Figure 16.4 for examples.

- **Grouped bar charts** allow you to compare either several aspects of each item or several items over time. Group together the items you want to compare. Figure 15.4a shows that sales were highest in the west each year. If we wanted to show how sales had changed in each region, the bars should be grouped by region, not by year.
- **Segmented, subdivided, or stacked bars** sum the components of an item. It's hard to identify the values in specific segments; grouped bar charts are almost always easier to use.
- **Deviation bar charts** identify positive and negative values, or winners and losers.
- **Paired bar charts** show the correlation between two items.
- **Histograms** or **pictograms** use images to create the bars.

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Line graphs

Line graphs are also easy to interpret. Use line graphs to compare items over time, to show frequency or distribution, and to show correlations.

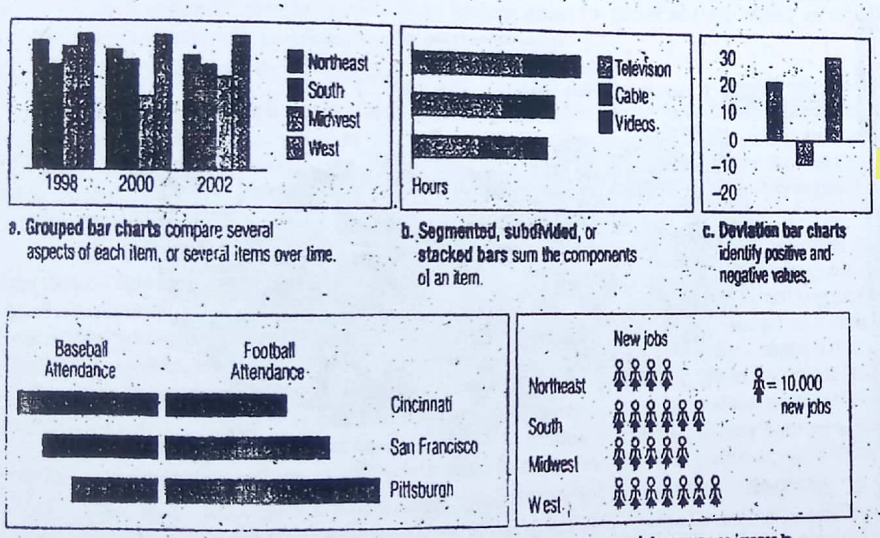
- Label both horizontal and vertical axes.
- When time is a variable, put it on the horizontal axis.
- Avoid using more than three different lines on one graph. Even three lines may be too many if they cross each other.
- Avoid using perspective. Perspective makes the values harder to read and can make comparison difficult.

Line graphs with the area below the line filled in are sometimes called landscape graphs.

Dot charts

Dot charts show correlations or other large data sets.

- Label both horizontal and vertical axes.
- Keep the dots fairly small. If they get too big, they no longer mark data "points"; some of the detail is lost.



a. **Grouped bar charts** compare several aspects of each item, or several items over time.

b. **Segmented, subdivided, or stacked bars** sum the components of an item.

c. **Deviation bar charts** identify positive and negative values.

d. **Paired bar charts** show the correlation between two items.

e. **Histograms or pictograms** use images to create the bars.

Figure 9.4 Varieties of Bar Charts

Photographs

Photographs convey a sense of authenticity. The photo of a prototype helps convince investors that a product can be manufactured; the photo of a devastated area can suggest the need for government grants or private donations.

You may need to crop, or trim, a photo for best results. If someone else is doing the production, mark the places for cropping in the margins of the photo or attach non-sticky paper. Never write or mark on the photo or the negative.

A growing problem with photos is that they may be edited or staged, purporting to show something as reality even though it never occurred.

Drawings

The richness of detail in photos makes them less effective than drawings for focusing on details. With a drawing, the artist can provide as much or as little detail as is needed to make the point; different parts of the drawing can show different layers or levels of detail. Drawings are also better for showing structures underground, undersea, or in the atmosphere.

Sketches

Unlike drawings, sketches omit details. In the sketch in Figure 16.5, no attempt is made to draw a specific person; instead, a generic male is shown. Sketches are good to help readers visualize processes. Here, the sketch shows how workers in Mexico get paid in a virtual system that eliminates paychecks and the need to have a bank account.

Maps

Use maps to emphasize location or to compare items in different locations. Several computer software packages now allow users to generate local, state, national, or global maps, adding color or shadings, and labels. (See Figure 9.6)

- Label states, provinces, or countries if it's important that people be able to identify levels in areas other than their own.
- Avoid using perspective. Perspective makes the values harder to read and can make comparison difficult.

Use Color and Decoration with Restraint.

Color makes visuals more dramatic, but it creates at least two problems. First, readers try to interpret color, an interpretation that may not be appropriate.

Perhaps the best use of color occurs in the weather maps printed daily in many newspapers. Blue seems to fit cold; red seems to fit hot temperatures. Second, meanings assigned to colors differ depending on the audience's national background and profession.

Connotations for color vary from culture to culture. Blue suggests masculinity in the United States, criminality in France, strength or fertility in Egypt, and villainy in Japan. Red is sometimes used to suggest danger or stop in the United States; it means go

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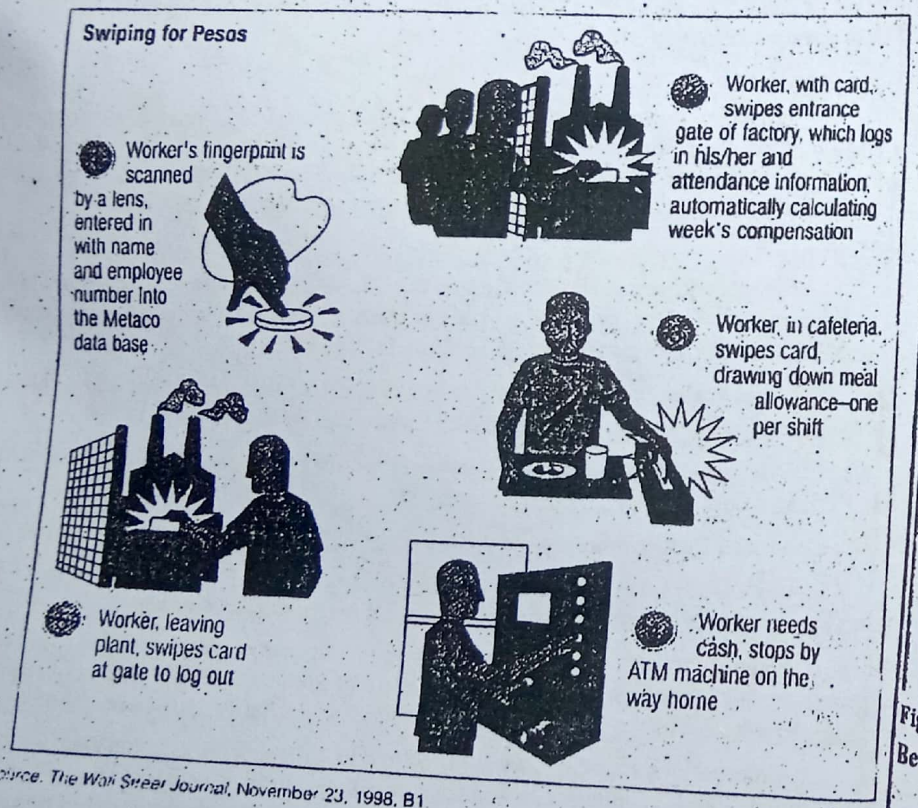
in China and is associated with festivities. Red suggests masculinity or aristocracy in France, death in Korea, blasphemy in some African countries, and luxury in many parts of the world. Yellow suggests caution or cowardice in the United States, prosperity in Egypt, grace in Japan, and femininity in many parts of the world.

These general cultural associations may be superseded by corporate, national, or professional associations. Some people associate blue with IBM or Hewlett-Packard and red with Coca-Cola, communism, or Japan. People in specific professions learn other meanings for colors. Blue suggests reliability to financial managers, water or coldness to engineers, and death to health care professionals. Red means losing money to financial managers, danger to engineers, but healthy to health care professionals. Green usually means safe to engineers, but infected to health care professionals.

These various associations suggest that color is safest with a homogenous audience that you know well. In an increasingly multicultural workforce, color may send signals you do not intend.



Source. The Wall Street Journal, November 23, 1998, B1

Figure 9.5 Sketches can show Processes

When you do use color in visuals, L. G. Thorell and W. J. Smith suggest these guidelines:

Use no more than five colors when colors have meanings.

Use glossy paper to make colors more vivid.

Be aware that colors on a computer screen always look brighter than the same colors on paper because the screen sends out light.

In any visual, use as little shading and as few lines as are necessary for clarity. Don't clutter up the visual with extra marks. When you design black-and white graphs, use shades of gray rather than stripes, wavy lines, and checks to indicate different segments or items.

Resist the temptation to make your visual "artistic" or "relevant" by turning it into a picture or adding clip art. Clip art consists of pre-drawn images that you can import into your newsletter, sign, or graph. A small drawing of a car in the corner of a line graph showing the number of miles driven is acceptable in an oral presentation but out of place in a written report. Turning a line graph into a highway to show miles driven makes it harder to read: it's hard to separate the data line from lines that are merely decorative. Edward Tufte uses the term chart junk for decorations that at best are irrelevant to the visual and at worst mislead the reader. If you use clip art, be sure that the images of people show a good mix of sexes, various races and ages, and various physical conditions.

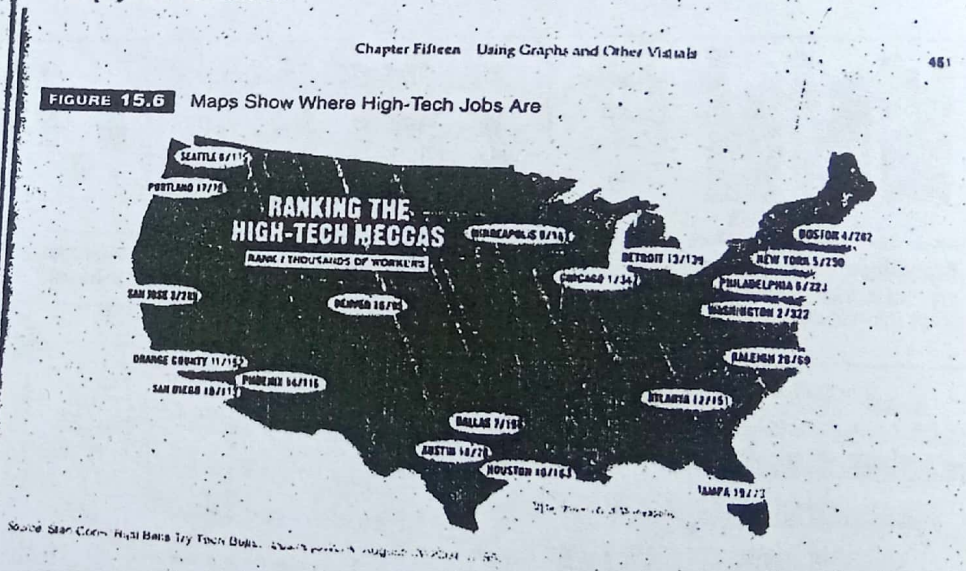


Figure 9.6 Maps Show where Hi-Tech Jobs are

Be Sure the Visual is accurate and Ethical.

Always double-check your visuals to be sure the information is accurate. Also, many visuals have accurate labels but misleading visual shapes. Visuals communicate quickly;

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audiences remember the shape, not the labels. If the reader has to study the labels to get the right picture, the visual is unethical even if the labels are accurate.

Perspective graphs are especially hard for readers to interpret and should be avoided. Even simple bar and line graphs may be misleading if part of the scale is missing, or truncated. **Truncated graphs** are most acceptable when the audience knows the basic data set well. For example, graphs of the stock market almost never start at zero; they are routinely truncated. This omission is acceptable for audiences who follow the market closely. Since part of the scale is missing in truncated graphs, small changes seem like major ones. Labels may make the visual literally "accurate," but a visual is unethical if someone who looks at it quickly is likely to misinterpret it. Data can also be distorted when the context is omitted. As Tufte suggests, a drop may be part of a regular cycle, a correction after an atypical increase, or a permanent drop to a new, lower plateau.

To make your visuals more accurate,

- Differentiate between actual and estimated or projected values.
- When you must truncate a scale, do so clearly with a break in the bars or in the background.
- Avoid perspective and three-dimensional graphs.
- Avoid combining graphs with different scales.
- Use images of people carefully in histographs to avoid sexist, racist, or other exclusionary visual statements.

3. INTEGRATING VISUALS IN YOUR TEXT

Refer to every visual in your text. Normally one gives the table or figure number in the text but not the title. Put the visual as soon after your reference as space and page design permit. If the visual must go on another page, tell the reader where to find it. Summarize the main point of a visual before you present the visual itself. Then when readers get to it, they'll see it as confirmation of your point.

The weak statement mirrors the thought processes that occur as the writer processes data: one first categorizes the data in a very general way ("results"); one next looks at the data; and one finally decides what the data mean. But when this mental process becomes the writer's organizing pattern, the reader is forced to duplicate the whole process by which the writer reached a conclusion. Most readers, understandably, are unwilling to do work which the writer is supposed to do, so they will skim or skip the data presented in this unsatisfactory fashion. When the writer finally comes to the point, readers may be unconvinced because they haven't recognized the significance of the evidence in the table. Remember that you are writing not to reveal how your own mind works but to explain something to your readers and to convince them that your analysis is correct.

How much discussion a visual needs depends on the audience, the complexity of the visual, and the importance of the point it makes. If the material is new to the audience, you'll need a fuller explanation than if similar material is presented to this audience every week or month. If the visual is complex, you may want to help the reader find key data points in it. If the point is important, you'll want to discuss its implications in some detail. In contrast, one sentence about a visual may be enough when the audience is already familiar with the topic and the data, when the visual is simple and well designed, and when the information in the visual is a minor part of your proof.

When you discuss visuals, spell out numbers that fall at the beginning of a sentence. If spelling out the number or year is cumbersome, revise the sentence so that it does not begin with a number. Put numbers in parenthesis at the end of the clause or sentence to make the sentence easier to read.

4. USING VISUALS IN YOUR PRESENTATION

Visuals for presentations need to be simpler than visuals the audience reads on paper. The table in Figure 16.3, for example, is too complex for a slide. Depending on the point you needed to make, you might be able to cut out one of the columns, round off the data even more, or present the material in a chart rather than a table.

Visuals for presentations should have titles but don't need figure numbers. Do know where each visual is so that you can return to one if someone asks about it during the question period. Decorative clip art, even though technically chartjunk is acceptable in oral presentations as long as it does not obscure the story you're telling with the visual.

Rather than reading the visual to the audience, summarize the story and then elaborate on what it means for the audience. If you have copies of all the visuals for your audience, hand them out at the beginning of the talk.

SUMMARY

- Numbers are not "objective." Like words, they require interpretation and context to make sense.
- In the rough draft use visuals to see that ideas are presented completely and to see what relationships exist. In the final report, use visuals to make points vivid, to emphasize material that the reader might skip, and to present material more compactly and with less repetition than words alone would require.
- You'll use more visuals when you want to show relationships and to persuade, when the information is complex or contains extensive numerical data, and when the audience values visuals.

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Chapter 10

MAKING ORAL PRESENTATIONS

This Chapter covers

1. Purposes in Oral Presentation
2. Planning a Strategy for your Presentation
3. Choosing the Kind of Presentation
4. Adapting your Ideas to the Audience
5. Planning Visuals and other Devices to Involve the Audience
6. Organization for Information and Persuasive Speaking
7. Problem Solution For Change & No Change
8. Delivering an Effective Presentation

At the start of a speech, you have the attention of the audience. The key to keeping their attention is to start fast-for example, don't go into a 10-minute recap of your personal history as fascinating as (only) you think it might be. Get to the meat of the talk. Skip the build-up. Even an informative presentation has to entertain. Only an interesting, entertaining speaker will get rapt attention. I want intellectual involvement, and it's my job as a speaker to make that happen.

Presentations don't have to use visuals. Indeed, visuals can be crutches for weak speakers. Visuals can emphasize key points, make the talk more interesting, and keep my company's logo on the screen in front of the audience. For a one-hour presentation, I use about 15 PowerPoint slides with short phrases or sentences like "Jump to the next curve."

I talk only about topics that I truly understand. I believe that someone who has nothing relevant to say to an audience shouldn't speak to them. Further, if the audience is relevant, but you have nothing to say (because nothing new has happened), then you should also decline the invitation.

I used to be very afraid of speaking in public. I've found that there are no magical fixes for this fear-you just have to speak. I speak about 60 times a year as a keynote speaker or moderator. It takes this volume to truly be comfortable, and I hope well.

The next-to-last message in a talk should be something positive, uplifting, and optimistic. The last message should be gratefulness. Don't worry about trying to end on a "strong note." You can't pull a bad presentation out of a hole with a clever sentence. The key is for the whole speech to be good, so you can end on an "even note" and be just fine.

The power to persuade people to care about something you believe in is crucial to business success. Making a good oral presentation is more than just good delivery: it also involves developing a strategy that fits your audience and purpose, having good content, and organizing material effectively. The choices you make in each of these areas are affected by your purposes, the audience, and the situation

1. PURPOSES IN ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Oral presentations have the same three basic purposes that written documents have to inform to persuade and to build goodwill. Like written messages most oral presentations have more than one purpose.

Informative presentations inform or teach the audience. Training sessions in an organization are primarily informative. Secondary purposes may be to persuade new employees to follow organizational procedures rather than doing something their own way, and to help them appreciate the organizational culture.

Persuasive presentations motivate the audience to act or to believe. Giving information and evidence is an important means of persuasion. Stories visuals and self-disclosure are also effective. In addition the speaker must build goodwill by appearing to be credible and sympathetic to the audience's needs. The goal in many presentations is a favorable vote or decision. For example, speakers making business presentations may try to persuade the audience to approve their proposals, to adopt their ideas, or to buy their products. Sometimes the goal is to change behavior or attitudes or to reinforce existing attitudes. For example, a speaker at a meeting of factory workers may stress the importance of following safety procedures. A speaker at a church meeting may talk about the problem of homelessness in the community and try to build support for community shelters for the homeless.

Goodwill presentations entertain and validate the audience. In an after dinner speech the audience wants to be entertained. Presentations at sales meetings may be designed to stroke the audience's egos and to validate their commitment to organizational goals.

Make your purpose as specific as possible.

Weak: The purpose of my presentation is to discuss saving for retirement.

Better: The purpose of my presentation is to persuade my audience to put their 401k funds in stocks and bonds, not in money market accounts and CDs.

or: The purpose of my presentation is to explain how to calculate how much money someone needs to save in order to maintain a specific lifestyle after retirement.

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Note that the purpose is not the introduction of your talk; it is the principle that guides your choice of strategy and content.

Comparing Written and Oral Messages

Giving a presentation is in many ways very similar to writing a message. All of the chapters up to this point on using you attitude and positive emphasis, developing reader benefits, analyzing your audience, designing slides, overcoming objections, doing research, and analyzing data remain relevant as you plan an oral presentation

- A written message makes it easier to
- Present extensive or complex financial data.
- Present many specific details of a law, policy: or procedure.
- Minimize undesirable emotions.
- Use emotion to help persuade the audience.
- Focus the audience's attention on specific points. Answer questions, resolve conflicts, and build consensus.
- Modify a proposal that may not be acceptable in its original form.
- Get immediate action or response.
- Oral and written messages have many similarities. In both, you should
- Adapt the message to the specific audience.
- Show the audience how they would benefit from the idea, policy, service, vor product.
- Overcome any objections the audience may have.
- Use you-attitude and positive emphasis.
- Use visuals to clarify or emphasize material.
- Specify exactly what the audience should do

2. PLANNING A STRATEGY FOR YOUR PRESENTATION

A strategy is your plan for reaching your specific goals with a specific audience. In all oral presentations, simplify what you want to say. Identify the one idea you want the audience to take home. Simplify your supporting detail so it's easy to follow. Simplify visuals so they can be taken in at a glance. Simplify your words and sentences so they're easy to understand.

Too complicated Information Storage Devices provides voice solutions using the company's unique, patented multilevel storage technique.

Simple: We make voice chips. They're extremely easy to use. They have unlimited applications. And they last forever.

An oral presentation needs to be simpler than a written message to the same audience. If readers forget a point they can turn back to it and reread the paragraph. Headings, paragraph indentation, and punctuation provide visual cues to help readers understand the message. Listeners, in contrast, must remember what the speaker says. Whatever they don't remember is lost. Even asking questions requires the audience to remember which points they don't understand

Analyze your audience for an oral presentation just as you do for a written message. If you'll be speaking to co-workers, talk to them about your topic or proposal to find out what questions or objections they have. For audiences inside the organization, the biggest questions are often practical ones. Will it work? How much will it cost? How long will it take?

Think about the physical conditions in which you'll be speaking. Will the audience be tired at the end of a long day of listening? Sleepy after a big meal? Will the group be large or small? The more you know about your audience, the better you can adapt your message to them.

3. CHOOSING THE KIND OF PRESENTATION

Choose one of three basic kinds of presentations monologue, guided discussion, or interactive.

In a monologue presentation, the speaker speaks without interruption; questions are held until the end of the presentation, where the speaker functions as an expert. The speaker plans the presentation in advance and delivers it without deviation. This kind of presentation is the most common in class situations, but it's often boring for the audience. Good delivery skills are crucial, since the audience is comparatively uninvolved.

Linda Driskill suggests that guided discussions offer a better way to present material and help an audience find a solution it can "buy into." In a guided discussion, the speaker presents the questions or issues that both speaker and audience have agreed on in advance. Rather than functioning as an expert with all the answers, the speaker serves as a facilitator to help the audience tap its own knowledge. This kind of presentation is excellent for presenting the results of consulting projects, when the speakers has specialized knowledge but the audience must implement the solution if it is to succeed. Guided discussions need more time than monologue presentations, but produce more audience response, more responses involving analysis, and more commitment to the result.

An interactive presentation is a conversation, even if the speaker stands up in front of a group and uses charts and overheads. Most sales presentations are interactive presentations. The sales representative uses questions to determine the

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buyer's needs, probe objections, and gain provisional and then final commitment to the purchase. Even in a memorized sales presentation, the buyer will talk at least 30% of the time. In a problem-solving sales presentation top sales people let the buyer do 70% of the talking up until the action close.

4. ADAPTING YOUR IDEAS TO THE AUDIENCE

Measure the message you'd like to send against where your audience is now. If your audience is indifferent, skeptical, or hostile, focus on the part of your message the audience will find most interesting and easiest to accept.

Don't seek a major opinion change in a single oral presentation. If the audience has already decided to hire an advertising agency, then a good presentation can convince them that your agency is the one to hire. But if you're talking to a small business that has always done its own ads, limit your purpose.

You may be able to prove that an agency can earn its fees by doing things the owner can't do and by freeing the owner's time for other activities. A second presentation may be needed to prove that an ad agency can do a better job than the small business could do on its own. Only after the audience is receptive should you try to persuade the audience to hire your agency rather than a competitor.

Make your ideas relevant to your audience by linking what you have to say their, experiences and interests. Showing your audience that the topic affects them directly is the most effective strategy. When you can't do that, at least link the topic to some everyday experience.

