MediaShare for Business offers a curated collection of business videos that provide customizable, auto-scored assignments. MediaShare for Business helps students understand why they are learning key concepts and how they will apply those in their careers.

Dynamic Study Modules help students study chapter topics effectively on their own by continuously assessing their knowledge application and performance in real time. These are available as graded assignments prior to class, and accessible on smartphones, tablets, and computers.

Pearson eText enhances student learning—both in and outside the classroom. Take notes, highlight, and bookmark important content, or engage with interactive lecture and example videos that bring learning to life (available with select titles). Accessible anytime, anywhere via MyLab or the app.

The MyLab Gradebook offers an easy way for students and instructors to view course performance. Item Analysis allows instructors to quickly see trends by analyzing details like the number of students who answered correctly/incorrectly, time on task, and median time spend on a question by question basis. And because it’s correlated with the AACSB Standards, instructors can track students’ progress toward outcomes that the organization has deemed important in preparing students to be leaders.

For additional details visit: www.pearson.com/mylab/businesscommunication
Business Communication Essentials

Fundamental Skills for the Mobile-Digital-Social Workplace

Courtland L. Bovée
PROFESSOR OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION
C. ALLEN PAUL DISTINGUISHED CHAIR
GROSSMONT COLLEGE

John V. Thill
CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
GLOBAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

New York, NY
This book is dedicated to the many thousands of instructors and students who use Bovée and Thill texts to develop career-enhancing skills in business communication. We appreciate the opportunity to play a role in your education, and we wish you the very best with your careers.

Courtland L. Bovée
John V. Thill
Preface xv
Prologue xxviii

PART 1 Business Communication Foundations 1
  1 Professional Communication in Today’s Digital, Social, Mobile World 3
  2 Collaboration, Interpersonal Communication, and Business Etiquette 37

PART 2 The Three-Step Writing Process 61
  3 Planning Business Messages 63
  4 Writing Business Messages 87
  5 Completing Business Messages 113

PART 3 Brief Business Messages 133
  6 Crafting Messages for Digital Channels 135
  7 Writing Routine and Positive Messages 167
  8 Writing Negative Messages 191
  9 Writing Persuasive Messages 221

PART 4 Longer Business Messages 247
  10 Understanding and Planning Reports and Proposals 249
  11 Writing and Completing Reports and Proposals 281
  12 Developing and Delivering Business Presentations 327

PART 5 Employment Messages and Job Interviews 359
  13 Building Careers and Writing Résumés 361
  14 Applying and Interviewing for Employment 393

APPENDIX A Format and Layout of Business Documents 425
APPENDIX B Documentation of Report Sources 441
APPENDIX C Correction Symbols 449

Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage 453
Answer Key 489
Index 495
## Preface xv

## Prologue xxviii

### PART 1

**Business Communication Foundations** 1

1 Professional Communication in Today’s Digital, Social, Mobile World 3

**COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . . 3**

**Why Communication Is the Most Important Business Skill** 4
- Communication Is Important to Your Career 4
- Communication Is Important to Your Company 4

**Communicating as a Professional** 6
- Understanding What Employers Expect from You 6
- Communicating in an Organizational Context 8

**Exploring the Communication Process** 9
- The Basic Communication Model 9
- The Social Communication Model 10

**The Mobile Revolution** 12
- The Rise of Mobile as a Business Communication Platform 12
- How Mobile Technologies are Changing Business Communication 13

**Committing to Ethical Communication** 14
- Distinguishing Ethical Dilemmas from Ethical Lapses 15
- Making Ethical Choices 16

**Communicating in a World of Diversity** 16
- The Advantages and Challenges of a Diverse Workforce 16
- Key Aspects of Cultural Diversity 17
- Advice for Improving Intercultural Communication 20
- Writing for Multilingual Audiences 21
- Speaking with Multilingual Audiences 21