When was the last time you were hungry? Maybe you remember being hungry while you were on a diet, or maybe you had to work late at a lab and didn't get back to the dorm in time for dinner.

Speech about world hunger to an audience of college students

Planning a Strong Opening and Close

The beginning and the end of a presentation, like the beginning and the end of a written document, are positions of emphasis. Use those key positions to interest the audience and emphasize your key point. You'll sound more natural and more effective if you talk from notes but write out your opener and close in advance and memorize them. (They'll be short just a sentence or two).

Consider using one of the four modes for openers startling statement, narration or anecdote, question, or quotation. The more you can do to personalize your opener for your audience, the better. Recent events are better than things that happened long ago; local events are better than events at a distance; people they know are better than people who are only names.

Startling statement

Twelve of our customers have canceled orders in the past month.

This presentation to a company's executive committee went on to show that the company's distribution system was inadequate and to recommend a third warehouse located in the Southwest.

Narration or anecdote

A mother was having difficulty getting her son up for school. He pulled the covers over his head.

"I'm not going to school, "he said "I'm not ever going again."

"Are you sick?" his mother asked.

"No," he answered. "I'm sick of school. They hate me. They call me names. They make fun of me. Why should I go?"

"I can give you two good reasons," the mother replied. "The first is that you're 42 years old. And the second' is you're the school principal."

This speech to a seminar for educators went on to discuss "the three knottiest problems in education today." Educators had to face those problems they couldn't hide under the covers.

Even better than canned stories are anecdotes that happened to you. The best anecdotes are parables that contain the point of your talk.

Question

Are you going to have enough money to do the things you want to when you retire?

This presentation to a group of potential clients discusses the value of using the services of a professional financial planner to achieve one's goals for retirement.

Question

According to Towers Perrin, the profits of Fortune 100 companies would be 25% lower-they'd go down $17 billion-if their earnings statements listed the future costs companies are obligated to pay for retirees' health care.

This presentation on options for health care for retired employees urges executives to start now to investigate options to cut the future costs.

Your opener should interest the audience and establish a rapport with them. Some speakers use humor to achieve those goals. However, an inappropriate joke can turn the audience against the speaker. Never use humor that's directed against the audience. In contrast, speakers who can make fun of themselves almost always succeed.

It's both a privilege and a pressure to be here.

Humor isn't the only way to set an audience at ease. Smile at your audience

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before you begin; let them see that you're a real person and a nice one.

The end of your presentation should be as strong as the opener. For your close, you could do one or more of the following:

- Restate your main point.
- Refer to your opener to create a frame for your presentation.
- End with a vivid, positive picture.
- Tell the audience exactly what to do to solve the problem you've discussed.

The following close from a fund-raising speech combines a restatement of the main point with a call for action, telling the audience what to do.

Plain and simple, we need money to run the foundation, just like you need money to develop new products. We need money to make this work. We need money from you. Pick up that pledge card. Fill it out. Turn it in at the door as you leave. Make it a statement about your commitment make it a big statement.

When you write out your opener and close, be sure to use oral rather than written style. As you can see in the example close above, oral style uses shorter sentences and shorter, simpler words than writing does. Oral style can even sound a bit choppy when it is read by eye. Oral style uses more personal pronouns, a less varied vocabulary, and more repetition.

5. Planning Visuals and Other Devices to Involve the Audience

Visuals can give your presentation a professional image. A1986 study showed that presenters using overhead transparencies were perceived as "better prepared, more professional, more persuasive, more credible, and more interesting" than speakers who did not use visuals. They were also more likely to persuade a group to adopt their recommendations. In 2000, a study found that in an informative sensation, multimedia (power Point slides with graphics and animation) produced more learning than overheads made from the slides and 16% more learning than text alone. In sales presentations by two different banks, one bank's use of multimedia (Power Point slides with graphics, animation, and video) motivated 58% more students to choose that bank over the bank that used overheads only. When the second bank used text alone, 50% more students chose the bank that used multimedia. Although the two banks offered identical fees and services, students said that the bank represent by PowerPoint slides aren't the only or necessarily the best way to involve the audience. Dan Leeber persuaded UPS to switch to Valeo clutches by completely disassembling the competitor's clutch and showing part by part why Valeo's product was better.

Location

This obvious characteristic needs minimal discussion. It is sufficient to say that each location for your presentation has its own peculiar physical environment.

Members of company speakers' bureaus have spoken in church basements, large auditoriums, oppressively small conference rooms, and even in lounges of local bars. Know the physical arrangements, find out whether you will have a podium or a table. Will you have a public address system? Surely the physical size of the room is important, but underlying all these factors is the attitudinal influence of the room on you, the speaker. Checklist 10.1 gives suggestions for analyzing your audience and the locales of your speech.

6. ORGANIZATION FOR INFORMATION AND PERSUASIVE SPEAKING

Your basic preparation is over. You have determined whether you will inform or persuade; you have stated your specific purpose and analyzed your audience. You also have begun collecting data. Now it's time to organize the data into a logical pattern. To give you suggestions, we employ the structure suggested since ancient times: introduction, body or discussion, summary or conclusion.

The Introduction

In the preceding chapter we suggested that introductions are composed of three parts: (1) the porch, (2) the aim, or purpose, and (3) the layout. This system we call the PAL approach to public speaking. Let's view those sections with reference to either the speech to inform or persuade.

The Porch (P)

This is the opening statement the beginning, through using five different approaches.

1. Tell an anecdote, appropriate joke, or good-natured story relating to your subject:

"Funny things happen to people between 40 and 60; here's one incident that's common to that group."

- Checklist 10.1 Analysis of Audience and Locale

1. Know their interests', likes, and dislikes.
2. Determine their degree of knowledge of the topic.
3. Know whether there is hostility toward the topic or toward you.
4. Be aware of the gender of the group and approximate ages.
5. Find out about die physical setting for the speech.

"An interesting communication story is of a speaker mistaking a rest-room in a London airport. I'll begin' there."

"Merit pay increase may have two definitions the company's and mine. You'll like mine better."

2. Use a quotation that gives some background or inspiration to your speech:

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"As Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote, 'A great thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving.' That's my theme. In which direction are we headed?"

"No man is an island,' John Donne said. That's the basic idea we promote is this company."

"The shadows are lengthening for me. The twilight is here.' The words of General MacArthnr in 1962 are not a drumroll for ending. They were the beginning of a new resolve for the rest of us."

3. Greet your audience sincerely

"Two places I especially enjoy coming to are home and your community. It's good to be with you."

"The sound of your applause is indeed a warm greeting. I thank you. It's good to be here."

4. Make a startling statement

"By the end of my talk, over 2,000 new babies will have been born: Over 1,800 people will have died."

"Last year we had the lowest turnover rate in the industry 6 percent."

"One of you has just won dinner for two. A look on page 27 of the workbook with my signature, indicates the lucky winner."

5. Ask questions that make audiences start to think

"Let me begin by asking some general questions. What's the average age of a company president? Which area of study do managers say is the most important in reaching the top?"

"Three questions are foremost: What are the architectural plans for the company condominiums? Who gets first claim on applying for entrance? How much will they cost?"

The Aim (A)

Briefly, the aim is simply stating clearly and precisely the purpose of your presentation. Examples such as the following have been used:

"One reason brings me here today to chat with you about the changes in our retirement policy, (We know the central purpose immediately).

"Let me state up front that our monthly meeting has one purpose to summarize our positive operating results for the last period." (There is little question as to the core idea for the speech}

"I'm here to ask for your support as a candidate for the office of state senator." (Either pro or con, the. audience knows the speaker's main thrust.)

"My point is tins: We must change our policy regarding the promotion of persons from within the company." (Using the word policy immediately sets the purpose of the talk.)

Therefore, be precise, be exact, be coneise regarding the reason you are before an audience. That way you avoid the embarrassing statement one occasionally heats from an audience member at the end of a confusing talk. I haven't the slightest idea what that was ill about."

The Layout (L)

By layout we mean giving an overview; setting the agenda, laying out the roadmap of where your speech will proceed. According to an old quotation, "It's tellin' 'em what yur gonna cover." It's giving a foretaste of the major points to be covered in the body of the talk some examples follow.

I'm here to discuss three, major costs connected with product liability. (The audience immediately knows you'll cover three points.)

"Today I'll concentrate on the cultural problems abroad regarding different concepts of keeping time." (The audience knows there will be several-precise number unknown issues to be discussed.)

"One of the reasons I'm here is to support the idea of establishing a subsidiary in the Philippines, for the following four reasons." (The audience knows four reasons will be presented.)

Occasionally speakers also state what the three, or four points will be, thus making the layout even clearer, as in the following examples

"To help you understand why we believe Venezuela-provides Wright Oil with attractive investment opportunities, I will discuss Venezuela's economic, financial, investment, arid political situation." (Listeners know the four areas to be discussed later in the body of the talk.)

"Based on my analysis, the marketing research department recommends [aim] that Happy Inn expands into the Danish market with several moderately priced 300-room hotels. My criteria, for this recommendation are the following favorable business and investment trends in Denmark, increases in' the Danish tourist market, and Happy Inn's strength in northern Europe." (Three criteria serve, as the core arguments to be supported in the body of the presentation).

Regardless of which approach you use in the layout simply giving the number of points to be covered or precisely listing the points audiences tend to remember your major points when the layout is clearly done. Sample introductions using the complete PAL technique are illustrated below.

Example 1 Informative

Porch (P) Here's a game I'd like to play it's a variation of Trivial

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Pursuit.

Aim (A) What I'd like to do is use this approach to describe some of the characteristics of top-level executives in the United States.

Layout (L) our categories for analysis will include career patterns education and personal background

Example 2 Persuasive

Porch (P) "how many of you know the word Macau? Do any of you even know it's a country? Have any idea where it is?

Aim (A) I'll tell you- Butt I'll also make clear that or, behalf of the research committee we recommended establishing a pharmaceutical joint venture with a company in that region of the world.

Layout (L) Our committee reviewed four criteria will serve as the basis for our recommendation and reasons for requesting your acceptance positive government attitudes improved infrastructure positive investment climates and a positive market for your products.

The Body (Text, Discussion)

Informative Speaking

Known variously as the body, the discussion, the text, or the main section this part of your speech supports your aim, or specific purpose. Here also appear the major sections you announced in your layout. In informative speaking you can choose from several ways to make your ideas clear

1. **By Topical Organization**. This means you organize topics into natural divisions or into some kind of general classification. No two people organize a topic in an identical matter each would be correct according to his or her own purpose. A speech on "The Automobile as a People Mover' could be variously organized.

I. The electrical System	I. Rubber and its use in an automobile
II. The lubrication system	II Plastics as a major portion of the
III. The cooling system	III Steel's contribution to an automobile

You decide on the major sections in the bony of your speech. Then to make those sections clear determine the supports (as discussed later in this chapter).

2. **By Chronological Organization**. Listeners like to follow material according to the order in which events or happenings take place past, present, and future. That's chronological. If a sequence is obvious, has a beginning and an ending has a definite sequential motion, has a prescribed order of events, use the chronological order.

An informational speech on "Rights of Students in the Business School Concerning Grade Issues" could have the following major headings:

I. Individual meetings with the instructor [earliest]
II. Consultation with the department chairperson [later)
III Consultation with the dean of the school [later]
IV Final review by academic committee, [latest)

Instructing a group of middle managers on "Preparing for Meetings" could include:

I Decisions before the meeting
II Notification of members
III Arrangements for the meeting
IV The leader's role
V The participants role
VI Evaluating the meeting

Even though the headings in the above example are chronological-from before the meeting to after the meeting-you may use your own subheadings within the chronological pattern.

3. **By Cause to Effect.** We know that certain pressures and stimuli cause other things to happen: Pressing down on the accelerator makes a car go faster, opening a refrigerator door lets cool air escape, investing money in a bond results in dividend payments; advertising a sale should bring in more customers.

In the preceding examples there is a high chance that the causes produced the stated effects. If the causes were not there, no effect would have occurred. But three caveats are note worthy in considering causal reasoning.

(a) Avoid, assuming that a single cause produces a precise result

Effect	Questionable Cause
Low earnings per share	are not solely the result of decreased sales, may or may not be due to a faulty spell-checker are- not entirely due to the actions of greedy people
Spelling errors	
Takeovers and mergers	
Your low raise	is not wholly due to your boss's not liking you does not necessarily mean the instructor dislikes you.
A low grade on an assignment	

(b) Avoid assuming a false connection that is, presuming that because one event occurred after another, the two are linked. In the following examples, ask yourself if there is a precise, infallible connection between the cause and the effect.

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Effect.	False Linking Causes
Sales were up in 199.	after new management took over.
The consulting area of the Big Eight has grown	since deregulation,
She's been a problem Unemployment is up,	since she's been here.
I got an A;	and stocks are down.
	I changed instructors

(c) Realize there may be multiple causes, some major, some minor. Not all causes are of equal value. A speaker who states that a minor cause is major is open to challenge. Such is often the basis of argument-discussed in the next chapter-as two different teams or individuals try to determine causer for a problem and try to correct it.

Persuasive Speaking

As the informative speech has options for organizing the body of the speech, so does the persuasive statement. In place of informing, you now use the body to persuade, to get the audience to accept your position, to believe your evidence. What you are doing is gaining acceptance of your aim, often expressed as a claim assertion, thesis, generalization, proposition, resolution, or even a formal legal statement.

Position: That one month of foreign travel be required of all students studying for a business degree.

Claim: I maintain that the Economist is one of the most widely read business journals.

Assertion: One often hears this assertion, which I happen to accept: There is a high correlation between a favorable home life and ones job satisfaction

Resolution: Whereas, lack of exercise among utility executives is a concern of health officials, and

Whereas, high correlations exist between exercise and decreases in stress, now therefore

Be it resolved: That our corporation supports the construction of a physical fitness and wellness center, and that it is available to all employees.

Legal proposition: Article XII, Section I C, of the code suggests that four members of the financial staff be endorsed by the chief Financial officer.

Therefore, an amendment through addition should be inserted into Article XII Section IC as follows: That all ...

All the terms in the left-hand column assert that something should be done, accepted, or believed. Each demands proof before listeners will willingly go aiong with you.

Remember this: Persuasive speaking may use the same kinds of organization discussed earlier (topical, chronological, and cause-to-effect). But

most persuasive business speaking uses the problem-solution format, proposing a change from the status quo or recommending that things remain as they are.

7. PROBLEM-SOLUTION-FOR CHANGE

Frequently your intent will be to argue that something is wrong and that a change is in order; you are unhappy with the status quo. For this reason you must convince listeners that a problem exists and that you have a solution to remedy the problem. You begin with proving the existence of a problem.

The Problem, Central to your thinking is the idea that something is wrong; there is dissatisfaction; flaws exist in the way things are going; failures far outnumber successes; costs are outrunning profits; negatives exceed the positives; the situation is so bad that something must be done; difficulties are many; there is a need for change; things are a, mess. Remember, not all your listeners may feel there is a problem" so your first step is proving that one exists. Two brief examples of the problem section -in the body follow.

Problem: Our preparation for a rate case hearing before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission can be-improved.

1. Neglecting contacts with advocacy groups
2. Preparing case with insufficient' evidence

Problem: There is need for improving communication between upper and lower management.

1. Lower management feels they are being talked down to
2. Downward communication is often without explanation
3. Personal interaction is minimal between the two, levels.

By presenting your problem analysis you have met half your responsibilities. You now must present the solution for solving the problem.

The Solution or Recommendation. Politely state your solution and then give your reasons. Several questions may run through your listeners minds:

- Do we really need to change from what we're now doing?
- Will the proposal really solve the problem?
- Can one be sure that the solution will work? Be practical? Be effective? Be cost-effective?
- Will the benefits of the solution outweigh the negatives?
- Will the proposal create a host of entirely new problems'?

Having answered what debaters call these "stock issues," you are ready to amplify your solution. Two examples of organizing solutions or recommendations follow:

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Recommend we improve our preparation for rate hearings through the following steps.

1. Inform the Undiana Utility Regulatory commission as to the motivation behind the proposed rate increase.
2. Focus on local consumer organization.
3. Inform company employees.
4. Write numerous news releases for the public media.

Recommendations for opening lines of communication between, upper and lower management

1. Public monthly newsletter inform all levels of the organizations
2. Institute a "Good Idea Program" to encourage employee involvement at all levels.
3. Promote visits between levels of management

Overview of forms of cooperation

1. Restricted investment
2. Technology licenses
3. Customer and supplier
4. Joint venture.

Your solution is a mixture of laying out your recommendation and showing how it will remove the problems you cited earlier. One more step needs to be taken in the body of the speech advocating change: Show the benefits of adopting your solution and the disadvantages of not accepting the solution .

The Benefits from the Solution Briefly, you can insert in your talk positive results if your solution is adopted. You're trying to heighten desire for acceptance, summarizing future desirable effects. Your answers would, be "yes" to the questions raised on page 433. Yes, we really do need to change; yes, my proposal would solve the problems, along with producing the following benefits; yes, my proposal would work, would be practical, would be effective, would be" cost-effective; yes, by accepting my proposal the benefits would outweigh the negatives: yes, my solution implies that a change is needed and would not create a series of new problems

The Disadvantages of not Accepting the Solution. Conversely you may also use a, negative approach. A typical method is to suggest that if your recommendation or solution is not accepted undesirable consequences will occur. You project, into the future, suggesting that the current situation will continue (the status quo will be maintained); current problems, as you have defined them, will continue; undesirable consequences, such as costs, work force issues or examples relevant to your topic, will not be removed. An example of two negatives is seen in the following:

Negative: Neglecting to improve our preparatory steps for a rate case hearing will result in continued poor preparation.

1. The commission will sense we are unprepared to defend our requested rate increase.
2. The public will be up in arms unless we get publicity out into the community.
3. The lasing consumer groups of the city will fell neglected if they are not kept informed resulting in less support of our position

Negative: Not adopting an open-line communication system will permit the current problem to continue

1. Team spirit will not increase
2. Vested interests will continue in strength

Thus, the problem-solution-benefit form of organizing the body of the persuasive speech first proves the existence of a problem; supplies a remedy to that problem', and then projects positive benefits if the solution is adopted or negative consequences if the recommendation is not accepted.

7. PROBLEM-SOLUTION---FOR NO CHANGE

"Any 'hint at changing a procedure or accepting a different idea within an organization is to some people a red flag. Indeed, most people like things to remain as they are. We all have heard statements such as "What's wrong with the" why we're.

- **Communication Probe**

Immunity. That term is usually associated with the medical world. Yet, used metaphorically, it has applicability to the world of business as well. There a "immunity" can be a shield, a hindrance, an impediment, an obstacle to individuals receiving a message. In brief, some persons consciously edit out unwanted information, screening out much information Formed in public relations people. Our answer is to select a strategy that is in tune with the audiences selected to hear the message, with the intent of influencing their behavior. How to achieve this, one expert suggests is via communication strategy, creativity, message building, delivery, and evaluation.

Obrien. T. (1995, May) Business must overcome "message immunity" communication World 12, 32.

now doing it?" "Why should we tamper with success?" "There's no problem why can't we leave things alone?" "That recommendation is worse than what we've got now." "Over my dead body will that solution be adopted," and so forth through a series of statements reflecting resistance to change.

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The Problem. If you feel the current situation is acceptable as is, you are in favor of the status quo. Such an attitude may be as legitimate as that of those who wish a change, except that you must prove that no problem or need to change exists. All your subheads in support of the proposition must leave one impression: There is no problem things are fine.

If you are in favor, for example, of keeping your training program in your company as now structured, you might formulate the following generic main headings, which may be adapted to other topics as well:

Problem: Current situation, for training managers

1. In-house programs
2. Use of outside consultants and trainers
3. Release, time form-site programs

The Solution. Debaters on the negative side of an issue-those opposed to change and in favor of the status quo-would argue that no new solution is needed, things are currently acceptable. By analogy, a political party out of power contends that so many problems exist that a change in the administration should be made; the group in power argues that to continue success, the current party must remain.

Recommendation that we remain with the current system

1. Continue in-house programs along with release time
2. Continue use of outside expert consultants and trainers

The Summary or Conclusion

Earlier we stated that a summary pulls together the main points of your talk. Now you tell an audience what you have told them – similar to the summaries at the end of each chapter in this book. If your talk has symmetry, the summary will closely mirror the purpose and layout as expressed in your introduction.

Organizing Your Information

Most presentations use a direct pattern of organization, even when the goal is to persuade a reluctant audience. In a business setting, the audience is in a hurry and knows that you want to persuade them. Be honest about your goal, and then prove that your goal meets the audience's needs too.

In a persuasive presentation, start with your strongest point, your best reason. If time permits, give other reasons as well and respond to possible objections. Put your weakest point in the middle so that you can end on a strong note.

Often one of five standard patterns of organization will work:

Chronological. Start with the past, move to the present, and end by looking ahead.

- **Problem-causes-solution.** Explain the symptoms of the problem, identify its causes, and suggest a solution. This pattern works best when the audience will find your solution easy to accept.
- **Excluding alternatives.** Explain the symptoms of the problem. Explain the obvious solutions first and show why they won't solve the problem. End by discussing a solution that will work. This pattern may be necessary when the audience will find the solution hard to accept.
- **Pro-con.** Give all the reasons in favor of something, then those against it. This pattern works well when you want the audience to see the weaknesses in its position.
- **1-2-3.** Discuss three aspects of a topic. This pattern works well to organize short informative briefings. "Today I'll review our sales, production, and profits for the last quarter."

Make your organization clear to your audience. Written documents can be reread; they can use headings, paragraphs, lists, and indentations to signal levels of detail. In a presentation, you have to provide explicit clues to the structure of your discourse.

Early in your talk-perhaps immediately after your opener-provide an overview of the main points you will make.

First, I'd like to talk about who the homeless in Columbus are. Second, I'll talk about the services The Open Shelter provides. Finally, I'll talk about what you-either individually or as a group-can do to help.

An overview provides a mental peg that hearers can hang each point on. It also can prevent someone from missing what you are saying because he or she wonders why you aren't covering a major point that you've saved for later.

Offer a clear signpost as you come to each new point. A signpost is an explicit statement of the point you have reached. Choose wording that fits your style. The following statements are four different ways that a speaker could use to introduce the last of three points:

Now we come to the third point: what you can do as a group or as individuals to help homeless people in Columbus.

So much for what we're doing. Now let's talk about what you can do to help.

You may be wondering, what can I do to help?

As you can see, the Shelter is trying to do many things. We could do more things with your help.

DELIVERING AN EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION

Audiences want the sense that you're talking directly to them and that you care that they understand and are interested. They'll forgive you if you get tangled up in a sentence and end it ungrammatically. They won't forgive you if you seem to have a

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"canned" talk that you're going to deliver no matter who the audience is or how they respond. You can convey a sense of caring to your audience by making direct eye contact with them and by using a conversational style.

Dealing with Fear

Feeling nervous is normal. But you can harness that nervous energy to help you do your best work. As one student said, you don't need to get rid of your butterflies. All you need to do is make them fly in formation.

To calm your nerves before you give an oral presentation,

- Be prepared. Analyze your audience, organize your thoughts, prepare visual aids, practice your opener and close, check out the arrangements.
- Use only the amount of caffeine you normally use. More or less may make you Jumpy.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages.
- Relable your nerves. Instead of saying, "I'm scared," try saying, "My adrenaline is up." Adrenaline sharpens our reflexes and helps us do our best.

Just before your presentation,

- Consciously contract and then relax your muscles, starting with your feet and calves and going up to your shoulders, arms, and hands.
- Take several deep breaths from your diaphragm.

During your presentation,

- Pause and look at the audience before you begin speaking.
- Concentrate on communicating well.
- Use body energy in strong gestures and movement.

Using Eye Contact

Look directly at the people you're talking to. In one study, speakers who looked more at the audience during a seven-minute informative speech were judged to be better informed, more experienced, more honest, and friendlier than speakers who delivered the same information with less eye contact. An earlier study found that speakers judged sincere looked at the audience 63% of the time, while those judged insincere looked at the audience only 21 % of the time.

The point in making eye contact is to establish one-on-one contact with the individual members of your audience. People want to feel that you're talking to them. Looking directly at individuals also enables you to be more conscious of feedback from the audience, so that you can modify your approach if necessary.

Developing a Good Speaking Voice

People will enjoy your presentation more if your voice is easy to listen to. To find out what your voice sounds like, tape-record it. Also tape the voices of people on TV or on campus whose voices you like and imitate them. In a few weeks, tape yourself again.

To find your best speaking voice, close your ears with your fingers and hum up and down the scale until you find the pitch where the hum sounds loudest or most vibrant to you. This pitch will be near your optimum pitch.

When you speak to a group, talk loudly enough so that people can hear you easily. If you're using a microphone, adjust your volume so you aren't shouting. When you speak in an unfamiliar location, try to get to the room early so you can check the size of the room and the power of the amplification equipment. If you can't do that, ask early in your talk, "Can you hear me in the back of the room?"

The bigger the group is, the more carefully you need to enunciate, that is, voice all the sounds of each word. Words starting or ending with f, t, k, v, and d are especially hard to hear. "Our informed and competent image" can sound like "Our informed, incompetent image."

To enunciate, use your tongue and lips. Researchers have identified 38 different sounds. Of these, you make 31 with your tongue and 7 with your lips. None are made with the jaw, so how wide you open your mouth really doesn't matter. If the tongue isn't active enough, muscles in the throat try to compensate, producing sore throats and strained voices.

Tongue twisters can help you exercise your tongue and enunciate more clearly. Stephen Lucas suggests the following:

- Sid said to tell him that Benny hid the penny many years ago.
- Fetch me the finest French-fried freshest fish that Finney fries.
- Three gray geese in the green grass grazed.
- Shy Sarah saw six Swiss wristwatches.
- One year we had a Christmas brunch with Merry Christmas mush to munch. But I don't think you'd care for such. We didn't like to munch mush much.

You can also reduce pressure on your throat by fitting phrases to your ideas. If you cut your sentences into bits, you'll emphasize words beginning with vowels, making the vocal cords hit each other. Instead, run past words beginning with vowels to emphasize later syllables or later words:

Choppiness hurts vocal cords. We must take more responsibility not only for ourselves and our families but for our communities and our country. Smooth phrasing protects throat. We must take more Responsibility Not only for ourselves and our Families but for our Communities and our Country.

You can reduce the number of uhs you use by practicing your talk several times. Filler sounds aren't signs of nervousness. Instead, say psychologists at Columbia

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University, they occur when speakers pause searching for the next word. Searching takes longer when people have big vocabularies or talk about topics where a variety of word choices are possible. Practicing your talk makes your word choices automatic, and you'll use fewer uhs.

Vary your volume, pitch, and speed. Speakers who speak quickly and who vary their volume during the talk are more likely to be perceived as competent. Sound energetic and enthusiastic. If your ideas don't excite you, why should your audience find them exciting?

Standing and Gesturing

Stand with your feet far enough apart for good balance, with your knees flexed. Unless the presentation is very formal or you're on camera, you can walk if you want to. Some speakers like to come in front of the lectern to remove that barrier between themselves and the audience.

If you use slides or transparencies, stand beside the screen so that you don't block it.

Build on your natural style for gestures. Gestures usually work best when they're big and confident.

Using Notes and Visuals

Put your notes on cards or on sturdy pieces of paper and number them. Most speakers like to use 4-by-6-inch or 5-by-7-inch cards because they hold more information than 3-by-5 inch cards. Your notes need to be complete enough to help you if you go blank, so use long phrases or complete sentences. Under each main point, jot down the evidence or illustration you'll use. Indicate where you'll refer to visuals.

Look at your notes infrequently. Most of your gaze time should be directed to members of the audience. Hold your notes high enough so that your head doesn't bob up and down like a yo-yo as you look from the audience to your notes and back again.

If you have lots of visuals and know your topic well, you won't need notes. Face the audience, not the screen. With transparencies, you can use colored marking pens to call attention to your points as you talk. Show the entire visual at once: don't cover up part of it. If you don't want the audience to read ahead, prepare several visuals that build up. In your overview, for example, the first visual could list your first point, the second the first and second, and the third all three points.

Keep the room lights on if possible; turning them off makes it easier for people to fall asleep and harder for them to concentrate on you.

Handling Questions

Prepare for questions by listing every fact or opinion you can think of that challenges your position. Treat each objection seriously and try to think of a way to deal with it. If you're talking about a controversial issue, you may want to save one point for the question period, rather than making it during the presentation. Speakers who have visuals to answer questions seem especially well prepared.

During your presentation, tell the audience how you'll handle questions. If you have a choice, save questions for the end. In your talk, answer the questions or objections that you expect your audience to have. Don't exaggerate your claims so that you won't have to back down in response to questions later.

During the question period, don't nod your head to indicate that you understand a question as it is asked. Audiences will interpret nods as signs that you agree with the questioner. Instead, look directly at the questioner. As you answer the question, expand your focus to take in the entire group. Don't say, "That's a good question." That response implies that the other questions have been poor ones.

If the audience may not have heard the question or if you want more time to think, repeat the question before you answer it. Link your answers to the points you made in your presentation. Keep the purpose of your presentation in mind, and select information that advances your goals.

If a question is hostile or biased, rephrase it before you answer it: "You're asking whether ...." Or suggest an alternative question: "I think there are problems with both the positions you describe. It seems to me that a third solution which is better than either of them is.... "

Occasionally someone will ask a question that is really designed to state the speaker's own position. Respond to the question if you want to. Another option is to say, "I'm not sure what you're asking," or even, "That's a clear statement of your position. Let's move to the next question now." If someone asks about something that you already explained in your presentation, simply answer the question without embarrassing the questioner. No audience will understand and remember 100% of what you say.

If you don't know the answer to a question, say so. If your purpose is to inform, write down the question so that you can look up the answer before the next session. If it's a question to which you think there is no answer, ask if anyone in the room knows. When no one does, your "ignorance" is vindicated. If an expert is in the room, you may want to refer questions of fact to him or her. Answer questions of interpretation yourself.

At the end of the question period, take two minutes to summarize your main point once more. (This can be a restatement of your close.) Questions may or may not focus on the key point of your talk. Take advantage of having the floor to repeat your message briefly and forcefully.

Making Group Presentations

Plan carefully to involve as many members of the group as possible in speaking roles.

The easiest way to make a group presentation is to outline the presentation and then divide the topics, giving one to each group member. Another member can be responsible for the opener and the close. During the question period, each member answers questions that relate to his or her topic.

In this kind of divided presentation, be sure to

Plan transitions.

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- Enforce time limits strictly.
- Coordinate your visuals so that the presentation seems a coherent whole.
- Practice the presentation as a group at least once; more is better.

The best group presentations are even more fully integrated: the group writes a very detailed outline, chooses points and examples, and creates visuals together. Then, within each point, voices trade off. This presentation is most effective because each voice speaks only a minute or two before a new voice comes in. However, it works only when all group members know the subject well and when the group plans carefully and practices extensively.

Whatever form of group presentation you use, be sure to introduce each member of the team to the audience and to pay close attention to each other. If other members of the team seem uninterested in the speaker, the audience gets the sense that that speaker isn't worth listening to.

SUMMARY

- Although the summary may closely follow the introduction, using a visual aid perhaps the same one used in the beginning of the speech – is a good way to add visual emphasis and provide a frame for the entire speech.
- Conclusions draw inferences, conclusions, judgments – as based on your material. Here you make one last call to action, one final appeal that your proposal be accepted. You imply that your evidence was sufficient to support your position and now request audience acceptance.
- "And so our conclusion is inescapable: We must approve the four steps recommended for improving our preparation for rate case hearings."
- "The review, I sincerely ask for your support in trying different methods of opening lines of communication between upper and lower management: through newsletters, through a 'Good Idea Program,' and through personal visits between management levels."
- Informative presentations inform or teach the audience. Persuasive presentations motivate the audience to act or to believe. Goodwill presentations entertain and validate the audience. Most oral presentations have more than one purpose.
- A written message makes it easier to present extensive or complex information and to minimize undesirable emotions. Oral messages make it easier to use emotion, to focus the audience's attention, to answer questions and resolve conflicts quickly, to modify a proposal that may not be acceptable in its original form, and to get immediate action or response.
- In both oral and written messages, you should

- Adapt the message to the specific audience.
- Show the audience how they benefit from the idea, policy, service, or product.
- Overcome any objections the audience may have.
- Use you-attitude and positive emphasis.
- Use visuals to clarify or emphasize material.
- Specify exactly what the audience should do.
- An oral presentation needs to be simpler than a written message to the same audience.
- In a monologue presentation, the speaker plans the presentation in advance and delivers it without deviation. In a guided discussion, the speaker presents the questions or issues that both speaker and audience have agreed on in advance. Rather than functioning as an expert with all the answers, the speaker serves as a facilitator to help the audience tap its own knowledge. An interactive presentation is a conversation using questions to determine the buyer's needs, probe objections, and gain provisional and then final commitment to the purchase.
- Adapt your message to your audience's beliefs, experiences, and interests.
- Use the beginning and end of the presentation to interest the audience and emphasize your key point.
- Use visuals to seem more prepared, more interesting, and more persuasive.
- Use a direct pattern of organization. Put your strongest reason first.
- Limit your talk to three main points. Early in your talk-perhaps immediately after your opener-provide an overview of the main points you will make. Offer a clear signpost as you come to each new point. A signpost is an explicit statement of the point you have reached.
- To calm your nerves as you prepare to give an oral presentation,
- Be prepared. Analyze your audience, organize your thoughts, prepare visual aids, practice your opener and close, and check out the arrangements.
- Use only the amount of caffeine you normally use.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages.
- Relabel your nerves. Instead of saying, "I'm scared," try saying, "My adrenaline is up." adrenaline sharpens our reflexes and helps us do our best.

Just before your presentation

- Consciously contract and then relax your muscles, starting with your feet and calves and going up to your shoulders, arms, and hands.

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- Take several deep breaths from your diaphragm.
- During your presentation,
- Pause and look at the audience before you begin speaking.
- Concentrate on communicating well.
- Use body energy in strong gestures and movement.
- Convey a sense of caring to your audience by making direct eye contact with them and by using a conversational style.
- Treat questions as opportunities to give more detailed information than you had time to give in your presentation. Link your answers to the points you made in your presentation.
- Repeat the question before you answer it if the audience may not have heard it or if you want more time to think. Rephrase hostile or biased questions before you answer them.
- The best group presentations result when the group writes a very detailed outline, chooses points and examples, and creates visuals together. Then, within each point, voices trade off.

Chapter 11

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

This Chapter covers

1. Dyadic Communication
2. Self Perceptions.
3. Dyadic Communication Relationship
4. Functional Relationship
5. Type of relationship
6. Telephoning
7. Dictating

Thus far this book has focused on the more formal aspects of business communication: writing and speaking in formal business settings. But there is another side more informal, more casual more given to informal interactions between people. Such interaction may be called **interpersonal** it is primarily face-to-face communication between two or more people with the opportunity for immediate feedback. Hence both sender and receiver affect one another the feedback loop involves oral and nonverbal responses and is immediate rather than delayed, as in written communication.

Many of your communications will be with one other person. Such interaction is called **dyadic**. And this 1:1 relationship is the foundation for group and committee work. Here however, we focus on some principles relating to dyadic communication and then offer suggestions on handling three commode forms of interpersonal communication interviewing, telephoning, and dictating.

1. DYADIC COMMUNICATION

We define a **dyad** as two persons seeking to exchange information. Of course that may occur within a meeting, but here we focus on personal 1:1 interactions. And because two persons interact, we begin with a look at self perceptions how each of us sees the self.

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Communication Probe

Four-types of communication pervade the business world. Sometimes called the big Four, their percentage of use has not varied much over the years-speaking; writing,' listening, and reading are cornerstones of business communication. Note that two of the four relate to oral communication, some of that being interpersonal in nature. Thus writing and reading pertain to the written word. Without detailing the many studies that have investigated their percentage of usage, look at the following percentages of use by some recent Asian and Egyptian managers

PERCENTAGE OF DAY DEVOTED TO THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

	Egyptian	Asian
Speaking	27.3	28.7
Listening	21.8	25.3
Writing	28-6	24.4
Heading	25.1	21.4

Hildebrandt II. W, & Edingtorn, D. (1987). A managerial profile: The Asian manager. Ann Arbor Division of Research University of Michigan Business School, University of Michigan, Hildebrandt W.W. (1996) Questionnaire data from Egypt Unpublished raw data.

2. SELF-PERCEPTIONS

Setting us apart from animals is our ability to look at ourselves. We can, objectively or subjectively, consider who we are. Surely most of those perceptions will be private, but on occasion we do make them public. Others perceptions of us may be different: Take a look at the following characteristics of one mall:

Tall	Married
Has a beard	Drives a four-wheel drive truck
Wears jeans to class	Smokes
Has hole in the jeans	Wears horn-rimmed glasses
Wears cap on backward	Wears no socks
Friendly	Consistently late

Although the above is an incomplete picture of the person, he nevertheless exists. What inferences do you draw from the above cues? What is your perception of this person? Would you invite him to your home? When asked to write a description of this man one person wrote.

He is someone from a broken home who rarely had guidance in preparing for

the outside world. His home was probably disorganized. His habits were influenced by in embers of his family one of whom smoked. Clearly he likes the out-of-door.

Would you agree? It is virtually impossible to arrive at conclusions based solely on visible, nonverbal characteristics. Actually, the description of the person is that of a college professor he has written over 40 articles has appeared on national forums and currently is a leading university lecturer. His self-perception is positive he gets along well with his peers and he is a diabetic type I. His teaching awards have been numerous.

In short, over time we accept some personal verbal and nonverbal habits of others that are out of sync with our own. We often are inaccurate in our perception of others, and we may have a distorted view of even ourselves. A cyclical action may occur as seen in Figure 11.1.

Thus misjudging a person because of idiosyncratic behavior can lead serious misunderstandings. Your personal biases may shout so loudly that you not even hear what the other person says. You may have thought a lot but not very correctly you may have spoken a lot but not very precisely. In short, both yourself perception and the perception and the perceptions of others can influence transactions in communication

3. DYADIC COMMUNICATION RELATIONSHIPS

Earlier we said that dyadic communication involves two people seeking to exchange information. Consequently, communication that is unidirectional lacks feedback.

Look at Figure 11.2 Speaker A sends a message to receiver B and receive little feedback from Receiver B. Receiver B, in turn, sends that same message listener C, again with little feedback. The cycle continues. That is not good inter.

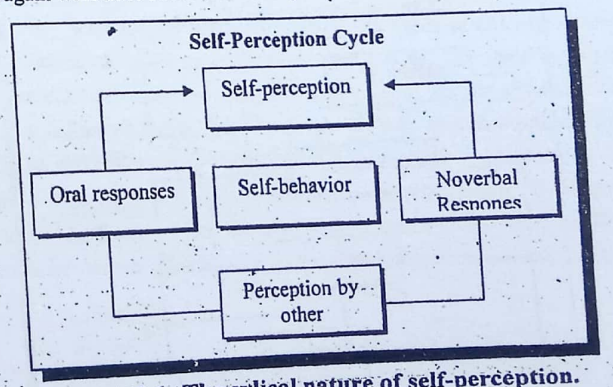

Figure 11.1: The cylical nature of self-perception.

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personal communication. Some argue that it is impossible not to communication. Even averting one eyes or turning away from a speaker is a form of response. Figure 11.3 is a more purposeful dyadic exchange.

Answer this question. What are the most frequent two-person communication interactions occurring during a business day! If you guessed face-to-face communication you are correct. We can classify two-person conversation two ways-by function and type.

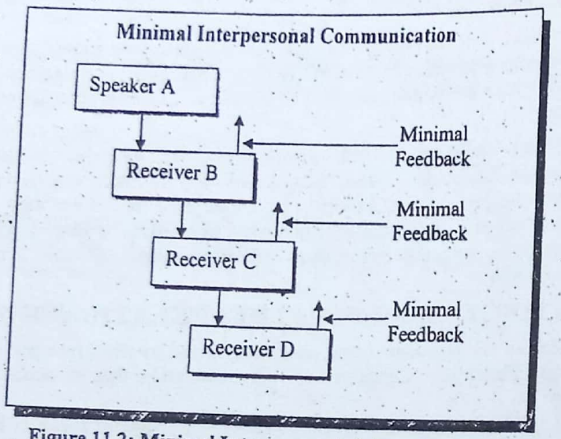

Figure 11.2: Minimal Interpersonal communication

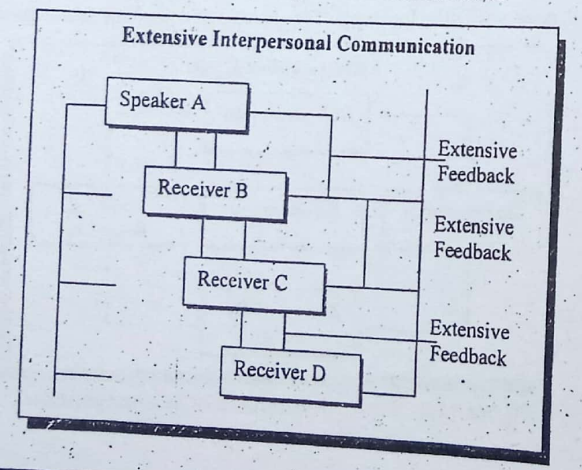

Figure 11.3: Extensive interpersonal Communication

Functional Relationships

A purposeful meeting may involve two people meeting for a common purpose. Here the glue holding them together is tighter than the hall conversation or the quick hello on the street. The following are functionally related interactions:

- Interviewing for a position (qualifications of a candidate are evaluated).
- Instructional interview (new employee finds out about the specific duties for a new position)
- Telephone exchange (clarification of issues, informing on topics hopes for closing a deal).
- Grade review (session to clarify grades on a recent examination, between student instructors).
- Job termination (exit interview seeking to get departing employee's reasons for leaving a position).

And there are many others. Note that all the above examples have one common aim to achieve something, to assist, to guide, to explain, and to review. The meeting is not haphazard, but in most instances planned by one of the parties the exchange.

Types of Relationships

A second way of viewing dyadic communication is to think about the level at which you relate to people. On a continuum of intimate, to non intimate, where do the following persons lie?

- **Communication Probe**

It does not take much insight to guess which form of communication is most often used in business settings face-to-face communication. That informal mode speaking with others is characteristic even-where-among U.S. managers and Asian managers. In fact with Asian managers the telephone is the most preferred mean for interaction with another person. Tie that statement in with face-to-face communication, and you realize the importance given to the value of interpersonal communication. Asian statistics follow

Modes of Communication	Percentage of Respondent: Listing Modes of Communication as I of 4 Modes of Communication
Telephone	90

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Face-to-Face	77.5
Memorandum	55
Computer mail	
Letter	30
Electronic blackboard	29
Teleconferencing	5
Videoconferencing	5

Hildebrandt. H.W. & Edington, D (1987) A managerial profile. The Asian manager. Ann Arhor: Division of Research. University of Michigan Business School

Your family	Your secretary
Your boss	Your teacher
Your coworkers	Your president
Your fellow students	Your roommate
Your spouse	Your significant other

Each of the above categories falls somewhere on the continuum, as seen in figure 11.4. A follow-up question to the above is what will cause your relationship to end with any of the above persons? It is safe to say that most of our relationships with, others are more non-intimate quick to flourish, quickly to die.

The words exchanged between persons in an intimate relationship (Spouses, significant others dates, partners) are clearly at a different level of exposure and intimacy than the other relationship categories. Although some intimate relationships do exist in a work setting your communication will more-likely avoid the kinds of topics and intimacy -reserved for your family and those close to you.

Most of your interpersonal communication at work will be at the "friend" and "acquaintances' levels. It will be more formal, with the topics heavily business-related. At meetings you may see people you do not know they are strangers and completely non-intimate .

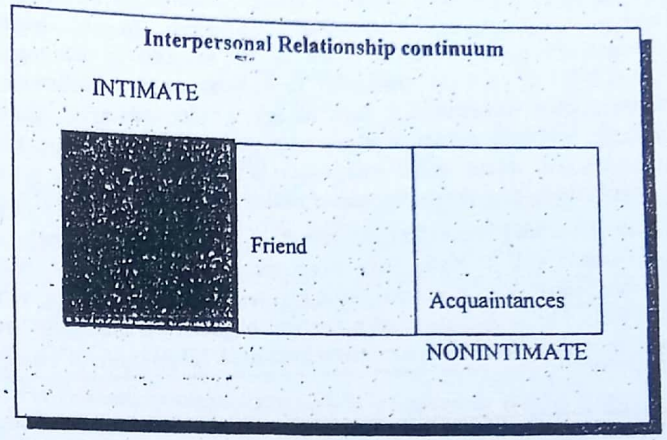

Figure 11.4: Interpersonal relationship continuum

Reflect for a moment. What sort of oral or nonverbal greeting did you receive from complete strangers today? Were you greeted orally or given some form of recognition as a stranger passed you? Was eye contact avoided?

As your intimacy with another person increases, the kinds of communication you exchange and kinds of things you talk about also change. The speaking about the weather is a safe, non-threatening oral greeting or a slight nod, or a hesitant wave to a stranger is usually acceptable. Rare is the person who launches into controversy immediately on meeting a stranger. Only after some sharing of pleasantries do both persons begin to open up and make public their views on issues. Time generally raises the level of intimacy. Some forms of address may become more familiar first names replace last names. Checklist 11.1 describes interpersonal relationships more fully.

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- **Communication Probe**

No test is exact enough to determine whether your perceptions about another person are correct. Yet you must interact, you must communicate with other people. You to a large extent may prefer certain of those people. How our degrees of positive feelings for another are as varied as the research on the topic. Propinquity (proximity of physical closeness) is a cause so are similarities in attitudes. Demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, cultural or ethnic identity, and socioeconomic status also play a role, as do similarity in beliefs, opinions, and values. When two people believe, and sense, the presence of these characteristics, they are on the way to becoming close interpersonal communicators.

Byrne, D (1969). Attitudes and attraction. In L. Berkowit (ed.), Advancesin in experimental Vol. 4. New: York Academic Press; Byrne, D. (1971). The attraction paradigm; New York: Academic Press; McCroskey, J. C., Richmond, V. P., & Daly, J, A. (1975). The development of a measure of perceived homophily in Interpersonal communication. Human Communication Research, I, 323-332

- **Communication Probe**

A recent theory on determining linkages between one's self-perception of his or her communication abilities and that of others is the Competing Values Communication Mode. Here you first self-assess your oral or written skins. Then other people (peers, subordinates, or superiors) an asked to do the same about you. Through statistical calculations applied to 12 criteria, it is possible to create a visual picture of where you feel you are now and where you would **like to be** Similar calculations are done for others evaluations. A sample of a completed visual of one person's self-assessment is depicted in Figure 11.5.