**Using Technology to Improve Business Communication** 23
- Keeping Technology in Perspective 23
- Using Tools Productively 23
- Guarding Against Information Overload 23
- Reconnecting with People Frequently 28

**Developing Skills for Your Career** 28
- The Future of Communication: Real-Time Translation 28

Chapter Review and Activities 29

### Contents

**Part 2**

**Collaboration, Interpersonal Communication, and Business Etiquette** 37

**COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . . 37**

**Communicating Effectively in Teams** 38
- Advantages and Disadvantages of Teams 38
- Characteristics of Effective Teams 39
- Conflict Resolution in Team Settings 39

**Collaborating on Communication Efforts** 40
- Guidelines for Collaborative Writing 40
- Technologies for Collaborative Writing 40

**Making Your Meetings More Productive** 43
- Preparing for Meetings 43
- Conducting and Contributing to Efficient Meetings 44
- Putting Meeting Results to Productive Use 45
- Using Meeting Technologies 46

**Improving Your Listening Skills** 47
- Recognizing Various Types of Listening 47
- Understanding the Listening Process 48
- Overcoming Barriers to Effective Listening 48

**Improving Your Nonverbal Communication Skills** 49

**Developing Your Business Etiquette** 50
- Workplace Etiquette 51
- Telephone Etiquette 51
- Mobile Device Etiquette 52
- Online Etiquette 52
- Business Etiquette in Social Settings 53

**The Future of Communication: The Internet of Things** 53
- What’s Your Prediction? 54

Chapter Review and Activities 54

Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress 54

Test Your Knowledge 55

Apply Your Knowledge 56

Practice Your Skills 56

Expand Your Skills 57

Improve Your Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage 58
PART 2
The Three-Step Writing Process  61

3  Planning Business Messages  63
COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . .  63
Understanding the Three-Step Writing Process  64
Analyzing the Situation  65
Defining Your Purpose  65
Developing an Audience Profile  66
Gathering Information  67
Uncovering Audience Needs  68
Providing Required Information  68
Selecting the Best Combination of Media and Channels  68
The Most Common Media and Channel Options  68
Factors to Consider When Choosing Media and Channels  72
Organizing Your Message  73
Defining Your Main Idea  76
Limiting Your Scope  77
Choosing Between Direct and Indirect Approaches  77
Outlining Your Content  77
Building Reader Interest with Storytelling Techniques  79
The Future of Communication: Haptic Technologies  81
What’s Your Prediction?  81
Chapter Review and Activities  82
Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress  82
Test Your Knowledge  82
Apply Your Knowledge  83
Practice Your Skills  83
Expand Your Skills  84
Improve Your Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage  85

4  Writing Business Messages  87
COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . .  87
Adapting to Your Audience: Being Sensitive to Your Audience's Needs  88
Adopting the “You” Attitude  88
Maintaining Standards of Etiquette  88
Emphasizing the Positive  89
Using Bias-Free Language  90
Adapting to Your Audience: Building Strong Relationships  92
Establishing Your Credibility  92
Projecting Your Company’s Image  93
Adapting to Your Audience: Controlling Your Style and Tone  93
Creating a Conversational Tone  93
Using Plain Language  95
Selecting Active or Passive Voice  95
Composing Your Message: Choosing Powerful Words  96
Balancing Abstract and Concrete Words  97
Finding Words That Communicate Well  97
Composing Your Message: Creating Effective Sentences  99
Choosing from the Four Types of Sentences  99
Using Sentence Style to Emphasize Key Thoughts  100
Composing Your Message: Crafting Coherent Paragraphs  101
Creating the Elements of a Paragraph  101
Developing Paragraphs  103
Writing Messages for Mobile Devices  103
The Future of Communication: Machine Learning  104
What’s Your Prediction?  106
Chapter Review and Activities  106
Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress  106
Test Your Knowledge  107
Apply Your Knowledge  107
Practice Your Skills  107
Expand Your Skills  109
Improve Your Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage  109