Bogers P.S. & Hildebrandt. H.W. (1993) Competing values instruments for analyzing written and spoken management messages, Human Resource Management 32(1).

121-142 Quinn, R.E., Hildbrandt. H.W. Rogers P.S. & Thompson M. (1991) A competing values framework. For analyzing presentational communication in management contexts. **The journal of Business Communication 28(3), 213-232.**

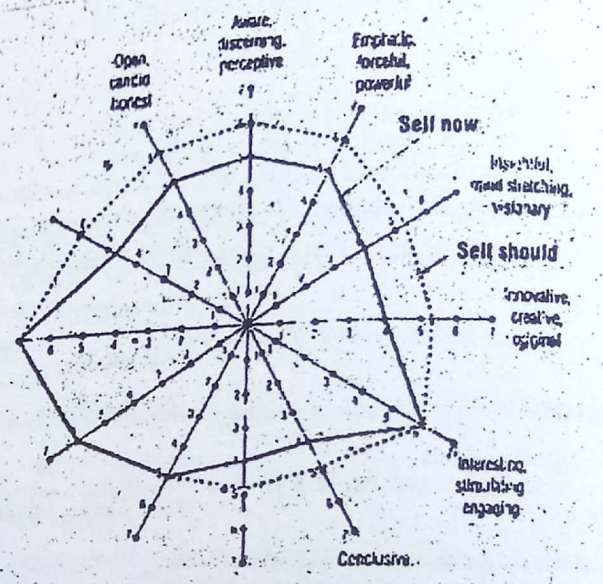

Figure 11.5: One persons self-assessment

- **Checklist 11.1 Interpersonal Disclosures, in Interpersonal communication**

1. Recognize that interpersonal relationships take time. Ask Am I comfort- able with certain people? What can I do to improve my relationship with them?
2. Recognize that some persons do not offer self-disclosure statements. Ask: If you want a closer relationship with others, has you-over time-at tempted to make public more of your personal thoughts?
3. Recognize that relationships end this is not unusual. Ask: Have you personally made an effort to continue or discontinue that relationship? Can you assess why the relationship ended?

5. INTERVIEWING

Some colleges' and universities have an Office of Career Development. Among its purposes is to prepare you to do a better job when interviewing for a position.

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Dyad research suggests that when there is agreement on the process when working through an issue, there is an increased degree of success for that project Likewise, business organizations are realizing the importance of gatekeepers," persons who control access to another person or office. Thus, establishing a rapport with a gatekeeper increases the success of a company in improving it's inform external communication. Although the research is preliminary among information technology professionals, it is a start at determining that self-reporting information dissemination behavior can be used to identify gatekeepers among individuals with diverse information-gathering behaviors.

Watson, W., Ponthien, La., & Critelli. J. (1995, September). Team interpersonal process effectiveness in venture partnerships and its connection to perceived success. Journal of Business Venturing 10, 393-411; Kolohas, J. & McGill: T (1955), September). Identification of technological gatekeepers in the information technology profession. Journal of the American Society for Information Science,46, 581-589;.

In fact an interview-there is many types-may be one of your most important dyadic communications. Here the dyadic interaction may place you in session with a complete stranger or with someone known in your work environment. Regardless, you need preparation.

This section reviews seven common interview objectives, Presents three checklists that you as interviewee can use as a guide for successful interviews, and discusses the responsibilities of the interviewer.

INTERVIEW PURPOSES

We stated above that interpersonal communication is purposeful. Such is the case in the' following interview situations:

Use	Procedure	Example
Seeking position	Candidates speak with company representative.	Recruiter meets with graduating students or job seekers.
Informing oil. job	Job requirements are stated as based on job description or job experience.	Senior member or boa meets with new employee early in job experience.
Solving problem	Facts are collected, options reviewed, decision, is made.	Employer talks with successful employee who abrasive.
Supporting solution	Information is collected and, arguments are planned to persuade.	Manager persuades employee who is,
Evaluating employee	employee needs help. Job performance reviews form in discussed.	Employee accused of drug abuse on the job, is presented with treatment options.
Gathering information	Data are gathered on why employee leave emphasis is on events and not personalities.	Supervisor makes yearly review of employee. Manager conducts exit interview.

Interviewee's Responsibilities

Considerable literature-articles, books, videotapes-is readily available for a detailed discussion of the role you play in the process of seeking a job. Our suggestions are in the form of three checklists, each of which acts as a summary of a stage of the interview process. Most job interviews in the past have been those in which the candidate appears in Person for evaluation. However, a growing format for interviewing candidates for positions is the interview via your personal computer.

Computer Interviews

The personal, on-campus interview still dominates. Yet, as costs increase to meet candidates face to face or in videoconferencing techniques, some initial effort is being given to computer conferencing. Basic technological aids needed include a high-speed telephone line and on each end a computer, a small camera, a micro phone and some software. Both the candidate and the interviewer sit at their computers and via a split screen can speak to each other and even pinpoint sections of the-resume. You school and even some companies may be in the process of signing up for this interactive system.

Suggestions for the Computer Interview

Stephen Miller offers seven suggestions for a computer interview

- Try out the equipment beforehand.
- Avoid excessive movement.
- Use an audio and visual check before beginning.
- Dress as if the interview were live: person to person.
- Operate on the assumption that everything you say will be heard.
- Avoid high-contrast clothing." small cameras have difficulty with contrast.
- Try to relax.

Interviewer's Responsibilities

Recruiters to schools are often recent-graduates of those schools. They know the

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school they know the caliber of the students. You too may be in that position- someday. For your preparation and knowing how the interviewer prepares. We look at objectives of the patterned interview a checklist of an interviewer preparation the procedures during the interview, and an evaluation of the conclusion.

Objectives of the Patterned Interview

In a patterned interview, the interviewer controls the direction of the conversation. He or she may actually follow an agreed-upon evaluation form used by all company recruiters. Remember, they have read your resume, and they will know more about you than you will know about them. In fact, some schools publish complete resumes of all their graduates-with standardized resume forms. All resumes may also he included on a CD-ROM (disk and available to companies for a fee.

Recruiters often have four goals:

- Evaluate job qualifications that resumes cannot provide
- Determine the oral communication ability' of the interviewee can the interviewee think off the cuff in a cogent and logical manner
- Give the applicant essential facts about the job and company.
- Establish goodwill on behalf of the company:

Interviewer's Preparation Before Interview

Warm-Up Period of the Interview. Earlier we considered how we communicate with strangers, trying to avoid controversial topics as both persons search for a common ground. Nonverbally greet the candidate with a firm handshake and a warm smile. Orally, suggest a degree of enthusiasm in your greeting; be sincere and friendly. It is up to the interviewer to set the interviewee at ease perhaps building on some current topic as suggested in the resume. A candidates hobbies are a nice, noncontroversial beginning to an interview.

Main Content of the Interview. After the brief warm-up, you make clear the purpose of the interview and the topics you plan to covet. You encourage the applicant to do most of the talking, but you control the interview and see that it does not wander aimlessly. You ask appropriate planned questions, use desirable methods throughout the interview, and avoid pitfalls.

Asking appropriate questions. You might begin by letting the applicant describe his or her education, and then move to the work history and off-the-job activities! Focus on relevant information that cannot be obtained as well from other sources.

Open-ended questions and statements are usually preferred because the applicant can give you more information-both verbal and nonverbal. Among useful open-ended questions you might ask are those that begin with "what," 'which,"

"why," "how," or "tell me,"

Which courses were the most useful in your degree program'? Why?

Which courses did you like best? Least? Why?

Please describe yourself in comparison with other members of your class.

Outside of school what are your interests?

What experiences in your previous jobs have helped you prepare for the job you are now seeking?

Describe the kind of manager for whom you would like to work.

Why are you leaving your present job? {If the applicant mentions problems with my supervisor" or other vague reasons, you may tactfully probe for clarification.}

Dead-end questions (also called closed questions) usually ask for only "yes" or "no" or other one-word answers.

How many people graduated in your class?

Can you give me the percentage of foreign graduates who majored In Accounting? Marketing? Finance?

How many accounting courses did you have in college? Did you enjoy college?

Which course was most difficult?

Questions similar to these elicit quick responses that are easy to tabulate. But the information is often less helpful than that from open-ended questions unless you probe for an explanation or reasons for the answers.

Using effective methods. Tense applicants do not give positive impressions. In part, that may be due to unfair, leading, negative questions. Avoid such self-betraying questions, value judgment questions, and any questions that the respondent may be reluctant to answer.

One of the things that I've supported for years is what's your opinion on that?

[School] is known for its lousy school attitude; would you agree with me?

What's your reaction to the favorable (unfavorable) ruling of the Supreme Court on the issue of?

Tell me, why are so many of you so tense in this school?

Questions should be neutral Embarrassing the interviewee-even in a planned confrontational interview-adds few benefits.

Evaluation After the Interview

Your authors follow one basic rule after an-interview: They immediately write

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notes on all interviewed candidates. Memories are variable; written notes help keep a paper trail of important recollections. In your evaluation of the interview, the cues in the following Communication Probe should prove useful in determining a macro impression of the candidate.

It is your choice as to the form of your notes following the interview. Some persons simply write a paragraph on each interviewee; others complete a check-list evaluation form. The form is unimportant. More important are your topic inclusions such as education and training, work experience, current off-the-the-job life, personal characteristics, and an overall summary.

6. TELEPHONING

All of us have grown up using the telephone. It is basic to business communication and is used extensively even in international communication. Rather than give a detailed discussion of its usage or the types of telephone capabilities.

7. DICTATING

Dyadic communication is direct communication between two persons. Dictation is oral communication between two people but with a twist. You speak to someone either directly or via some-electronic device. Your goal, often, is to have someone else type a communication that will be sent to an addressee. Shorthand is falling by the wayside in its place is the spoken word recorded on the many kinds of electronic devices for transcription later.

Suggestions for Dictating

Your approach will vary little from preparing for a telephone call. Here too you collect information, plan for your specific purpose, organize ideas clearly, and speak in a firm, clear voice. What you do additionally is give more instructions to the stenographer transcribing your words unto paper. We offer seven suggestions.

1. Give the precise name, address of the individual (s) to whom the message is to be sent.
2. Speak clearly. Be careful with plurals. It's also better to repeat when using numbers. Sounds such as "p" and "b," "f" and "v" and "t" and "d" can be misunderstood.
3. Spell unusual words or names when using them for the first time, as in the following list:

Checklist 11.6 Points to Consider in International Telephoning

1. Be aware of time zones. Western Europe is between 6 and 7 hours ahead the eastern United States. Asia is 13 or 14 hours ahead. Few businesspersons want to get phone calls in the middle of the night.
2. Speak more clearly, Often your message receiver is foreign and is using English as

a second language. Over articulate in place of mumbling.
3. Restate and summarize more often. Memories are prone to error.
4. Follow up the conversation with a letter or fax. That way you and message receiver have a statement that summarizes the major point covered.

Checklist 11.7 Sender's preparation prior to a phone call

1. Know your specific purpose have some questions in mind. It is better to have one central purpose than many rambling thoughts. Introduce yourself much time has elapsed between calls.
2. Know the precise person you are calling, and the best time to call.
3. Give thought to your opening statement. As noted earlier in this text, even PAL (porch, aim, and layout) introduction can focus direction for the conversation.
4. Take notes. Have before you pertinent papers of previous correspondence or summaries of previous discussions.

Accept, except	ordinance, ordnance
Addition, edition	practical, practicable
Affect, effect	principal, principle
Assistance, assistants	residence, residents
Brake, break	right, rite, write
Cease, seize	sight, site, cite
Coarse, course	stationary, stationery
Compliment, complement	straight, strait
Council, consul, counsel	their, there, they're
Formally, formerly	to, too, two
Its, its	waive, wave
Latter, ladder	weather, whether
	Who's whose

4. Suggest punctuation. Clearly, this suggestion depends on the amount of time you have spent with a secretary. But in many, instances a secretarial pool transcribes your words. When in doubt, insert your suggestions as to paragraphs and specific punctuation, if you feel it is needed.
5. Avoid side comments. These "off the cuff" comments (intended merely as your personal opinions) confuse more than clarify.

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6. Dictate at a slower rate of speech. Too rapid a rate may slur some words; too slow-with too many interruptions caused by holding the pause button on the recording machine-will confuse the stenographer.
7. End with a suggestion regarding the time you will need the recorded, information and state where you can be reached.

Example of Dictation

The following opening and closing sections from a good-news reply to a phoned request for product information simulate how an orally dictated letter might "sound" to the transcriber. If you dictate to the secretary face to face, most of the words below in italics will be omitted. If, however, you use a voice-recording instrument, your instructions to the transcriber may be similar to those in italics below. Of course, voice inflection conveys additional (unspoken) instructions for instance at the end of each sentence.

"Good morning, operator. This is Robert Bridges in the consumer service department. Extension 507. Please transcribe this letter addressed to Mr. Phillip P-h-i-double l-i-p Jones, Department four two, Harrington H-a-double r-i-n-g-t-o-n Corporation, one six. zero, zero, Avenue of the Americas plural. New York, New York, one zero zero three eight. Dear Mr. Jones.

'Thank you for your inquiry about our, operator, next two words all caps ELECTRO hyphen SPEED, operator cop M as in Mary Model 28, operator, cap T Typewriter. Yes; comma indeed comma this model has proved very popular in such applications as yours in which, operator, one word downtime must be minimized. Paragraph"

[Middle paragraphs dictated in similar fashion.}

"Our sales representative in the cap E. Eastern cap T Territory comma Tanya T-a-n-y-a Brickler B-r-i-c-k-l-e-r comma will call you next week to set-up a meeting to discuss your needs more specifically semicolon she will then be able to inventory your needs and give you a price quotation. To help you investigate our product line more thoroughly comma I have enclosed six colorful brochures period, parenthesis. Note- the blue leaflet that describes the automatic quote. initial cap N Never hyphen, initial cap F Forget end quote one zero zero hyphen character memory system period, close parenthesis, paragraph.

Please call me at five five five hyphen double nine eight seven if we can answer additional inquiries about our typewriters. Cordially yours, Robert Bridges. Customer Service Representative. Enclosures six.

A shortened version of the same material-providing your secretary knows your style-might proceed in this manner.

"Joanne, I'll give you the business cards (or all the next couple of letters when I return. Just omit the inside address. This is letter one.

"Dear Mr. Jones. Thanks for your inquiry about our ELECTRO-SPEED

Model 28 Typewriter. Yes, this model has proved very popular in such applications as yours in which downtime must be minimized. Next Paragraph

Joanne would know, from previous letters dictated by her boss, which words to capitalize, where the dictator wishes abbreviations, and even when the preferred ending should be.

SUMMARY

- A dyad is defined as two persons seeking to exchange information. Communication in that situation is two-way. Feedback is immediate. In that interchange both persons have a perception of themselves, either accurate or erroneous. Regardless of those perceptions, we are most open with those closest to us and less so with our partners in a business environment.
- An interview is one of the more common forms of dyadic communication, which is often 1:1. You and your partner seek to solve a problem inform, and even persuade. These general purposes are found in situations such as seeking a position, informing about job requirements, solving a company problem, counseling an employee, and evaluating an employee.
- Face-to-face communication and the telephone are the most used modes of communication. At the international level additional problems arise, primarily language issues and problems of time. One should prepare as carefully for a phone conversation as for a longer oral statement.
- Dictation is oral communication to an intermediary who transcribes the spoken words into a written message. Desirable dictation practices include clear pronunciation, spelling of unusual words (where appropriate), and adequate instructions to the transcriber. With today's word processing systems, several drafts can easily be prepared before a final one is approved.

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Chapter 12

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS AND GROUP MEETINGS

This Chapter covers

1. Background Information on Groups
2. Formation of Groups
3. Purposes and Kinds of Meetings
4. Solving Problems in Meetings or Groups
5. Methods of Solving Problems in Meetings
6. Leadership Responsibilities in Meetings
7. Planning Steps Before the Meetings
8. Procedures During the Meeting
9. Participant Responsibilities in Meetings

You know the familiar definition of a meeting: a group of people wasting time on topics of unimportance. Perhaps true. But it need not be that way. Each day-no matter the country or the company-meetings are held to conduct business more efficiently and for more profit. Sadly if there is one activity in the, business world that disturbs people, it, is the meeting-for any number of negative reasons.

Poorly run meetings need not occur. Thus, this chapter offers some background information on groups, reviews the purposes and kinds of meetings occurring in business, lays out the various ways to solve problems in meetings, and summarizes the responsibilities of both the group leader and participants.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON GROUPS

Definition-of a Group Meeting

Definitions for meetings are legendary: "They keep minutes and spend hours" "they sow but do not reap"; "a camel is a horse designed by a committee"; and so on. But let's be positive: A meeting is a gathering of two or more people

where purposive discourse occurs. Of course these purposes will vary.

In the preceding chapter we suggested that dyadic communication is primarily an interchange between two people. A group is larger: at least 3 people and perhaps as many as 15 or more. Additionally, a group often meets face to face with a common purpose in mind. Such a group may also be informal (unplanned, free-flowing discourse) or formal (clear planned purpose).

Informal Group

Casual or informal group meetings are common. Here you casually chat over coffee, meet after work, or get together for purely social occasions. You and your friends meet to socialize, to interact-often spontaneously, without plan. Your business day is filled with such informal group meetings. Ironically, out of the need for frequent casual meetings may develop the need for more formal and directed meetings.

Formal Group

Often called task-oriented groups, **formal groups** often search for answers to problems; look for a course of action, make recommendations to a higher authority. This means that you and others may meet to change a policy, make decisions on how a specific problem should be solved, and decide on the beginning steps to implement a solution.

Our focus in this chapter is more on this formal group: a gathering where the participants and leader know the specific reason for getting together. Would you call the following meeting announcement specific?

To:	The Staff
FROM:	Personnel
SUBJECT:	Vacations

Hope you can make the meeting on November 10. We've got to talk about vacations for everyone.

Hopefully you said "no," for the purpose of the above meeting announcement is vague, incomplete, imprecise. We make suggestions for clarifying meeting announcements later.

2. FORMATION OF GROUPS

How are groups formed? Surely informal or casual group meetings arise out of a common liking for the other persons. You just enjoy being with them. In fact, strong interpersonal attraction is the glue holding persons together for a common, even casual, purpose. One researcher suggests that most groups go through four formative stages in becoming a group.

Forming: Here the group tries to get started. It is the orientation phase for group

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members.

Storming: Members begin to stake out their positions; they begin to have conflicts and arguments.

Norming Progress begins here. Members work to solve conflicts and recognize acceptable kinds of conduct.

Performing Here the group begins to achieve its goals

Most likely when joining an organization, you will join the group at step four, **performing;** it would be rare for you as .a company newcomer to try to get a group started. More likely you would join a mature group one under way for some time.

Once you are part of a group, seeking to solve a problem. One other thing occurs: The group begins to follow certain phases in solving the problem

Orientation Here discussion is free flowing, people orally wander about, each trying to focus on asking questions. Here too, questions are numerous. Members try to inform, ask further questions. Here member's convictions are tentative and somewhat ambiguous.

Conflict After the preliminary sparring is over members begin to offer opinions, evidence in support of their position. At this phase initial conflicts occur. There may even be resistance to the agreed upon task.

Emergency Open exchanges continue; members begin to search for ways of truly solving the problem. Compromises occur, and there is a decrease in conflict and sincere movement toward decreasing differences in opinion. A positive attitude exists at this phase. Options have been discussed, and criteria for measuring those options have been viewed. Now is the time to complete the task and agree upon a solution.

3. PURPOSES AND KINDS OF MEETINGS

We noted that meetings have two core purposes: to present information and to help solve problems. Obviously both purposes occur in all meetings. Three kinds of meetings help achieve these objectives.

Information Meetings

Review the following list: all were actual meeting topics in various companies.

- Changes in reporting procedures in the purchasing department
- Report on the company's strategic plans for the next fiscal year
- Announcement of the new mission statement
- Retirement planning for those over age 50
- Cultural differences between British and Finnish organizations

- Documents needed for working relationships with' Thailand's National Energy Policy Committee

At each of these meetings the members learned, asked questions, sought to understand. No problems were solved no recommendations for change occurred. In each case there was an opening statement by the caller of the meeting and then a discussion. Participants came to the meeting with one pivotal purpose: to be informed, to understand the information.

Suggested Solution Meetings

Visualize this situation. A manager desires to receive input from her staff on an issue; she desires to .review preliminary recommendations before solving the issue. The complete scenario may run something like this:

1. A supervisor senses a problem and desires a meeting to review options on addressing the problem. The goal: purely exploratory.
2. A memo or E-mail message is sent to all staffers asking for possible options on removing the problem:
3. Suggestions are tabulated and distributed to all respondents:
4. A meeting is called to discuss all possible options:

The manager.' and the review committee review all recommendations. Comments on the options occur at the meeting. Often no decision is made. The meeting is exploratory and informational. Then a final recommendation is prepared either for higher approval or group consensus.

Problem-Solving Meetings

Problem, solution, benefit, action. These four steps trace .the most common process in solving problems typical of the business world. Often (1) the major problem is presented early in the meeting; (2) participants suggest solutions discussing and evaluating them and (3) participants arrive at a decision for further action. All the steps involved in this process are discussed in the following section.

SOLVING PROBLEMS IN MEETINGS OR GROUPS

Because the problem-solving meeting requires the most careful planning, and supervision by the leader and rational discussion by the participants, the remainder of this chapter focuses on the problem-solution meeting. You can, of course, use most of the suggestions for all types of meetings.

Authorization for a Committee

You may be asked to form a committee to solve a specific problem. That letter or memorandum of authorization similar to the letter of authorization or charge may come from your superior, or even at the level of the .secretary of the board. Regardless of the source, that note should include who, what, when, where,

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and why as good cornerstone questions to answer. Two examples of memos for authorizing a committee follow:

EXAMPLE1: Committee authorization.

To: ER Nursing staff of [name of hospital]

FROM Nancy -Glover, Chairperson
Economic and General Welfare

SUBJECT: Establishing a committee to investigate education requirements for re-licensure.

Our Chief of Staff requested that I convene a committee of staff nurses to review what steps the hospital should take to ensure nurse re-licensure in our various specialties. flay I set the first meeting of this ad hoc group for Monday November 14, 1999 in the ER Conference Room at 4:00PM? Our task is to consider the following issues.

1. How to encourage individuals nurses to achieve certification.
2. What is the possibility of onsite programs?
3. What is the approximate off-from- work time needed to meet continuing education requirement?
4. Who will, collaborate, with the Board of Nursing to ensure that all requirements for re-licensure have been met?

I look forward to working with you on these important issues.

Illustrated above is who requested the meeting; the **specific purpose** of the meeting, who is to be **present**, and the **time** and **location** for the meeting. A detailed analysis on how to work on problem-salving issues in a meeting will now be discussed.

5. METHODS OF SOLVING PROBLEMS IN MEETINGS

Just how do you solve a problem in a group? Some of you may use intuition (rapid insight into a problem), rationalization (justification of solution over time), or scientific, reflective thinking (logical progression) to arrive at an answer. We favor this last approach, the one used most often m business. Four steps are involved in problem-solving meetings: background analysis solution discovery solution evaluation, and choice of action.

Background Analysis

You sense a problem you feel something is wrong you hear contradictory stories you know something is not going well. Welcome to frustration. You now can solve the problem alone, or you can assemble a group. We recommend three steps.

1. **State the Problem or Question in an Affirmative Tone.** Affirm stating the central issue is more effective than stating the issue in the negative

egative Wording	Preferred Affirmative Wording
ow not to handle personnel dismissal?	What should be our procedure in dismissing personnel form their positions?
hich kind of related businesses should oid?	In which related bus nesses should we we consider expansion?
ow can the negative consequences of reign maids be decreased in Asia?	Which steps should be taken to improve treatment of foreign maid Asia?

Define and Limit the Problem. Each of the above affirmative questions requires some definitions. This information is usually included in the authorization memorandum or in the initial stages of a group meeting.

By personnel we mean only those employees in job classifications -.17. By related businesses we mean only core competencies! i-e those t have at least a 50% relationship to our manufacturing process. By reign maids we mean, only those women from the Philippines who have en in Asia since 1990.

Collect Facts on the History of the Problem.

Several questions, and others, relate to gathering initial data.

How long has the problem' existed?

Describe the symptoms of the problem,

What is the extent of the problem?

Can we tentatively guess at the possible causes and effects of the problem?

How do other companies handle the problem?

Your thoughtful examination of background material will have helped to prepare for the role of discussant or leader of the meeting. And if you have prepared ten background material for the group, it will serve, as backup information to pare for the next stage: solution discovery.

ution Discovery

Establish Criteria. Ask yourself: What are some of the frequently used ria applied in problem-solution meetings. If you **answered fairness, workability,** ptability, positive consequences, favorable costs, number of people impacted, and n on investment, you would be among the majority.

Apply some of the above criteria to the following issue: "In view of our high gy costs, what should be the policy of our company regarding alternative sources nergy?" Your group" might set up criteria for assessing solutions to the issue as ws:

The solution must be **acceptable** to the Environmental Protection Agency and

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the company.

- The solution should have little **impact** on the earnings per share.
- The supply of energy must be **adequate** (favorable) to cover energy needs into the next century.

Unless there is consistency in applying criteria, each participant will assess solutions using their own criteria. But note: Some criteria may change during a meeting and attach different weights to those criteria.

2. List Possible Solutions

During a meeting you as a new graduate may offer a solution that you feel has been logically thought out, based on time and research, and then firmly insist that the problem can be solved only in this way. It is a rude introduction to the business world when others suggest that your solution has little merit. Hence, the thoughtful chairperson and participants should' consider several alternative solutions, perhaps ranging from the practical to the highly innovative

A good technique at this point in the problem-solving ocess is simply to list alternatives. **Brainstorming-the**: process of listing as many id as possible without judgment from any group member-is a favored method. Here ersons, interested in solving a problem, offer ideas in a freewheeling atmosphere. No criticisms are allowed, even for off-the-wall solutions.

After everyone has had a chance to voice suggestions, the list is shortened, usually in light of stated criteria. Several good ideas may thus arise, and later serve as a list from which may come the final solution.

What list of solutions, for example, would you propose to the question "What should be the company policy on drugs in the workplace?" A shortened list of possible solutions from one company looked like this:

During recruitment let candidates sign release forms for drug testing

Managers should orally and in' 'writing communicate this message. Employees will be fired if caught using drugs on the job.

External drug rehabilitation programs will be used for those using drugs.

"No Drugs in the Work place" should be posted' throughout the company.

An employee assistance program (EAP) is the central goal in the war against drugs.

Drug testing must-be used in conjunction with other means of employee assistance

Solution Evaluation

The preceding step was simply formulating a list of tentative suggestions of solving a problem. Now you must evaluate all suggestions in light of your stated criteria. In other words, you begin testing locating pro and con reasons about a

solution, answering whether a preferred solution truly will solve a problem or create new ones. As you work through the process in a discussion, you may end with selecting one of your tentative proposals, create an entirely new solution, or combine parts of several solutions. Your responsibility is this: You should arrive at a solution during this evaluation phase.

A series of questions can serve as hints to what you could be asking, for example, on this problem: "What health programs will best meet the needs, of our workers?"

What will be the consequences of adopting one of the tentative solutions? Will any of the solutions introduce, new dangers or new' problems? Will all the causes of the problem be removed?

How does each of the solutions meet the criteria established for judgment of the solutions?

What' are the advantages and disadvantages of each solution? What effect will the solution have on the future?

Has the solution proved workable at another company or in a similar situation?

Is there a professional organization or a person held in high regard in support of one of the options?

In each of us are hidden reasons why we support or do not support a proposed solution. Rational persons try to apply a reasoned approach to problem solving meetings. Consensus, or formal vote, then determines the solution to be accepted.

With the solution accepted, you still have one more thing to decide.

Choice of Action

A favorite question of senior management receiving a recommendation from a committee "is this: What costs are involved? That question, along with a time schedule, is basic to any group recommendation

The following example was part of an action marketing plan for placing ads into catalogs sent to consumers in their homes

Marketing Budget for First Year

Our marketing recommendation for the new product Diet Lite has been prepared for introduction on September I, 199.

Annual marketing plan	
Packaging'	$360,000
Revised product sheets	$25,000
Advertisement design	35,000
Co-op advertising plan	35,000
	60,000

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Media 'planning" and placement 205,000

Personnel involved
Media Director
Graphic Arts Department
Administration '

The document as signed by the vice president for Media Relations.

Thus, problem solving will be the major reason for business' group meetings. And while some meetings will not precisely follow the three main divisions noted above, all do begin with some kind of opening analysis, spend considerable time reviewing options, and end with a recommendation for action. Getting to the final stage is sometimes messy, but it is better to live in a democracy where we listen to the view of others than in a totalitarian society where decisions are often made with little input. How to be a good leader and a good participant using the above problem solving structure is the topic to which we now turn.

6. LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES IN MEETINGS

"She's a bore";' "He only needs our committee to help him in delaying a decision"; "He leads a committee that should have been buried long ago." These are negative evaluations of chairpersons many are worse. In brief when you are appointed chairperson, you have major responsibilities; it is up to you to lead a group through the intricate process of resolving an issue. You should know about the three different 'kinds of leadership and its functions before during, and after the meeting-to be effective.

Kind of Leadership

Look at Figure 9.1. We suggest that styles of leadership are on a continuum from authoritarian through democratic to leaderless; here, we elaborate on this premise.

Authoritarian.

Avoid the following characteristics typical of an authoritarian leader: shows contempt for some members, dominates the discussion, praises those who agree

Communication Probe

Research on leadership is worldwide. Indeed throughout business history people have been interested in what makes an effective leader. Numerous comparative studies sought to determine the differences in leadership styles across cultures, with similarities in style dominant. Although some of this leadership research is somewhat macro, some of the ingredients for leadership have a carryover to leadership of smaller groups. Regardless of culture, differences in leadership style may result from beliefs, values, needs risk taking, cognitive styles, and personal factors. Indeed one's personal value style may influence managerial leadership-how one.

- Perceives and defines a situation.
- Defines and tackles problems and decisions.

- Approaches interpersonal relations
- Interprets ethical behavior
- Responds to organizational pressures

Ronen, S. (1980) Comparative and multinational management (pp. 197-220). New York Wiley: England G.W. & Fee. R. The relationship between managerial values and managerial success in the United States; Japan, India, and Australia. The Journal of Applied Psychology 59(4), 411-419; Westwood, R.I., & Chan, A. (1992). Headship and leadership. In R.I. Westwood (ed.) Organizational behavior p. 118-143). Hong Kong Longmans.

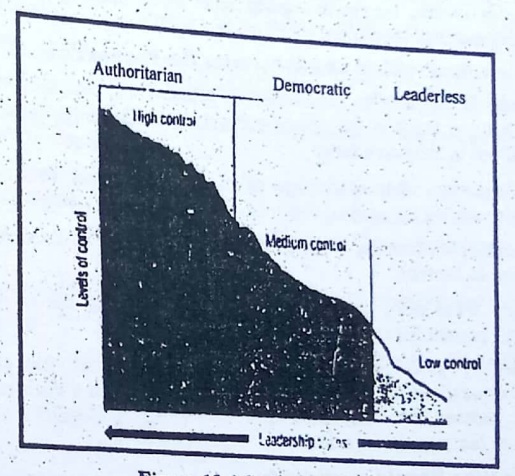

Figure 12.1 Styles of Leadership

with his or her position speaks often and loudly, issues orders and commands, suggests that higher authority supports his or her position. Such leadership characteristics do not belong in our current system of group meetings,

Leaderless.

This is almost as bad as the authoritarian style, but here the leader delegates all direction and decision-making steps to others. This person believes in shared leadership, allowing high-ability people to run the meeting. While sometimes successful, there is need for someone to offer some guidance, some positive feedback to the group that something has been achieved.

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Democratic, Participative

You live in a democracy; you know that all points of view have the right to be heard. You also know that in such an- environment the group has the final authority, that groups will vary in their ability to make decisions. Your major goal is to help, the group make the best decision possible rather than force them into it; you facilitate productive group discussion, invite minority opinions, evaluate unsupported generalizations, and clarify vague statements. To achieve such a lofty profile is possible-with work.

Realize that business discussions take time, are frequently disorganized, are in need of good guidance before, during, and after a meeting.

7. PLANNING STEPS BEFORE THE MEETING

It seems obvious that you as a group leader should know the precise purpose of your upcoming meeting. In your preparation, take the following steps.

1. Review the Problem and Determine the Precise Purpose

As with formulating an informative or persuasive speech take, some time to write out what you think is the central purpose of the meeting. Such a statement works well if put in infinitive form.

- To determine what percentage of our profits should be contributed to charities during the year.
- To decide whether the regional office now located in London-should be returned to Detroit.
- To ask: What steps should we take in reprimanding the employee who falsified accounting records over the past year?

In brief by phrasing the question in infinitive form, you already are answering this question: Do we really need a meeting or can a decision be made via telephone, memos, letters, video or teleconferencing, or E-mail? It is the chair person call as to the medium selected.

2. Decide Who Should Participate

In regularly scheduled meetings the cast will be similar; who will be there is predetermined. Specialists might also be called in for their expertise or a facilitator to assist in the deliberations. But when a special ad hoc (temporary committee), is formed, it is desirable to have persons representative of the group as a whole. Usual criteria include gender, age, diversity of view ethnic groups, and others.

Ideally a smaller group (3 to 5 members) is more harmonious than a larger group. Often a small group may draft some preliminary information and layout some options before going to a larger group. In the following Communication Probe some further research observations were observed between the size of the group and the behavior of "superior" leaders Journal of Social Psychology 32. 11-22:

and many others.

3. Arrange for Meeting Date, Time, Place

- Be exact as to time and date. E-mailing a reminder to participants works well.
- Avoid Friday afternoon. Generally Tuesday through Thursday is desirable.
- Be precise as to location. A room change from a consistent location demands both oral and E-mail follow-up.

4. Create an Agenda

You as chair have the responsibility to set the agenda. An agenda is the roadmap of what will be covered in the meeting. That information can be sent in advance (desirable) or distributed at the meeting. Busy managers and executives tend to follow the latter.

We have repeatedly emphasized the importance of the wording of the problem question. Be clear when putting that information in the agenda know that your agenda can word that problem as a question of fact, value, and policy.

Fact questions are concerned with what is true. You try to answer the question, what are the facts of the matter? For example,

- Who is the leading builder of luxury boats in the world? Is that company a competitor with our size boats?
- What are the constraints on TV advertising in Germany?
- China is developing rules for joint ventures in their country; which Hong Kong legal firm has the largest client list on international joint ventures?

Value questions depend on words implying appraisal and judgment of the goodness or badness, lightness or wrongness, acceptability or unacceptability, and merits or demerits of a person, place, or thing.

- What assurance do you have that the government will be fair to minority firms from the West?
- Is there a value to our sending three people to the executive program on human resource development?
- Is it worthwhile for our company to continue its program of sales awards to persons whose gross sales are above $75,000 a month?

Policy or procedure questions wall occupy most of your meetings: What should be done? What action should we take? Who should carry out the decision?

- Which actions should we take to cover future maintenance of our physical plant?
- We build numerous products for medical care: to what extent should we

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ourselves make the component parts or have them built by others?

- To what extent should we do three things: Invest time and money in creatin new markets in Asia or Europe; align ourselves with a firm already in plac in those parts of the world: or piggyback with another firm interested in o overall objectives?

It makes little difference which of the three question formats you choos What does make a difference is clarity in wording. The wording should be shor clear, unbiased, as in the following sample agenda and later announcements for th meeting.

Agenda for Marketing Staff fleeting November 15, 199-

1. Review of progress on actions approved at meeting of October tin 6, 19 [informative]
2. Problems with our ad clients since last meeting. [informative]
3. Action item: What theme should we pursue in our new TV ad campaign fo Client X? [Policy question]
4. Action item: What should be asked to coordinate the written and oral propos response to the request that we bid for the agency of record potential Client Y [Policy question]
5. Other issues to come before the group

5. Distribute the Announcement for the Meeting

If you have decided on the main questions for discussion, laid out the agenda fo the meeting, and decided on who, what, when, and where, you're ready to send ou the announcement for the meeting. Some announcements are simple and brief others may be detailed. In fact, most of the items in the agenda can serve as a majo portion of the call to the meeting.

October 7, 199.

To: Warehouse salespeople

FORM: Chris

Title of topic SUBJECT: Potential computer market for home use

Title of Topic TO: Warehouse salespeople

FROM: Chris

SUBJECT: Potential computer market for home use

Important Electronic Topics suggests in its October issue that a potentia market exists for increased sales of computers in the home.

Topic question will each of you please give thought to this question: How can w

Responsibilities increase sales of our personal immediate area? This will be the first meeting on the issued we'll assign more responsibilities at the meeting-

Date, Time, place We'll meet two weeks from now. Tuesday October 21, 1999 in my offices at 9:00 am.

In addition to the five ingredients listed above and "importance" of the topic you may also when desirable- include suggested reference materials, as sent with this announcement

Date, time, place TO: Product Planning Committee

From: RNS President

SUBJECT: Monthly meetings Wednesdays June b, 10:00 a.m. Rm.816

Responsibility Two questions are to be discussed in our monthly meeting

Specific topic questions

1. What other uses can you .suggest for our disposable tubing?
2. What policy should we follow about producing intravenous suckers that use internal wiring for support?

Individual responsibilities Beyond these two questions we will have a review of progress on our redesigned modules-by Mike S. and Tom G. and the usual monthly review of our ongoing new-product items by all of you.

Responsibilities of group My staff has prepared the background and history of the two questions above I ask you to come prepared to recommend options. Suggested reference material is enclosed with this announcement for the meeting.

6. Check on Physical Arrangements

- Select the seating pattern.
- Determine what kinds of materials are needed in the room.
- Have available the usual electronic visual aid's

Leadership procedures before the meeting are summarized in Checklist 12.2

8. PROCEDURES DURING THE MEETING

Here's a hint. Learn from other group leaders; note those actions and procedures that you feel make them effective group leaders. On the other hand avoid those leadership characteristics that you feel produce a negative effect.

1. Begin with an Opening Statement

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Be sure to prepare your introductory remarks before the meetings.

2. Stimulate Discussion

Remember: you as the leader primarily encourage all to participate, which means getting all views on the table. For instance, to assist discussion of a topic, you might write on a board or chart the criteria the solution should meet. List on another surface the possible solutions. Then discuss. Ask questions to keep the discussion moving, and keep participants on the main path. Get conferees to analyze their own thinking and that of others.

Above all keep an atmosphere of goodwill and cooperation. If the situation becomes tense or hostile keep calm. Ask for restatements, request courtesy in place of acrimony. Even taking a recess diffuses tensions.

3. Understand the Roles of the Participants

There are many classifications many names given to participants in meetings. Benne and Sheets classification of the National Training Laboratory in Group Development is our favorite:

Group Task Roles, Anyone may play these roles, even the chairperson.

Initiator-contributor	Coordinator
Information seeking	Orienter
Opinion seeker	Evaluator-critic
Information giver	Energizer
Opinion giver	Procedural technician
Elaborator	Recorder

Group Building and Maintenance Roles. Keeping the goals of the group in mind through group-centered attitudes characterizes these roles

Encourager	Group observer
Harmonizer	Compromiser
Standard setter	Follower

Gatekeeper (opens channels of Communication)

"Individual" Roles. The emphasis here is self-oriented roles, often at odds with group building and maintenance roles.

Aggressor	Recognition seeker
Blocker	Self-confessor
Playboy	Dominator
Help Seeker	Special interest pleader

Problem participants demand special attention. Consider our suggestions for five common problem participants.

The Reticent, Nonparticipating Member. First ask this person a question he can answer by a simple "yes" or "no," Then whenever possible, ask this member to give the conferees some information that he is sure to know because of job, training, or experience. Thank and praise the person as much as you can; he may then be more likely to enter the discussion confidently.

The "Know-It-ALL" This person may be asked to justify every statement she makes. Whenever possible, ask other conferees for their opinions of these statements. Sometimes, if necessary and you feel the majority are annoyed by this person s arrogance, you may tactfully quiet the person by asking for a show of hands from the group, which strongly outvotes the know-it-ails suggestions.

If the negative member still insists on knowing all the answers, a private, outside-the-meeting session can bring the groups concern to the person. This one-on-one meeting in a non-threatening atmosphere may produce more positive results.

The Long-Winded Speaker. Thank this excessive talker when he is' at the end of a sentence, and then recognize someone else. Or you might move the discussion to another highly important point, perhaps with a statement like "Well, we have two more points to consider before we wind up this meeting, so let s move along to the next topic."

The Erroneous Member. If the other members-out of respect-are reluctant to correct this person, an especially tactful comment by you the leader, may be required. As with any bad-news message; avoid direct criticism, sarcasm, or ridicule. Shield the persons pride, "When praising people, single them out; when criticizing them, put them in a group." Perhaps analyze a similar case, without referring to the speaker personally.

The Conferee Who Shows Personal Animosity. Although rare, sometimes an angry member shouts hateful, tactless comments toward another member or members. You can show an attitude of calm understanding and turn her off by directing a question to another conferee.

4. Interpret Data for Solution Evaluation.

After all options are before the group, it's time to evaluate. Encourage consideration of advantages and disadvantages. As a leader-at this stage-avoid imposing your opinions on the group. Or, if you wish to participate; ask another member to chair the meeting.

5. State the Major Conclusions and Plan of Action

In earlier chapters we suggested that written analytical reports, for example, end with a clear call to action, a clear indication of what you wish readers to accept. It is no less in concluding a meeting.

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Checklist 9.4 How to Be a Good Leader, During and After the Meeting

1. Prepare your opening statement in advance.
2. Involve all members in the discussion, if possible.
3. Encourage participant comments to be positive: from sincerely trying to solve a problem to encouraging others into more helpful roles.
4. Encourage members to evaluate all options before making a decision.
5. Be precise in stating the conclusions and final action plan.
6. Write out minutes of the meeting; send members that record along with individual responsibilities agreed to in the meeting.

- Summarize (list major conclusions of the discussion).
- State individuals responsible for specific actions
- Indicate by which time a task is to be completed.
- Extend thanks to the members for attending and completing the task.

Follow-UP After the Meeting

A leader has two final responsibilities: distributing the minutes of the meeting and seeing that responsible committees, departments, or individuals are appointed to complete decided upon actions. Good minutes will include who and when a task is to be completed. Briefly, minutes should include the following:

- Name-of the organization, department, or group
- Date, time, place of meeting
- Names of members present, including who chaired the meeting
- Signature of the secretary who recorded the minutes

It is also the responsibility of the secretary (or chairperson), to keep a permanent file a paper trail-of all material viewed or distributed at the meeting.

9. PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES IN MEETINGS

Not all of you can be leaders: the law of average works against you. Accordingly, you most often will be a participant. You too have responsibilities.

Preparation for-Meetings

Personal preparation adds to meeting effectiveness. Do your homework, collect information, check your data confirm your conclusions. In other words, the phrase "I don't know" in response to a manager's question is harmful to your career-to put it mildly. Be over prepared.

Effective Participant Roles in Meetings

Professors William M. Sattler, how deceased, and N. Edd Miller wrote a classic text

on discussion and meeting procedure they recommend nine roles for you play to succeed as a good participant during a meeting.

1. Organizer

Some persons do not like clutter-even in meetings. Some are natural organizers. They dislike disorganization. Meetings, as you know, often move without direction from either the inability of the leader to give direction or because members wander off the path. When you are an organizer, you give procedural suggestions, you steer the group back to main, central issues.

"I feel we're wandering from the topic. I suggest we return to the main object which in my estimation is what criteria should we consider for any foreign expansion?"

"Let me pause a moment and reflect on what I think are our central concerns: What will be the reaction of our shareholders and what-will be the potential reaction the market?"

"Mr. Chairman, I suggest we consider moving to item two on our agenda; that issue requires a decision from us by next month."

2. Clarifier

A Clarifier points out misunderstandings, attempts to make clear unclear expressions or foggy ideas.

"It's useful that we begin with a consistent definition of the term strategic- let's see if we can set a common understanding of the timeframe."

Let me add this comment: Some of you are using exchange rate figures for German Mark from two months ago, some from last week, and others from today. As you know even a decimal point shift will affect our budget. I suggest we use today's figure for consistent analysis."

3. Questioner

Many questions need clarification. You wish to fill in your knowledge gap for yourself and others. Be careful: Know the difference between a vital or an inconsequential question. But when in doubt ask your question; others may have had the same question but were afraid to voice their concern.

4. Factual Contributor

Any time you add substantive (factual, accepted opinions) information to, discussion, you are making a worthwhile contribution. Watch your tone. Presenting factual information in an arrogant or overbearing manner will create negative reactions. Be positive.

"You make an interesting point; I like it. May I add some data from a study appearing in the fall issue **of the Journal of Business Communication?"**

"If you read the Wall **Street Journal** this morning, their information is lightly

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different. Here's what the article said".

"We seem to be guessing on what our chairman wished us to do. Let me take a minute and read from his letter to this committee"

5. **Energizer**

Football coaches often typify this role so do group members desiring to the discussion moving stimulating members to reach their goal. Gloom is a part meeting so is frustration. An energizer suggests there is light at the end of tunnel.

"Hang in there, we're almost there. If we can make it another half hour, I'm sure we'll reach some kind of consensus."

"Madam Chairperson perhaps a recess is in order. That would give us a little time to reflect and get a cup of coffee. Then lets come back and finish task before the end of the hour."

6. **Idea Creator**

So needed is this kind of contributor. The creator risks ideas that may new, different, and even unusual. If you are an idea creator, you are willing to test idea in the open forum of the meeting.

"Let me try this idea:"

"Wait a second, there may be third option"

"Before coming here I made several phone calls for others ideas. They mentioned three possibilities; here they are"

"The Nation, one of Thailand's newspapers, recently had an in-depth analysis of hotel expansions in Bangkok. May I summarize three issues which could help us get started?"

And so on Creativity in offering options, different points of view is needed in group meetings: If you play such a role you will become one of the more valuable members of any group.