5  Completing Business Messages  113
COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . .  113
Revising Your Message: Evaluating the First Draft  114
Evaluating Your Content, Organization, and Tone  114
Evaluating, Editing, and Revising the Work of Other Writers  114
Revising to Improve Readability  117
Varying Sentence Length  117
Keeping Your Paragraphs Short  117
Using Lists and Bullets to Clarify and Emphasize  117
Adding Headings and Subheadings  118
Editing for Clarity and Conciseness  118
Editing for Clarity  118
Editing for Conciseness  120
Producing Your Message  120
Designing for Readability  120
Designing Messages for Mobile Devices  124
Proofreading Your Message  124
Distributing Your Message  126
The Future of Communication: Telepathic Communication  126
What’s Your Prediction?  127
Chapter Review and Activities  127
Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress  127
Test Your Knowledge  128
Apply Your Knowledge  128
Practice Your Skills  128
Expand Your Skills  131
Improve Your Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage  131

PART 3
Brief Business Messages  133

6  Crafting Messages for Digital Channels  135
COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . .  135
Digital Channels for Business Communication  136
Media Choices for Brief Messages  136
Compositional Modes for Digital and Social Media  136
Creating Content for Social Media  137
Optimizing Content for Mobile Devices  139
8 Writing Negative Messages 191

COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . . 191

Using the Three-Step Writing Process for Negative Messages 192
  Step 1: Planning Negative Messages 192
  Step 2: Writing Negative Messages 193
  Step 3: Completing Negative Messages 193

Using the Direct Approach for Negative Messages 194
  Open with a Clear Statement of the Bad News 195
  Provide Reasons and Additional Information 195
  Close on a Respectful Note 196

Using the Indirect Approach for Negative Messages 196
  Open with a Buffer 196
  Provide Reasons and Additional Information 197
  Continue with a Clear Statement of the Bad News 198
  Close on a Respectful Note 198

Sending Negative Messages on Routine Business Matters 199
  Making Negative Announcements on Routine Business Matters 199
  Rejecting Suggestions and Proposals 199
  Refusing Routine Requests 199
  Handling Bad News About Transactions 201
  Refusing Claims and Requests for Adjustment 202

Sending Negative Employment Messages 202
  Refusing Requests for Recommendations 202
  Refusing Social Networking Recommendation Requests 204
  Rejecting Job Applications 205
  Giving Negative Performance Reviews 206
  Terminating Employment 207

Sending Negative Organizational News 207
  Responding to Negative Information in a Social Media Environment 209

The Future of Communication: Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality 210
  What's Your Prediction? 210

Chapter Review and Activities 211

Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress 211
  Test Your Knowledge 212
  Apply Your Knowledge 212
  Practice Your Skills 213
  Expand Your Skills 214
  Improve Your Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage 218

9 Writing Persuasive Messages 221

COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . . 221

Using the Three-Step Writing Process for Persuasive Messages 222
  Step 1: Planning Persuasive Messages 222
  Step 2: Writing Persuasive Messages 225
  Step 3: Completing Persuasive Messages 225

A01_BOVE9404_08_SE_FM.indd   11
06/10/2017   22:08
Contents

Planning Proposals 265
The Future of Communication: Emotion Recognition Software 267
What’s Your Prediction? 267
Chapter Review and Activities 272
Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress 272
Test Your Knowledge 273
Apply Your Knowledge 273
Practice Your Skills 273
Expand Your Skills 274
Improve Your Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage 278

11 Writing and Completing Reports and Proposals 281

COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . . 281
Writing Reports and Proposals 282
Adapting to Your Audience 282
Drafting Report Content 282
Drafting Proposal Content 285
Writing for Websites and Wikis 286
Drafting Website Content 286
Collaborating on Wikis 287
Illustrating Your Reports with Effective Visuals 288
Choosing the Right Visual for the Job 289
Designing Effective Visuals 296
Completing Reports and Proposals 298
Producing Formal Reports and Proposals 298
Distributing Reports and Proposals 298