7. **Critical Tester**

Every meeting needs a person willing to challenge, tactfully, the validity and reasonableness of contributions. Note that the stress is on what is said rather than on who is saying it. Focus on the idea, the content, the evidence, the reasoning, leaving out all references to the person. All persons have the right to do so whenever is leading or inaccurate statements is made. The following are questions to keep in mind:

- Were a sufficient number of facts given on which to build a conclusion?
- Is the information consistent or do some contradictions get in the way of

accepting the information?

- Are the fact-and the language-clear?
- Are the sources of information and the statistics reliable?
- Is the information recent can one see time source and verify the evidence given?
- Was the cause sufficiently powerful to produce the alleged effect?
- Have some data been omitted in leading to the conclusion?

You should not hesitate to challenge an unsupported conclusion, an out-of-date source, a-biased piece of information an incomplete recital of facts, an unclear cause producing even more unclear effects, an unclear referent or source and other illogical matters that potentially can negatively influence the discussion. Not to do so is to omit good participant responsibility when reading a report or participating in a discussion.

8. **Conciliator**

Deadlocks are not uncommon in meetings. Both sides refuse to budge; violent disagreements do occur. What often happens is that persons become so polarized that not losing face is as important as not losing the argument. You as a conciliator attempt to find a middle ground, seek to find a compromise.

"Let me try this suggestion: Instead of offering a two-year appointment, could we consider a one-year appointment with a review after die first six months? If our review is favorable we could then move toward a three-year appointment.

"Well we're at an impasse as to what the final recommendation should be. I suggest four people two from both sides hammer out a draft and then come to the whole body for our review."

"O.K., we're still far apart it seems we're not going to reach agreement this evening. We can either call in an outside facilitator have an outsider chair the meeting, or we continue in deadlock. I recommend we get a neutral facilitator to help us to closure on the issue."

9. **Helper of Others**

A final role you can play is to invite other participants to join in. You do not wish to embarrass others, but try to help those who may feel inadequate or who are simply hesitant to speak up in the forum. Tact, sensitivity, and cooperativeness with the chairperson characterize this role.

"Most of us have had a chance to participate. I'd like to hear what Jane has to say on the topic." **(Invitation to participate)**

"Mr. Chairman, there appears to be a slight misunderstanding. I think what Kellie was saying is this "**(clarification and further support)**

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"Superior thought, Donna Let me make a comment and then invite other make observations."**(Praise of member)**

SUMMARY

- Of all the chapters in this book, this chapter brought together the many elements of good business writing and oral communication. Many meetings and discussions within those meetings depend heavily upon written documents most often to arrive at a solution to a problem.
- This business [illegible]

things contributing content of value via positive participant roles and suggesting procedural steps to improve both the harmony of the group and the flow of the discussion, In short, a good meeting requires cooperation between the leader and its participants.

- Keep in mind the two other purposes for meetings informational (giving of information to individuals) and suggested solution meetings. This latter form is in the form of a hearing, a bringing together of various preliminary views prior to the final recommendation.

Chapter 13

EFFECTIVE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

[illegible]

6. Writing Effectively
7. Subject Lines
8. Put the Main Point First
9. Know Your Audience
10. Organization of the Message

In today's world of rapid-fast communication via texts and emails, most of us would ther shoot off a written message than make a phone call. It's fast, efficient when used operly, and it provides a nice document trail for our work records. Written communication more important than ever, yet very few people know when writing is the right - or wrong - m of communication, and fewer still can write well. Of course, like all other mmunication skills, good writing skills can be learned.

WHEN AND WHEN NOT TO USE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Sure, sending an email is easy. How many of us haven't written one while on hold th another call or in those few moments between one meeting and the next? Texts are en easier - and let you send information from virtually anywhere.

t when is written communication most effective, and when is it not? There are a number factors that can help you make that choice.

COMPLEXITY OF THE TOPIC

ing written communication is an excellent choice for sharing information that is easily

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organized and easily understood by the independent reader. This means that the reader can read the communication and get the message clearly without additional information from you or other sources. Meeting notices, answers to quick questions, or quick clarifications are all easy to complete with written communication.

> Highly complex topics or lengthy explanations are not good choices for normal written communication. Written communication should 'stand alone' for the reader.

However, there is a point at which written communication becomes inefficient for one of several reasons. The information may be too complex to organize in a manner that will be intelligible to your reader without further assistance. The amount of explanation required to make the information intelligible might be cumbersome, leading to misinterpretation or lack of understanding. In the long run, you'll end up answering so many follow-up emails or phone calls that in these cases you would have been better off having a face-to-face meeting or in a formal training session.

3. AMOUNT OF 'DISCUSSION' REQUIRED

If the topic is complex or involved enough that there will need to be a long exchange of discussion-type emails, the longer you allow the exchange to continue in writing, the more you are risking that someone will misunderstand. Furthermore, you can't be assured that everyone who received the email has actually had the chance to participate in the discussion unless you are able to track the receipt of others' emails or require everyone to respond one way or the other. Therefore, decision making, long, involved explanations or conversations or controversial subjects are not usually good topics for written communication.

Lengthy discussions by written communication (email) are not efficient, and each exchange risks meaning getting lost.

4. SHADES OF MEANING

We've learned from previous information in this e-book that non-verbal communication is the most important form of communication in getting your message delivered. When you are writing, you are left to the small portion of communication that is possible through words alone in getting your message through to your reader. So the more intense the emotions around a topic or the more important the message is, the less likely writing will be a successful form of communicating.

Written communication alone does not allow for nonverbal communication - the most important aspect of getting your meaning across.

For example, it can be difficult to convey tone of voice, humor, sarcasm, or other shades of meaning in writing alone. Don't risk offending someone or causing confusion by someone not understanding your true meaning by trusting written communication with the task of

conveying highly emotional or important information.

5. FORMAL COMMUNICATION

Although there are exceptions, written communication is still the common choice when the level of formality between two parties is high. For example, think about your customers or clients. Chances are that formal communication such as contract terms, sales agreements, account information, or other legal or administrative information will be transmitted in written form. This gives you both the information in a format that you can pass on as needed, and gives you both reference material to help you in continuing your communication. As the level of formality decreases in the relationship, you are more likely to move from paper documentation to email communication as well.

The higher the level of formality of communication, the more likely you will use written communication. Plus, you will usually employ email more as the level of formality decreases.

6. WRITING EFFECTIVELY

Although some of the following information relates to either email or paper communication, it is mainly geared towards email since so much of our work involves email. However, you can apply most of the advice to paper communication as well.

7. SUBJECT LINES

When you are writing a letter or an email, the subject line of the communication is like the headline in a newspaper. It calls your attention to the communication and should also let you know what it is about. The best subject lines will also tell you what needs to be done - and will let the recipient prioritize which emails to open first and which ones to ignore for later (or altogether!)

What do these subject lines tell you about the information that will follow?

- Response to Your Email
- Question
- Hello
- Meeting
- Information for you

By these subject lines, can you tell any information about what will follow? Sure, the first one could be clear if the receiver has only written one email that day. But most of us handle dozens, if not hundreds, of emails every week. It's unlikely the receiver will remember exactly what you are responding to.

The other subject lines are too general. They don't specify what information will be contained or what action the recipient needs to take. If there is important or urgent information included, it might go unread - or opened, scanned, and dismissed.

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Instead, try subject lines such as:

- Information on Open House Tuesday, June 22, 2010 - Please RSVP!
- Question Regarding the Change in Health Benefits - Response Needed
- Meeting Requested on New Website Design - Please Confirm Availability
- URGENT! Change in On-Call Schedule for Memorial Day Weekend
- Response to Your Question on the Marketing Plan for 3rd Quarter

Each of these tells the reader what information they will find when they open the email, and also tells them whether or not they need to take action. The reader can decide which of these is most important and process the incoming emails in the best order.

8. PUT THE MAIN POINT FIRST

When you write your communication, you need to know exactly what, why, and to whom you are writing. Are you simply giving information, asking for information, or requesting the other person to take an action? If you can't narrow down the point, you either aren't ready to write or writing isn't the right choice of communication formats to use.

Once you know what the main point of your email is, you should put that first in the communication. We all tend to scan written communication to save time, focusing more at the top of the information than the bottom. Putting your main information at the top of the communication pulls the reader's attention to the main topic, request or instruction. You can follow with background information after you've stated the reason for writing - but if you start with the background information, you risk your reader missing the point of the communication.

Here's a bad example:

Dear Tom,

I spent some time with Joan this morning reviewing the numbers from last quarter's sales results. I was concerned to see that there seems to be a downward trend in sales of the Widget Deluxe, which is significantly different from what we forecasted. I am concerned that this might have an impact on our launch of the Widget Super Deluxe planned for next quarter. I think we should meet with the marketing team and the sales team to see if we can identify any possible issues with the sales and fulfillment process that we could influence. Would you let me know when you are available this week?

Thanks,

Julie

Notice the subject line? Again, it's not precise. Then the writer doesn't get to the point of the communication until the last line. If the reader is scanning for information, he might not even get to the last line before moving on to the next email. If that happens, you'll have to write another communication or follow-up with a phone call - which is a waste of your time.

Now read this version:

Subject: Request to Meet with You Regarding Sales Process - Please Respond Dear Tom, I'd like to meet with you, the sales team, and the marketing team this week to discuss the impact of the latest sales trends on the launch of Widget Super Deluxe. Would you be available on Monday at 3pm for about an hour?

I spent some time with Joan this morning reviewing the numbers from last quarter's sales results. I was concerned to see that there seems to be a downward trend in sales of the Widget Deluxe, which is significantly different from what we forecasted. I think we should attempt to identify any possible issues with the sales and fulfillment process.

Thanks,

Julie

See the difference? The second email has a clear subject line that asks for a response. It gets to the point in the first paragraph. Even if the reader is scanning the information, he will have a better chance of getting the message.

9. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

When you are writing a communication, you need to be able to identify to whom you are writing. Sure, you could be writing to the 'world' of your organization or the 'world' of all of your customers, but you need to know what it is that they will gain from your communication. Is it just information for everyone, or are there particular unidentified members of the audience who need to receive your communication, recognize the information that is important to them, and then take a specific action?

For example, say you are changing the HMO healthcare plan at the office so that domestic partners are now eligible for coverage. You might be sending the communication to everyone in your organization, but your true audience is employees that have domestic partners. In thinking about those people, what information do they need? What choices do they need to make? What concerns might they have in acting on the information? How can you handle those concerns in your communication? Identifying your audience helps you target and fine tune the communication in order to make it as effective as possible.

Another aspect of knowing your audience is being aware of what they don't know. Most of us have a 'lingo' that we use in the day to day operations of our work. They might be technical terms, references to internal structures or teams, or acronyms that are shared among peers. However, you need to be certain that every member of your audience would understand that lingo or acronym before using it - and that every person they might forward your communication to would also understand it. When in doubt, add a brief explanation or spell it out.

10. ORGANIZATION OF THE MESSAGE

Perhaps your communication has more than one request or call to action. If the actions are unrelated to each other, the best choice is to send a separate email for each one. That

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requires your reader to see each topic in the subject line and then to respond accordingly.

However, you might have situations where you have several requests or several important facts for the reader. In that case, you need to organize the information in a way that increases the chance that the reader will give you all of the information or take all of the actions that you request. You can do this by using topic headings that still put the main topic of the communication at the top such as: Response Needed, Background, Concerns. Or RSVP Requested, Instructions, Directions, FAQs. You could also use bullets or numbers for each subtopic. Or consider using bold or colored font to highlight requested actions. One word of caution - avoid using all capital letters, which can be interpreted as 'yelling'.

Your job is to make it easy and fool-proof for your reader to get your message. Use whatever tools you can employ to ensure that the message is delivered fully, as long as they are still professional and appropriate for your audience.

Chapter 14

THE APPEARANCE AND DESIGN OF BUSINESS MESSAGES

This Chapter covers

1. Business Letters
2. Envelopes
3. Standard Parts of the Letter
4. Optional Parts of the Letter
5. Punctuation Styles
6. Memorandums
7. Parts of the Memorandum
8. Special Times Saving Message Media

In the workplace of the future, you may send and receive dozens messages, interview a candidate for a position in your company through videoconference, write a report to your manager regarding a new initiative, and download several company files for analysis-all from a PC in your home office from your laptop if you are not at home. The electronic revolution is changing the way we communicate, and these changes include formats and conventions written communication.

In the more traditional forms of written communication, your receiver form an impression of you based on the overall appearance and format of the massage. Your cover letter enclose with your resume when you apply for a job communicate something about you even before your receiver reads a word of it. This chapter is a brief overview of both the traditional formats of written communication, such as letters and memos, and the newer communication styles developing as a result of the exploding technology.

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1. BUSINESS LETTERS

The medium used most often for written messages to persons outside you organization is the business letter. Your letters appearance conveys nonverbal impressions that affect a reader's attitude even before that person reads the letter. The many type styles and formats of modern word processing systems a printer can enhance the appearance of your message and create a positive impression.

Elements of appearance that help produce favorable reactions a appropriate stationery and correct letter parts and layouts.

Stationery and Envelopes

Keep the following guidelines in mind if you have an opportunity to suggest or change your organization's stationery.

Quality, Size, Color

To help build an image of quality, the paper for general business correspondence should have at least 25 percent cotton content cotton does not turn yellow in time as doe's wood pulp. Paper quality is usually 20-pound weigh based on the actual weight of 4 reams (2,000 sheets) of standard-sized paper. Other types of paper used are 16- and 24-pound weight. Most letters are the standard size 8½ by 11 inches, with some legal firms using 8½ by 14 inches. With is the most common color, although cream and light gray are also popular. With the new possibilities generated by computer graphics, some messages are written on dark or bright-colored paper. These colors should be used only in special circumstances, however, as when the design of the message is as important as the substance.

Letterhead

Modern letterheads usually occupy no more than 2 inches at the top of the page. The firm's name, address, ZIP code, and sometimes telephone number cable address, fax number, Internet address, nature of business, and name of the department or branch office sending the correspondence are printed embossed or engraved. Optioned details are names of offices and directors, trademark, slogan and the firm's starting date. Many firms include the extended zip code four figures beyond the zip. Benefit of including the extended zip are high-speed sorting of your outgoing mail and improved delivery services.

2. ENVELOPES

Return addresses of the senders, often printed like the letterhead, or if necessary

1. Name and title of receiver
2. Name of department
3. Name of organization
4. Name of building (if relevant)
5. Street address and suite number or post office box number
6. City, state, and ZIP code (U.S.) or city, province, and postal code (Canada)
7. Country (if letter is being sent out of the country).

Mail notations such as REGISTERED or SPECIAL DELIVERY should type in all capitals below the postal area. Any on-arrival instructions, such CONFIDENTIAL, PLEASE FORWARD, or ACCOUNT NUMBER, should be

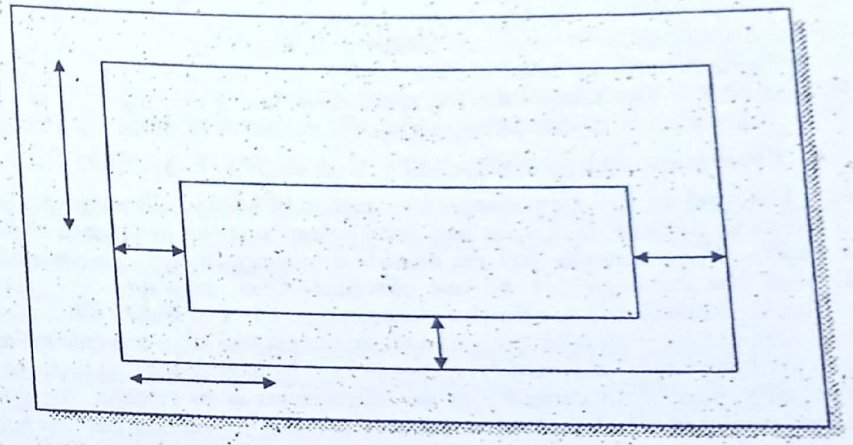

Figure 10.2 Large business envelops (no 10 size—91/2 by 41/8 inches) property addressed for optical character recognition.

typed in all capitals below the return address near the left upper edge of envelope, as shown in Figure 10.2. Business correspondence should follow prescribed guidelines because the Postal Service uses scanners to speed operations

The U.S. Postal Service extended ZIP codes can identify a floor in a large building or even a department in an organization.

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addressing are available from your local post office.

3. STANDARD PARTS OF THE LETTER

Most business letters have the following parts: (1) heading: letterhead and date, (2) inside address, (3) salutation, (4) body, (5) complimentary close, (6) signature area, and (7) reference section, as shown in Figure 10.3.

1. Heading-Letterhead and Date

A heading shows where the letter comes from, and if it is letterhead stationery, it is usually at the top center of the letter. If you are not using letterhead stationery, your return address, but not your name, is typed directly above the date, about 2 inches from the top, as in Figure 10.4, p. 165.

Usually the date is typewritten two to six lines below the last line of the letterhead-at the left margin, centered, begun at the center, or placed so it ends with the right margin. Date sequence preferred in American, "business is month, day, year-March 5, 1997-with the month spelled out if you use the figures 3/5/97, the meaning in Europe, Latin America, and Asia would be day, month, year - 3, May, 1997. As companies globalize, more people write out the month to avoid confusion.

- **Communication Probe**

The kind of stationery a company chooses, its quality, and any graphic designs or letterhead formats it chooses can communicate a strong message to clients and consumers. If a company has no consistent graphics, letter-heads, or quality of stationer), the message can be one of visual chaos, suggesting an absence of attention, organization, and effective management. A lack of quality and consistency can also be costly, with each division and department designing and funding its own stationery, letterheads, and images. Although a reader usually does not study the kind of stationery used by a company or the effectiveness of its graphics, the physical characteristics nevertheless do communicate a strong impression that can help or hinder the substance of the message.

Spaeth, T. (1991, winter) Diagnosing corporate identities. Design Management Journal, 47-51.

2. Inside Address

Always blocked at the left-hand margin, the inside address includes the name and address of the individual, group, or organization to whom you are writing.

Order of items is (1) courtesy title, (2) name, and (3) executive or professional title, if any. All parts are typed single-spaced.

Courtesy Title and Name. If the addressee has no professional title such as Doctor, Reverend, or Professor, the traditional courtesy titles are Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms. When in doubt about a woman preference use Ms. plus her own first name and surname. Current trends suggest Ms. as the courtesy title for all business and

professional women regardless of their marital status unless they have a professional title that takes precedence.

After the courtesy title include your addressee full first names or two initials and surname. When you do not know whether the initials are for a man or a woman you can use Mr. or Ms. for the courtesy title or omit the courtesy title altogether.

Executive* or *Professional Title. Depending on the length of lines, the executive or professional title may be typed on (a) the same line as the addressee's name, (b) the second line preceding the company's name, or (c) a line or two by itself, as in the following examples:

a) Mr. John Trimmer, President General Construction Company Larson Building 1380 Adams Street NW Chicago IL 60623-1123

b) Ms. Marietta K Worthington Treasurers Treasurer, XYZ Corporation Augusta GA 30915-1234

c) Dr. Marlotte Lim, Sr. Human Resources Officer Esso Singapore Private Limited 1 Raffles Place Singapore 0104

3. Salutation

The salutation is typed on the second line below the inside address, two lines above the body, and even with the left margin. Both traditional and comparatively recent salutations are included in the fallowing list, all of which much is appropriate for the first line the inside address.

a) Dear Mr.' [or Ms., Mrs,-", Miss) Doe-When the 'first line of an inside address is the name of an individual

b) Dear John [or Mary or nickname] -When you'd address the individual this way in person and when it is appropriate for you to do so in your letter.

c) Dear Koo Hong Chuan, --Most often used in Asia family name first then given name then comma.

d) Dear Manager [or, Executive Human Resources Director, Admissions Director or an appropriate variation]--When the first line is a position within an organization and you have no name.

e) Dear Ladies and Gentlemen [or Members of Committee Members Professional Momens, XYZ Fraternity Admissions Office]-When you are addressing a company, a group, or a department and you don't know a specific person to contact.

f) Dear Customer [or Homeowners Executive! Students Occupant Member of] -For messages that omit the inside address such as sales letters or announcements.

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4. Body

Generally, the body of all letters should be typed single-spaced, with double spacing between paragraphs, before and after the salutation, and before the complimentary close. Figure 14.3 indicates where all blank line spaces are in that letter. A short letter could be double-spaced with additional blank line spaces before and after the date and within the signature area.

When the body of a letter is two or more pages; each page beyond the first is headed by the addressees name, page number, and date. This Information is typed at the top of the sheet with the same margins as the first page.

5. Complimentary Close

The most popular complimentary closes in American letters are the following (notice that only the first word is capitalized).

Sincerely [most popular)

Sincerely yours, yours sincerely

Very truly yours, yours very truly

Cordially,

When the letter is informal, additional complimentary closes are often used such as Warm regards, Best regards, and Best wishes. Do not be surprised to see letters from the U.K or Asia closing with Faith fully yours, or Faith fully; tradition influences their use of that closing.

6. Signature Area

You can include in the signature area several identifications: name of your company, your signature your typewritten name, and your business title. If printed on the letterhead, your company name need not be typed after the complimentary close. However, if you wish to include it type it in capital letters a double space under the complimentary close, as in the Westwood company example below.

Your signature is pen-written above your typed name, which appears three to five lines below the company name (if included) and the complimentary close. The typed business title usually follows the typed name.

Jennifer Wenth	Stuart Station	Steven
Jennifer Wenth	Stuart Stanton	Steven Grant
Marketing Manger	human Resources Director	President

Usually, the signature is the same as the typed name. An exception occurs when you use your reader's first name for the salutation, in which case you will usually sign only your first name above your typed name, as Steven Grant did in the example above.

7. Reference Section

Your initials as the composer of the message along with those of your typist usualiy appear at the left margin on the same line with the last line of the signature area (your name or title) or one, or two lines below that, as in Figures 14.3 and 14.5. Common forms are

MLO/mb MLO/MB MLO:mb MLO:MB

Use of word processing systems adds another dimension. Disk information is often included as in the following:

HWH<3> : jr [HWH is composer; disk 3; j r is typist]

jc[JNT v] <b> [j c is composer; title on disk; disk 6]

If someone other than the signer of the letter composes the letter, practice varies regarding reference initials. Many firms show on the file copy the initials of the signer, writer, and typist (KLM: JC:tr). The original to the addressee may omit all or only the writer's initials to avoid showing that the signer did not compose the letter. At present, there is no universally recommended way to include references.

4. OPTIONAL PARTS OF THE LETTER

When appropriate, any of these optional parts can be included: (1) attention line, (2) subject line, (3) enclosure(s), (4) copy notation, (5) file or account number and mailing notation, and (6) postscript.

1. Attention Line

When you want to direct a letter to a particular person or title or department in an organization, you can use an attention line. It is useful in the following contexts:

- When the writer does not know an individual name but wants the message to go to a particular title (sales or adjustment manager) or department (personnel)
- When the writer knows only the person's surname and therefore does not want to use hat name in the salutation.
- When the writer expects that the addressee travels often and wants the letter to be attended to promptly by whoever takes care of the addressees business

Placement of the attention line is usually between the inside address and salutation, with a blank line before and after it. It may be flush with the left margin indented with the paragraphs or centered. See Figure 14.5 for an example of flush with the left margin.

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2. Subject Line

Considered part of the body of the letter, the subject line helps tell your reader at a glance what your letter is about. It also helps in filing. The subject line may include or omit the word **subject**. It is usually placed on the second line below the salutation and centered, or it may be placed flush with left margin. The typing may be capitals and lowercase and underlined or all capitals.

3. Enclosure Notation

To remind whoever prepares your envelope for mailing that something is to be enclosed, the enclosure notation is usually typed a single or double space under

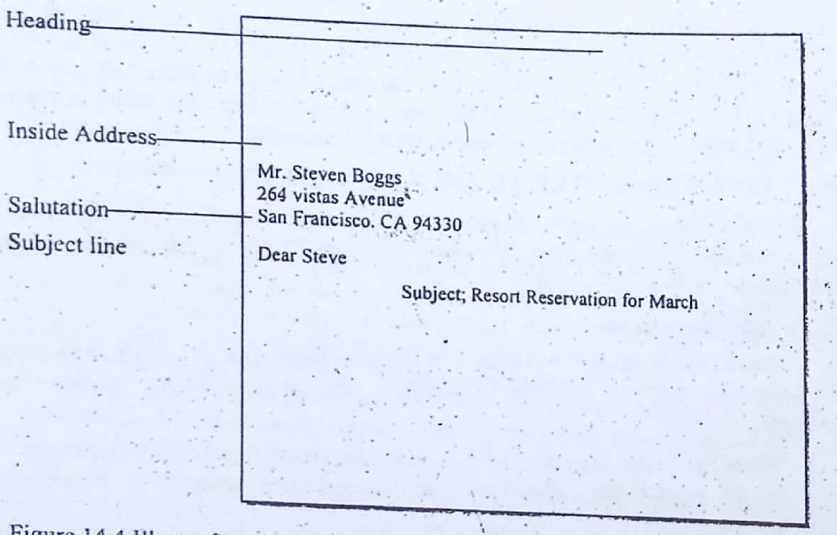

Figure 14.4 Illustration of heading with typed return address on plain stationery, also inside address nickname in salutation, and centered subject line.

the reference initials. This notation also alerts the addressee to check for enclosures. One enclosure is a unit that can consist of one or more pages. For example, a cover letter with a two-page resume enclosed is only one enclosure. When more than one item is enclosed, you should indicate the number: Enclosures 3 (See Figure 10.6) for an attachment, that word may be typed in place of "enclosure".

May 2. 199-

REGISTERED MAIL

Mr. Kevin George. Consultant

Office Supply Corp.

111 Computer Notices Building

460 River Street

Chicago.' IL60045-6677

Dear Mr. George:

DIGIGRAPHICS. Inc. can supply you with forms for all kinds of business letters. This full-block letter is typed single-spaced with a blank line between paragraphs. Every line begins at the left margin."REGISTERED MAIL" is a double space from the date.

Many firms prefer this format because of its simplicity and ease in setting up on computers or word processors. The writer's company name may be typed under the complimentary close, as here, or omitted.

Other accepted forms of reference initials could be used with this letter style. Also the "REGISTERED MAIL" notation could be type at the bottom, a double space after the reference initials. The postscript, handwritten or typewritten, would then be placed a double space under "REGISTEREO MAIL."

Sincerely yours,

DIGIGRAPHICS, INC
Andrea Forman, Manager
Customer Service Department
MB/mo

Figure 14.5 Full-block letter styles, with mixed punctuation. Length: short.

When the enclosures are especially important (checks, legal documents, blueprints), it is desirable to list in the enclosure notation exactly what the enclosures are (Enclosures 2-Policy #9595 and #32805).

Copy Notation

When you want persons other than the addressee to receive a copy of your letter, the names of these persons should be typed just below the reference initials or the enclosure notation, whichever is last. Type "cc" before the copy notation names if you are sending them a carbon copy Type "c, "pc." of "copy' if it is a photocopy. Recipients addresses may be included after their names.

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When you do not want the addressee to know that other persons are getting a copy of the letter type, be (blind copy) or "bpc" (blind photocopy) and the recipient: names on the copies only.

5. File or Account Number and Mailing Notation

To aid in filing and quick retrieval for both the senders and readers company some firms require that file, loan, or account numbers be typed above the body of the letter.

Mailing notation words such as Special Delivery, Certified, or Registered Mail, when applicable, may be typed a double space below the date line and at least a double space before the inside address, as in Figure 14.5. An alternative placement is below the last notation. For instance, the Registered Mail notation could be placer a double space under the reference initials and a double space above the postscript.

Postscript

To emphasize a point already in your letter or to include a brief persona message unrelated to the letter, a postscript, typed or handwritten (with or without "P.S.," "PS "or" PS:") may be added below everything else typed on the page. (See Figure 14.5) But with today's rapid word processors, the postscript is falling into disuse.

If you have occasion to use several notations after the signature area, the initials RECMP may help you remember the proper order for arranging then vertically at the left margin: reference initials, enclosures, copy notation, mailing notation, postscript.

Although layout or format of the letter is primarily the typists responsibility it is covered briefly here to give you a basis for choosing the styles you prefer. Some companies have adopted a common word processing software package (that ever includes punctuation) so that all their letters are uniform regardless of dictator department or secretary.

5. PUNCTUATION STYLES

Open and mixed punctuation are the two forms most used in American business letters. In open punctuation, no line of any letter part (except the body) has any punctuation at the end unless an abbreviation requires a period. In mixed punctuation, a colon follows the salutation a comma follows the complimentary close.

Foreign writers, especially those in Asia and Great Britain use a comma in place of a colon after the salutation. They argue that colons are too formal. Tradition in the United States suggests a comma in personal letters even though colons are used in business letters.

Letter Styles

Business letters are usually arranged in one of the letter styles described briefly below and in Figures 14.3 to 14.7.

Every line begins at the left margin. This is a common format because it is quick and easy

to set up.

Modified-block (Figure 14.3) the date, complimentary close, and signature sections begin at the horizontal center of the page or are placed so that they end near the right-hand margin. Attention and subject lines may be indented, centered, or begin at the left margin, where all other parts begin. This letter style is used often and is attractive on the page.

Modified-block with paragraphs indented (Figure ----)

AMS (Administrative Management Society) simplified style (Figure ----). AMS has been in use since the 1950s, but is not widely used.

Tips for Letter Placement

Software packages permit instant formatting (indents, spacing, margin width, type style. for example) of material according to the length of the letter or the size of the paper. The following suggestions are helpful for setting up your message on 8/2 by 11-inch paper.

Letter words Length in Body	Side Margins, Inches	Line length, Inches	Line Between Date and Inside address	Examples
Short Under 100	2	4 ½	4-10	Figure 14.4
Medium 100-200	1 ½	5 ½	3-8	Figure 14.6
Long 200-300	1	6 ½	2-6	Figure 14.3 & 14.5

In summary, some software packages for word processing systems have removed most of the guesswork in lying out or formatting a letter. Additional non- verbal cues of the letters appearance are its stationery, placement of the standard parts on the page and envelope. When these are all desirable the combination will help you send a visually appealing letter.

6. MEMORANDUMS

In contrast to the letter, which is directed outside your organization the memorandum goes within your organization. It is the most common form of written

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LETTERHEAD
February 6, 199-
Research & Development Department
Futura Graphics Company
114 Fourth Avenue, NE
San Ohispo, CA 55577-000
Attention: Ms. Fenottus

Research Development Team:

Among other formats available for your business letters is this modified-block style with paragraph indentations. The date may be centered or placed to the right of center so long as it does not extend into the right margin. In this example, the date begins to the right of center.

The attention line here is at the left margin, two lines below the inside address, and underlined. It could also have been centered and typed in all capital letters without underscoring. If you wanted Ms. Fenottus name in the salutation, you would type her first name or two initials and her surname above "Research & Development Department. Then you would omit the attention line and use" "Dear Ms. Fenottus" in the salutation.

Like the date, the complimentary close begins at the center of the page. The company name is omitted, but it could have been included. Also, the signer's name, instead of being at the left, could have been typed in the usual place-or just move above "Creative Director," and reference initials could then have been used at the left margin. The term enclosures 3" in the reference section shows that three additional items are being enclosed in the envelope. Each different item is counted as one regardless of the number of pages it has. The notation V indicates that a copy is being sent to Mr. Solomon. If you have more than one name, you can list them alphabetically or by rank. The right-hand margins are not "justified" (even) in this letter, but that is an option you have for this and all other letter styles.

Very Truly Yours
George wells
Enclosures 3
C: Mr. james Solomon

Creative director

Figure 14.6 Modified-block letter style, with paragraph indentations and mixed punctuation. Length long

LETTERHEAD

May 1,199-
Mr. Louis St. John P.O. Box 9.9-2
Boston, MA 00000-1234
FORMAT FOR SIMPLIFIED LETTER

This letter form, Mr St. John" has been recommended by the Administrative Management Society as a timesaver when typing business letters. Here are its features:

- It uses full-block form and open -punctuation.
- It omits the salutation and complimentary close but-to personalize may, if possible, use the reader's name in the first and last sentences
- The subject line is all capitals, omits "Subject," and is typed where the salutation is usually placed.
- The signer's name and business title are typed in all capitals, starting at the left margin at least four lines below the last line of the letter body.
- The typist initials are at the left margin two lines below the signer's name. Enclosures and names of persons receiving copies are on separate lines below the initials.

Mr. St. John, the simplified letter not only saves time but also avoids the risk of-selecting an inappropriate solution or using "Dear (name)", when the reader is in no way "dear." It is also helpful when you are writing a department and don't know anyone's name or whether-its members include men, women, or both.

For most business letters, correspondents prefer to use the traditional forms with salutations and complimentary closes.

JANICE C. PETINA-PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR
mo
Enclosure
CC: Jon Sanchez, Jennizer Waits

ure 14.7 AMD simplified style Full-block open punctuation. Length Medium side margins 6 inches line length: 5 ½ inches.

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Communication between people or departments. The stationery parts lay out and envelopes are somewhat different from those of the letters, described in the preceding section.

Stationery

Managers using electronic mail (E-mail) send their message from a computer to that of a colleague, eliminating the need for stationery. Or the receiver may print out the message on computer paper. For more permanency, a copy of the E-mail memo is often reproduced on higher-quality stationer). Formal memorandum reports composed on word processing systems and reproduced on laser printers may also use higher quality paper. Preprinted memo stationery may include MEMORANDUM and the company's name (but not address). Also, words naming the various memo parts may be included, as in Figure 14.8. Many companies decide on their own format.

7. PARTS OF THE MEMORANDUM

Standard memos consist of a heading with TO, FROM, SUBJECT, and DATE. On preprinted office forms, the word MESSAGE may also appear. These parts can be programmed to appear automatically with just a keystroke in a word processing system. Optional parts are such items as reference initials, enclosures, file number, routing information, and the senders department and telephone number. Unlike the letter, the memo requires no inside address, salutation complimentary close, or full signature. It is not unusual to sign the memorandum at the end along with a personal, handwritten note. That is more the case with British- influenced writing, in which even a complimentary close is added. Some companies have combination message-reply forms that provide lines for both the writers and the reader's signatures.

Using the combination **message-and-reply memorandum** form is an especially good time and expense saver for both sender and receiver. A packet of three or more perforated sheets plus carbons (unless special carbon less paper is used) makes up a message-reply packet. Printed instructions at the top or bottom tell the sender and the reader how to use the sheets. Each sheet is divided into two sections, MESSAGE and REPLY. These two sections may be side by side or one above the other, as in Figure 14.9:

Headings

What-you write after, the TO, FROM, and DATE will vary with the situation and your organizations practices. A courtesy title such as Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms before your reader's name may be used, depending on your relationship with the reader (superior or subordinate) and the degree of formality- within your organization. You omit the title before your name. Also, if the message is

temporary message, not to be filed, and if you and the writer work together regularly, you may merely use initials, first name or nickname after TO and FROM and use all figures or abbreviations for the date.

Whether you use initials, first names, or whole names, you must sign or initial your memo. Usually your signature is written above or to the right of your printed name. Occasionally, the signature is put at the bottom of the memo.

If the memo will be filed, the names of the sender and receiver should be completely spelled out. If you are sending the same message to several persons, their names or titles, or both, should be typed after To. If you write to the same persons often, you may have a form called a **routing slip** prepared with their names printed after the To. When you have only one copy of a document, book, or other important papers that you want everyone in a certain group to read and comment on, circulate a cover memo as in the following:

DATE:	April 1, 1999	please read and initial the attached: then send it
	John Evans	to the next reader. Last reader please returns
TO:	Jane Brown	memo and attachment to sender
	Toshi Umeda	
	Susan kalray	
FROM:	Steve West berg Human resources	
SUBJECT:	Request your suggestions on Attached policy Manual	

A subject line must make the content of the memorandum instantly clear. One-word subject lines communicate little. The" reader does not know whether he or she will be informed or persuaded, asked to do something, or simply to read for information. Busy executives who receive many memos daily desire an up-front clear direction to the memo. Thus the deductive early statement of intent often including a verb gives early understanding of later contents as in the following two approaches.

Informative Subject Lines-note use of qualifiers

Changes in Vacation Schedules Requesting Leaves of Absence

Family Events during the Coming year

Announcement of Newly Promoted Colleague

Persuasive Subject Lines-note use of verbs Employees-Nust Determine Vacation Schedule by March 1 Vice-Presidents Should Submit Material for annual report Leave of Absence Needed

In brief, the subject line should give immediate direction to the memorandum. Later of course, the specific aim of the memo will appear. But having clarity immediately increases the chance of a readers understanding.

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Layout of the Memorandum Body

The body of the memo is its most important part because it contains your message. In general, you can use the same guidelines, principles, and organizational plans for the memo as for the letter.

Unlike that of a letter, the memo body is not centered on the page. First lines usually begin a triple space under the last of the memo headings regardless of message length. Left margins are usually lined up evenly below the headings. Single spacing with double spacing between paragraphs is conventional. For memo pages beyond the first, headings are the same as those for the business letter readers name page number and date. Reference initials are typed a double space below the body at the left margin. Copy notations may be placed after the reference initials or near the top of the memo between the TO and FROM. If only your business title appears in the FROM line, or if the FROM line is omitted, you should sign your name a few spaces below the memo body.

Envelopes and Electronic Mail

How your memo is sent to the addressee depends on where you and the reader are located and the degree of high technology in the office. Firms generally have messengers, preprinted company envelopes, or electronic mail. The envelope address contains your name and department in the upper left corner and the readers name, department, and address according to your organization s procedures.

8. SPECIAL TIME SAVING MESSAGE MEDIA

Included in this section are various message media that save both the sender and the recipient time. Media that merit discussion here are the newer electronic forms of communication, such as electronic mail (E-mail) and facsimiles (faxes), as well as a few of the older forms, such as telexes, telegrams, and mailgrams. Teleconferencing adds another dimension to electronic communication, enabling a person to attend a meeting in another city without leaving his or her desk.

Electronic Mail

Writing conventions for electronic mail are still emerging, but generally, E-mail is marked by informality and speed. Formats can vary considerably from one sender to another. Receivers have varying comfort levels with messages sent electronically some receivers always print out the message in hard copy in order to give it their best reading. Over time the users of E-mail will determine which kinds of formats are effective. At present, E-mail formats are generally a less formal combination of letter and memo conventions, with memo headings for internal and external communications, but often with salutations and Closings more like letters.

Commupication Probe

Some researchers have suggested that a writer relation to electronic communication seems different from a writer relation to a hard copy of a letter or memorandum. Some writers lose the sense of audience when composing on a computer and thus lose the inhibitions or constraints that a hard copy provides. So far, there is little censorship in electronic mail, and writers sensing this freedom express ideas that they would not write on a hard copy writers need to be aware that even though writing on E-mail seems relatively anonymous and impermanent, there is not only a receiver of the message but also a record of each message that remains on the system for a period of time. E-mail messages can be read by system operaters, can be transcribed on command and can be subpoenaed in a court of law.

Hawisher, G & Moran, C. (1993, October). Electronic mail and the writing instructor. College English 55(6), 627-643; Ahrens, E. (1992, Winter). The perils of imprudent writing. ACCA Docket, 34-37.

Facsimiles (Faxes)

Where there was one fax machine, there are now three, five, or ten. For years, this instrument languished, only to burst forth as one of the preeminent instruments for communicating information-worldwide or clown the hall. Basically, the system transmits identical images electronically from the sender machine to the receivers. That machine may be a fax machine or a computer with software capable of sending a fax directly from your computer to another computer. All one needs is the telephone and fax number of the receiving party.

Noteworthy also is the Western Union, Instant Mail Manager for the Macintosh computer. It is usable for message creation, transmission, and receipt. Fax for Macs is delivered worldwide. From your Macintosh you can send messages to multiple fax machines as well as telex subscribers simultaneously by using Easy Links multiple address feature. You receive immediate information that your fax message has been delivered.

Telegrams, Mailgrams, Telexes

Older forms of electronic communication that operate on the same wires and satellites set up for the telephone systems are telegrams, mailgrams, and telexes. These communication media are still used by companies not set up with computer systems, although their use is diminishing as computer-driven technology becomes easier and less expensive to access.

You can still send a telegram within the continental United States and Canada or a cablegram overseas by contacting a Western Union toll-free number listed in any telephone directory. Since charges are based on number of words, conciseness is important. Mailgrams are used when you need to reach a number of people simultaneously in writing on the next business day. They may be sent by various

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means, but the most convenient is to telephone a Western Union toll-free number. In general, telegrams and mailgrams are less expensive than phone calls, especially if the message must be transmitted a long distance.

Telexes is also electronic messages that use telegraph lines for transmission. A telex message is keyboarded on a word processing system and then sent over telegraph lines to compatible receivers. Many companies, hotel chains, airlines, and other groups communicate directly with their own branch offices by telex.

Teleconferencing.

It is often less expensive to bring together people located at distant geographical sites by arranging a teleconference rather than have them physically come together. There are three ways you can make this kind of arrangement

1. Audio-Audio conferencing uses telephone lines to set up a group conference. Everyone in the group is able to speak to everyone else.
2. Video--Videoconferencing uses closed-circuit television, in which every participant can see, hear, and talk to others. This form of communication is gaining popularity because of improvement in technology and decreasing costs.
3. Computer-Computer **conferencing** uses computer terminals to link participants. People can send and receive messages in real time (while they are actually sitting at their computer terminal) from other members of the group.

SUMMARY

- Forms of your message, as contrasted to its substance, are important for two reasons (1) You want your receiver to get your points without being distracted by the messages format, and (2) you want your message's format to make your points as easy to understand as possible. Even with your messages format, you need to be aware of your receiver expectations.
- This chapter is your guide to formats of business letters, memos, and the various forms of electronic communication media. The appearance of your business messages gives a strong nonverbal impression to your reader. Stationery, parts, format, and envelopes for business letters (external communication) should follow certain guidelines. For memorandums (internal communication) the stationery, parts, layout, and envelopes are different from those of letters.
- Format conventions for the new and developing electronic media are continually changing. E-mail tends to take less formal shapes and to be based on quickness of delivery. Faxes are also immediate and at this writing, easier to use than E-mail. Older forms of electronic media-telegrams, mailgrams and telexes- are still used by many companies not yet hooked up to the growing computer networks. Teleconferencing is growing in popularity for companies whose interests are increasingly global.

Chapter 15

ORGANIZING AND FINALIZING REPORT/PROPOSALS

This Chapter covers

1. Organizing the Report or Proposal
2. Parts of a Report
3. Using Your Persuasive Side
4. Finalizing Your Report or Proposal

1. ORGANIZING THE REPORT OR PROPOSAL

Now that you have collected, analyzed, and interpreted your research dings, you must organize them into a finished report or proposal. Finished reports and proposals contain organized parts that guide the reader to a greater understanding of the project. You will need to know how to use these parts to communicate effectively and successfully with your audience.

Because reports and proposals are organized somewhat differently, we will discuss them separately in this section a report presents information, explains data, or provides an analysis of information. On the other hand, a proposal uses formation to persuade an audience, so it must be formatted somewhat differently from a report. We will begin our discussion on report/proposal organization by scribing the parts of reports. Next, we will turn our attention to the parts of proposals. We will conclude by presenting a checklist that will help you identify report and proposal elements.

2. PARTS OF A REPORT

Reports are complex and contain several different sections or parts. The parts to be included in a report are determined by the type of report and the needs of your situation For example, an intricate problem will require a longer, more formal type of report whereas a simple problem will require a shorter, less formal report. However, there are always exceptions to this, and you must invariably organize your ports to fit your specific needs.

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Most reports contain the following three sections: the prefatory pages, the body, and the supplementary pages. Readers expect to see most of these parts in long or formal reports, although short reports, such as memos, do not include prefatory or supplementary pages. The decision as to what sections to include in a port depend upon your own specific situation and needs. To view all the parts of Sylvia Montelongo's report, visit the Web site at http.//ohair.swcollege.com and click n the resources.

Prefatory Pages, Long and formal reports contain elements that precede the body or the actual text of the report. These pages support the content and enhance the appearance of the report. The prefatory parts include a cover page, a title page, a letter of authorization, a letter of acceptance, a letter of transmittal, table of contents, a table of illustrations, acknowledgments, and an executive summary.

Cover Pope. The cover binds the report, and is often embellished with the company logo. Because it can form impressions about the report itself, it should positively promote the company image. Some cover pages also include the title of the report.

Title Page. The title page displays the report title and is considered the first page of the report. In addition, the title page generally contains the name, title, organization, and address of the recipient; the name, title, organization, and address of the preparer: and the date of submission.

Developing the title for your report or proposal can be an arduous task. Remember that your title must convey to the reader specifically what your report or proposal is about. To help you develop a succinct and yet complete title, use the following five guide words: who, what, when, where, and why. For example, for her report, Sylvia Mon-telongo answered the five guide words as follows:

Who: Verbatim. Insurance Corporation

What: Experience-based training and development (EBTD) results When: 2001

Where: Implied (in-house training given by the human resources department)

Why: To improve relationships and productivity in job areas

From her analysis of too five guide words,

Sylvia developed the following report title:

"2001 Results of Verbatim Insurance Corporation's Use of Experience-Based Training and Development (EBTD) to Improve Job Relationships and Productivity"

Sylvia's title page is illustrated in Figure 15.1.

Letter of Authorization: The letter of authorization is a document written by the person who has given permission for conducting the project. If your research report was authorized in writing, you may want to include the letter as part of you prefatory pages. However, it is optional even for the most formal reports.

2001 Results of Verbatim Insurance Corporations Use of Experience-Based Training and Development (EBTD) to Improve Job Relationships and Productivity

Report prepared for:

Ms. Catherine Yen, Director of Human Resources

Vice-Presidents

Branch Managers

Area Managers

Report prepared by

Sylvia Montelongo

Human Resources Development Department

October 1, 2001

Figure 15.1 Sylvia's Title page

The letter of authorization usually spells out the duties and responsibilities, purpose, deadline background, costs, and authorization for the project. An example letter authorization can be found in Figure 15.2. Read and review this example. Can you determine the purpose of the authorized report? The responsibilities and duties of both parties: (American printing Company and the Copy Centre)? The date of completion and the authorizing representative?

Letter of Acceptance. If you choose to use a letter of authorization in your prefatory pages, you will also want to include a letter of acceptance. The letter of acceptance is a response to the letter of authorization, and either states the acceptance of the project in accordance with the letter of authorization or states visions to the letter of authorization. Let's return to the sample authorization letter (Figure 15.2). If you chose to include this authorization letter in your prefatory ages, you would also want to enclose a letter confirming your acceptance of the conditions and terms disclosed in the letter of authorization. In response to the authorization letter in Figure 15.2, you might respond with the following letter of acceptance (see Figure 15.3).

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American Printing Company
7397 East Thirston Drive
Oklahoma City, OK 73019
(405) 327 -9567

October 23, 2001
Ms. Juliette Constantonople
The Copy Centre
17 North Valley
Parkway
Omaha, NE 85674

Dear Ms. Constantonople:

I am delighted to inform you that our-executive committee has authorized your preliminary report to investigate the costs of converting our high-speed copiers to automated printing engines. We appreciate very much yow willingness to invest in this report.

It is our understanding that, in return for developing-a research report on the costs of converting to automated printing engines, your company. The Centre will be allowed to bid first as a vendor in providing the recommend equipment. Our facilities are open to your research team for data collection and I will forward to you a copy of our balance sheet for the past two years. Please contact me if you require other information from our firm.

As we agreed upon, December 12, 2001, would be an ideal date to receive your final report. I hope that you and other members of your research team will be present to answer questions about the estimates for the printing engines.

Thank you for your interest in our business. I look forward to working with you on this project.

Sincerely,
Susan Yanchus, Vice- President
Purchasing Department

Figure 11.2: Letter of Authorization

THE COPY CENTRE
17 North Valley Parkway
Omaha, NE 85674
(205) 760-7548
October 3, 2001
Ms. Susan Yanchus
American Printing Company
7397 East Thirston Drive
Oklahoma City, OK 73019
(405) 327-9567

Dear Ms. Yanchus:
I received your letter authorizing my firm to prepare a report to investigate the costs of converting your high-speed copiers to automated printing engines. Everyone at The Copy Centre is thrilled at the prospect of working with your group. I will be in touch with your accounting department in the next week to work out the transfer of documents we will need in assessing the inventory and maintenance costs of your present system.
The research report we will deliver to you will estimate the costs of converting your outdated copiers to automated printing engines. We appreciate the opportunity to bid first as a vendor in providing the recommended equipment. As our preliminary proposal indicates, the on-site research team will arrive in Oklahoma City the week of October 15, 2001. Our presence should not affect your daily operations any way.
The Copy Centre will have no difficulty in meeting the December 2, 2001, deadline for a final report and proposal. At least two members of the research team, in addition to myself, will deliver the report in person so we can address any questions about the estimates for the printing engines.
We appreciate very much the faith that you have placed in our company. We will do whatever it takes to provide you with a timely report.

Sincerely,
JUliette Constantonople, Director
Sales and Marketing

Figure 15.3 letter of Acceptance

In this letter of acceptance, Juliette Constantonople, director of sales and marketing for The Copy Centre, approved all the conditions set forth in the letter of authorization sent by Susan Yanchus, vice-president of purchasing for American Printing Company.

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Letter of Transmittal. A letter of transmittal is a personal message from the writer of the report to the reader of the report. Sometimes, a foreword or preface serves as a letter of transmittal. Regardless the letter of transmittal serves as a introduction to the report- over viewing the project citing what stimulated the project, and identifying the benefits it has for readers. In addition, the letter of transmittal can make suggestions about follow-up studies or point out possible limitations or cautions about the research. Figure 15.4 shows Sylvia's letter of transmittal.

Table of Contents. The table of contents is the report outline in finished form. All major sections of the report-and in some reports, the subsections-and identified with the appropriate location or page number. All other report component is included in the table contents.

VERBATIM INSURANCE
CORPORNTION
3054 ROCKRIDGE PLAZA
NORTH RIDGE, CALIFORNIA 22003
(213) 123-9876

Letter of Transmittal

Date: October 1, 2001

To: Ms .. Catherine Yen

From: Sylvia Montelongo

Subject: Benefits from Current Training Program

I am happy to submit the following report to you pertaining to the benefits derived from human resources training programs offered by our department. After you have had a chance to respond to the contents of the report. I will be happy to duplicate as many copies as you wish for distribution among the branch managers. area supervisors, and appropriate front-office personnel. I am delighted to report that our training efforts are paying off. Participants in our program report improved relations among the people they work with most closely, as well as improved productivity in their job areas. Evidence of this type should make a strong case for additional resources in the training area.

I feel that a follow-up report should be developed in about eighteen months to confirm the results reported here. I would be happy to supervise that project. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to verify. with empirical data, the importance of training in building teamwork and improving morale among the field personnel in our organization.

I look forward to your response.

Figure 15.4

Table of Illustrations. As a general rule, if a report has more than foul charts, graphs, tables: or other illustrations, a table of illustrations should he included. These tables direct the reader attention to the graphical or illustrated material contained in the report. Creating a table of contents or a table of illustrations is much easier now with the aid of word processing programs. Often all you need to do identify your headings and the software does the rest.

Acknowledgment: An acknowledgments page is used only when acknowledgments are numerous or have not been included in the letter of transmittal. Be careful to include all colleagues or group who helped in any way to accomplish the finished report, including those who offered advice provided materials, typed, and so on. Acknowledgments not only are proper but can increase morale and self-esteem of co-workers.

Executive Summary: An executive summary, immediately preceding the body, is a concise description of the report. The executive summary is also commonly referred to as an abstract or synopsis. Most executive summaries will mention briefly the research problem, purpose and research methods, major. Findings. conclusions, and recommendations. An executive summary should be as short as possible, and rarely should it exceed

Executive Summary

Controversy exists regarding the worth of experiential outdoor-based programs in training and development. Labeled EBTD (experience-based training and development), these programs continue to rise in popularity. with over 100 firms offering courses of this sort (Mitchell, Ferrier, and McDaniel, 1991). Descriptions of different approaches to this training abound (see Broderick, 1989; Buller, Cragun, and Mchlvoy, 1991; Galagan, H)87; LOng, 1987; Petrini, 1.990).

The key assumption behind EBTD programs is that the skills and lessons experienced in the outdoor arena an: transferable to the workplace. Hence, if during an EBTD program, managers experience facets of goal setting, problem identification, time management, unrestricted feedback, risk taking, or imagery, the assumption is that the managers will remember these experiences and apply these lessons which were experienced in the field to their jobs. It is expected that improved morale and team-building skills will be significantly improved as a result of this training. Futher enhanced productivity should result from these improved attitudes and skills.

Results from a pretest/posttest design indicated that participants in a EBTD program report significant gains in skills at both the individual and group levels. Gains in productivity were also reported by participants in the training sessions, although more objective assessment of on-the-job productivity is needed to verify the self-reports of participants

Figure 15.5: Sylvia's Executive Summary

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eight or nine pages for even the longest reports (over 200 pages). Providing a clear and concise summary is important because many busy professionals do not have time to completely read every report. The executive summary allows these professionals to determine in the shortest period of time, whether the report has relevance. Most readers will make a decision about reading more of the report from their review of the executive summary. Sylvia's executive summary is depicted in Figure 11.5

Body. The backbone of the report is the body. The body contains the essential elements the reader is expecting: the introduction the discussion, the summary and conclusions, the recommendations, and the bibliography.

Introduction: The introduction serves to orient the readers. In the introduction, the writer introduces the project to the audience and previews the report. Do not assume that the reader is familiar with your subject. The introduction usually contains a purpose statement, topics that will be covered in the report and background information (such as the history or a description of the problem). Sometimes it is helpful to the reader to mention what the report is not covering, especially if it could be confused with other projects or problem areas. Complex reports usually require a section at the end of the introduction that previews the order and arrangement of the remaining sections. Introductions are best developed after the rest of the report has been written.

Since the introduction "sets the stage" for a report, it is important here to gain the attention of your audience. Consider using the following attention-gaining strategies:

Previous research

A question

An appropriate quote

A story (should be relevant to the material)

A startling statistic

Look at the introduction that Sylvia Montelongo wrote for the body of her report (Sylvia's complete report is located at http://ohair.swcollege.com. In he introduction, Sylvia uses an attention-gaining quote to help describe experience-based training and development programs-the topic of her report. The first part her introduction is shown in Figure 15.6.

Discussion: The discussion of the report is the complete, detailed account of the problem. The research purpose, methodology, and results are specifically defined. The discussion also includes an analysis of the data collected as well as an interpretation of the results. The discussion of the report should be enhanced with graphics and visual aids for comprehension, interest, or summarization.

In looking at the discussion section of Sylvia's report, we can see that she clearly establishes the purpose of her research to demonstrate the value of EBTD training toward improving morale and overall productivity in the branches "Next, Sylvia moves into a discussion of her research methodology and procedures. She describes the research sample she used for her research "Managers from two large sales divisions of our corporation participated in the program (N = 153) ... [They] were divided into teams defined by their grouping in the organizational hierarchy. (N = 34). These two sections of Sylvia's report are partially depicted in Figure 15. 7. Following her research sample description, she provides specific details about her research procedures by describing the pre- and post program questionnaires she used during the research. For example; Sylvia explains, "Each participant in the program was asked to complete the questionnaire six weeks in advance of the program. The identical questionnaire was distributed six weeks following the program.

Introduction

EBTD (experience-based training and development) programs continue to rise in popularity, with over 100 firms offering cour.ses of this sort (Mitchell, Ferrier, and McDaniel, 1991). The key assumption behind EBTD programs is that the skills and lessons experienced in the outdoor area are transferable to the workplace. My purpose in this report is to demonstrate the value of EBTD training toward improving overall productivity in the company branches of Verbatim Insurance Corporation. I begin my report by describing EBTD programs. I then provide a suggested model for use in transferring communication skills to the workplace through an EBTD program. In addition, I discuss my research hypoth methodology, and results, In conclusion, I present five features of the transfer process that seem important to individual growth and team development.

One of the best descriptions of EBTD programs was provided by Long (1987), who described EBTD programs as metaphorical:

... physical and mental challenges in the woods are designed as metaphors for professional challenges in the organization. Relevant wilderness lab challenges highlight interaction issues clients are facing in the workplace, such as internal collaboration for external competition, managing through the uncertainties of change, or tapping the collective creativity of diverse discipline perspectives to solve problems. Wilderness lab challenges are most useful when they replicate relevant environmental constraints, such as geographical disbursement of team members, diminishing resources, or competitive compensation systems; (p. 32)

She further describes how she analyzed the questionnaires ("t-tests were performed for all participants") and concludes with a written interpretation of her

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research results ('The results indicated that the program was responsible for significant advances in team development, as measured on [four different] dimensions"). To enhance her written comments, Sylvia uses visuals to summarize her findings. For example, see Tables 1 and 2 in Sylvia's report at http://ohair swcollege.com

Figure 11.6 Beginning of Sylvia's Introduction

Discussion

Research Purpose

The purpose of my research is to demonstrate the value of EBTD training toward improving morale and overall productivity in the branches of Verbatim Insurance Corporation. Guiding my re-search two research hypotheses:

H1: Human resources training programs improve employee morale and team-building skills.

H2: Improved morale and team-building skills increase productivity.

Research Methodology

Managers from two large sales divisions of our corporation participated in the program (N = 153). The sales divisions were divided into teams defined by their grouping in the organizational hierarchy. Throughout the program, the participants worked in their teams (N = 34).

Four dimensions of team building were developed in the program. These were roles, goals, processes and procedures, and relationships. Activities and instruction for components of each of these dimensions were developed for participants in the program. Three items for each of these dimensions were identified as critical skills that would be addressed in the corresponding phase of the training program and would be assessed by a pre- and post-program questionnaire

Figure 15.7: Purpose and Methodology Sections of Sylvia's Report

Summary and Conclusions. A summary provides a synopsis of the main points from the introduction and discussion. It is an overview of the research report. A conclusion is a response to the research purpose. Normally, the conclusions are stated in order of importance. Sylvia uses the following concluding statement to highlight the findings described in her research report: Experience-based training and development provides structured support for team members as they transfer team-building and, leadership skills experienced outdoors to the workplace. In addition, she augments her concluding statement by presenting five particular features of the transfer process that seemed important to individual and team development. The opening of Sylvia's conclusion is shown in Figure 15.8

Recommendations. Recommendations, which proceed from the conclusions, are suggestions for action to be taken based on the conclusions. In some reports, the recommendations are included in the conclusions section. Recommendations are usually stated in specific terms, guiding the reader to a clear plan of action.

Recommendations are generally used when the writer considers them beneficial or when they are expected by the audience.

Bibliography. The bibliography is usually the last page of the body. It lists all sources used for the report, both primary and secondary. Here is an example of a bibliographical reference from Sylvia's report:

Buller, P. F., Cragun, J. R. and McEvoy. G. M. (1991). "Getting the Most out of Outdoor Training." Training and Development journal 45: 58-61.

Bibliographies serve two important functions for your report. First a bibliography presents a report of the sources that were drawn upon for the project thereby fulfilling the report's requirement that credit be given where it is due:

Second, a bibliography gives the critical reader an impression that previous Information was consulted. Most readers are interested in how the information contained in the report compares to work that

Summary and Conclusions

My purpose in writing this report was to demonstrate the value of EBTD training toward improving overall productivity in the company branches of Verbatim Insurance Corporation. I began by describing EBTD programs. I then provided a suggested model for use in transferring communication skills to the workplace through an EBTD program. In addition, I discussed my research hypotheses, methodology, and results.

In conclusion, I find that experience-based training and development (EBTD) provides structured support for team members as they transfer team-building and leadership skills experienced outdoors to the workplace. These transferred skills improve employee morale, team-building skills, and overall productivity in the workplace. To further support my conclusion, I would like to present five particular features of the transfer process that seem important to individual employee growth and team development.

Figure 15.8: First Paragraphs of Sylvia's Conclusion

was conducted elsewhere or opinions expressed by other people. Bibliographies lend an air of credibility to the report or proposal.

Supplementary Pages. Some reports include supplementary material, often referred to as **back matter** that appears at the end. The decision to include this information depends on the type of report and the expectations of the reader. Long formal reports are more likely to contain back matter. The three sections found in the back of a report, in descending order of frequency, are the appendix (or appendices), the index (or indexes), and the glossary (or glossaries).

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Appendix. The appendix, placed after the bibliography, contains additional material that supports the ideas and conclusions in the report, but is not necessary r an understanding of the report. Appendix information can include business forms, printouts, surveys, summary tables, additional references, blueprints, and photographs. Each type of information should be placed in a separate appendix or a more detailed discussion of a certain aspect of the report.

Charts, graphs, and tables that directly support the body of the report should not be placed in the appendix. These types of information belong in the body of the report, where they are more convenient for the reader to refer to. As a rule, remember that each appendix you use should be relevant to the report, but should not be necessary to understand the report.

Index. An index is an alphabetical subject guide for the report. You are most familiar with indexes that appear at the back of books. An index serves a quid reference guide for subject matter contained in the report. Most reports will not need an index, instead relying on the table of content as a reference to sections or subject matter within the report.

Glossary A glossary is sometimes provided if the report or proposal contains words that are unfamiliar to the reader. The items that appear in a glossary are defined, explained, or illustrated from the reader's perspective. We do not recommend using language that is unfamiliar to the reader, so a glossary is usually, a rare item in reports.

3. USING YOUR PERSUASIVE SIDE

Persuasion is a matter of getting the audience to think in a certain way or make a particular course of action. Using persuasive techniques, write a short proposal to your class instructor asking that the next class meeting time be cut short by one hour or that class convene at a local coffee shop.

As demonstrated here a persuasive proposal answers client needs, makes clear and specific recommendation, provides evidence of your qualifications, and promotes your solution over that of a competitor. Persuasive proposals meet the client's needs by addressing fears, answering questions before they're raised, and providing information that supports your solution. In addition, an effective proposal promotes the credibility of your company. Your company must be perceived as trustworthy, knowledgeable, and competent. Experience, education, professional correspondence or appearance, and credible sources of evidence can enhance your company's credibility. Furthermore, an effective strategy emphasizes your strength and downplays your weaknesses, and conveys advantages in either cost quality technology, or benefits. The cost approach focuses on ways to eliminate waste or save money. Quality strategies emphasize the gains that come from investing in the best products or services. Technology strategies appeal to the use of automation as a solution to increase productivity. The benefits approach provides evidence for unique

or superior benefits from your solution.

4. FINALIZING YOUR REPORT OR PROPOSAL

Finalizing your report involves four steps: revising, editing, selecting graphics and visuals, and proofreading. Revising is the act of correcting and improving the content of your proposal or report. It often means rewriting or rearranging your content. According to many writers revising may be even more difficult than actually writing. Ernest Hemingway once stated that he revised the ending of **A Farewell to Arms** 39 times before he got the words right. It is easy to see that revising can be a time-consuming effort Editing, on the other hand occurs after you are satisfied with your revisions, and consists of correcting errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure. It is much easier to revise and edit work of others than to do so with your own work. Two principal reasons for the difficulty are (1) as the writer of the material, it is difficult to be objective about your tent, and (2) it is equally difficult to disregard the intent of your message and concentrate exclusively on the grammar, punctuation, spelling, style and other elements of good construction.

We begin this section by providing some revision guidelines. Second we turn the topic of editing and provide suggestions to help make your editing easier. In third subsection we take up the issue of selecting graphics and visuals that are appropriate for the report. Finally, we offer suggestions for proofreading your entire report so that it is error-free.

Visiting Your Work

Good writers understand the importance of revisions. The work that occurs-during revisions is essential for producing a good report. During revision, you will again at virtually everything you have done in writing your report or proposal following three revision steps will assist you in your efforts.

First, read your report or proposal aloud to evaluate content, style, organization, and readability. When you read out loud, your ear forces your mind to rate at a slower speed, and you catch mistakes yon might skip over otherwise. A general rule to follow is that if anything sounds wrong, it probably is.

Second, set your report or proposal aside for two or three days. You will be more objective after being away from your work for a few days. Read through it in, both silently and aloud. Make sure you still agree with the revised changes have already made or that you don't need to make additional changes.

Third, if you have an opportunity, let someone else read your report or proposal and give feedback about the content. Are there areas of confusion? Can your reader give you a strong summary about the report or proposal? If he or she cannot, you may have some problems with your paper's focus or logic, and revision is needed.

Editing Your Work

After you are satisfied with the revisions, edit the report. This consists of

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evaluating paragraph and sentence structure and correcting errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. We have broken our discussion down into three general editing areas paragraph structure; sentence structure; and spelling, grammar, and punctuation. The suggestions in each of these areas will help you in your editing efforts.

Editing for Error in Paragraph Structure. A report or proposal is made up of multiple paragraphs. As we discussed earlier in this chapter, you-must make sure that your report or proposal begins with an introductory paragraph. This introduction should include an effective purpose sentence that implies the content and order of the rest of the paragraphs in the paper.

Also, check that the final paragraphs or concluding paragraphs relate back to your purpose statement. If they do not, you need to edit your work to achieve this relationship. In addition, check that all paragraphs between the introductory and concluding paragraphs carry the purpose and message of your report or proposal in a logical and unified manner. Furthermore, make certain that each paragraph connects appropriately with the preceding paragraph. This connection can be achieved by using a transitional word, phrase or sentence.

Editing for Errors in Sentence Structure, checking your sentence structure is another important part of the editing process. Make sure you include a variety of sentence types, such as simple sentences, compound sentences, and complex sentences. It also helps to vary the way you begin your sentences. In addition, your sentences should vary in length.

Editing for Errors in Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation. Using a computer to help you edit for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation will save you time and energy. Most word processing packages have built in spelling and grammar, checkers. You should become familiar with these tools. **Spelling checkers** scan your document, examining each word and comparing it to entries in its internal dictionary. **Grammar checkers** identify sentences in your report that may contain grammatical errors or a weak writing style. Be prepared to spend some time with the grammar checker, since it will identify a number of potential problems and ask you for permission to correct the errors. However, since grammar checkers tend to flag what they perceive to be errors that violate rigid and archaic rules, the best grammar checker is your own best judgment.

Computer software cannot check for spacing, proper names, headings, and other special features contained in reports. For example, a spelling checker will not recognize typos such as form instead of from. Examine your document carefully even if you have used the spelling and grammar checkers. In addition, it is extremely beneficial to have someone you trust edit your document to help you identify errors. A second, fresh pair of eyes is more likely to uncover small errors that can easily escape your own tired, familiar eyes.

Many word processors and grammar checkers can also provide a readability index that gauges the reading level of your report. Readability indexes are based on the ratio of

active to passive sentences, the number of words per sentence, and the number-of long words relative to the total number of words. Most give a reading level according to grade level. If your index indicates that your document is at the twelfth-grade level, you know that its readability level is appropriate for readers who have finished high school. Readability level can be helpful as you try to match our report's writing level with the abilities of your readers.

Selecting Graphics and Visuals

As with giving speeches, visuals can be a powerful communication tool in drawing attention to important information in your report or proposal. Not only can visuals add some spice to a report full of words and numbers, they can illustrate data and ideas in a unique manner. Just remember that adding visuals to your report or proposal should be done with a purpose. Don't add them just because you think you are supposed to.

The key to selecting graphics and visuals for your report or proposal is to identify ideas, concepts, data, and unfamiliar or ambiguous terms that would benefit from some type of illustration. If geographical regions or sales territories are discussed, using maps may get the point across much more clearly. Trends that occur over time are usually best represented by line or bar charts depicting changes over months, quarters, or years. Pie charts work nicely for data that is segmented into percentages. Sylvia selected a table to represent the results of her survey. She also used a figure (flow chart) illustrating a process model. Sylvia's visuals are shown in Figure 15.10 and 15.11.

Table: Mean Scores for Individuals

N="140

Question: There is at least one member of my team: (1=strongly agree; 4=strongly disagree)	Before	after	t
1. Whom I do not know very well as a person or professional	2.31	2.87	-7.32
2. Who has a strength or weakness that is different from those of any other team member	2.98	2.99	-0.11
3. Whose job performance suffers from demands other than work	2.75	2.94	-2.81
4. Who is unclear about goals and objectives for the Job	3.00	3.29	-4.69

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(15) ORGANIZATION &FANALIZING REPORT/PROPOSAL

5. Who is not committed to goals and objective for Job	3.14	3.35	-3.04
6. Who says company policies and procedures inhibit	2.56	2.83	-3.95
7. Who blames others for own sub-par performance	2.88	3.01	-1.96
8. Who needs to make changes in how he or she gives or receives feedback	2.37	2.59	-3.07
9. Whose ability, support, and/or effort on the job Needs improvement	2.45	2.70	-4.12
10. Who gets defensive in conversations or meetings	2.47	2.62	-2.34
11. Whom I do not trust.	3.01	3.13	1.84
12. Whom it is useless to question or argue with	2.84	3.03	-2.71

*-Statistically significant, could occur by chance 5/100

*-very statistically significant; could only occur by chance 1/100

Figure 15.10: Sylvia's Research Results Table

Proofreading

The last step before submitting your report or proposal to potential readers is a manual proofreading of the entire document. Proofreading the final version of your report or proposal is best accomplished in three steps. First, read the document for content. Note on the page any instances of vagueness, awkwardness, or incompleteness. Second examine only the structure of your document. Make sure headings are at the appropriate level and correspond to the outline you developed.

Third, look at your punctuation, the citations in your bibliography, and a supplemental parts to ensure that everything is in place. When you are satisfied with your results, your report or proposal is ready for delivery!

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