The Future of Communication: Three-Dimensional Communication 299
What’s Your Prediction? 315
Chapter Review and Activities 318
Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress 318
Test Your Knowledge 319
Apply Your Knowledge 319
Practice Your Skills 320
Expand Your Skills 320
Improve Your Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage 324

PART 4 Longer Business Messages 247

10 Understanding and Planning Reports and Proposals 249

COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . . 249
Applying the Three-Step Writing Process to Reports and Proposals 250
Analyzing the Situation 251
Gathering Information 251
Selecting the Right Combination of Media and Channels 251
Organizing Your Information 252
Supporting Your Messages with Reliable Information 253
Planning Your Research 253
Locating Data and Information 255
Evaluating Information Sources 255
Using Your Research Results 256
Performing Secondary Research 257
Finding Information at a Library 257
Finding Information Online 258
Documenting Your Sources 259
Performing Primary Research 260
Conducting Surveys 260
Conducting Interviews 261
Planning Informational Reports 261
Organizing Informational Reports 261
Organizing Website Content 262
Planning Analytical Reports 263
Focusing on Conclusions 263
Focusing on Recommendations 264
Focusing on Logical Arguments 264
Planning Proposals 265
The Future of Communication: Emotion Recognition Software 267
What’s Your Prediction? 267
Chapter Review and Activities 272
Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress 272
Test Your Knowledge 273
Apply Your Knowledge 273
Practice Your Skills 273
Expand Your Skills 274
Improve Your Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage 278

11 Writing and Completing Reports and Proposals 281

COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . . 281
Writing Reports and Proposals 282
Adapting to Your Audience 282
Drafting Report Content 282
Drafting Proposal Content 285
Writing for Websites and Wikis 286
Drafting Website Content 286
Collaborating on Wikis 287
Illustrating Your Reports with Effective Visuals 288
Choosing the Right Visual for the Job 289
Designing Effective Visuals 296
Completing Reports and Proposals 298
Producing Formal Reports and Proposals 298
Distributing Reports and Proposals 298

The Future of Communication: Three-Dimensional Communication 299
What’s Your Prediction? 315
Chapter Review and Activities 318
Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress 318
Test Your Knowledge 319
Apply Your Knowledge 319
Practice Your Skills 320
Expand Your Skills 320
Improve Your Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage 324

12 Developing and Delivering Business Presentations 327

COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . . 327
Planning a Presentation 328
Analyzing the Situation 328
Selecting the Best Media and Channels 329
Organizing a Presentation 329
Developing a Presentation 333
Adapting to Your Audience 333
Crafting Presentation Content 334
Enhancing Your Presentation with Effective Visuals 337
Choosing Structured or Free-Form Slides 337
Designing Effective Slides 339
Integrating Mobile Devices in Presentations 344
Completing a Presentation 344
Finalizing Your Slides 344
Creating Effective Handouts 345
Choosing Your Presentation Method 345
Practicing Your Delivery 347
Delivering a Presentation 347
   Overcoming Presentation Anxiety 347
   Handling Questions Responsively 348
   Embracing the Backchannel 349
   Giving Presentations Online 349
The Future of Communication: Holograms 350
   What's Your Prediction? 350
Chapter Review and Activities 351
Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress 351
Test Your Knowledge 352
Apply Your Knowledge 352
Practice Your Skills 352
Expand Your Skills 353
Improve Your Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage 355

PART 5
Employment Messages and Job Interviews 359

14 Applying and Interviewing for Employment 393
COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . . 393
Submitting Your Résumé 394
Writing Application Letters 394
Understanding the Interviewing Process 399
   The Typical Sequence of Interviews 400
   Common Types of Interviews and Interview Questions 400
   Interview Media 403
   What Employers Look for in an Interview 404
   Preemployment Testing and Background Checks 405
Preparing for a Job Interview 405
   Learning About the Organization 406
   Thinking Ahead About Questions 406
   Boosting Your Confidence 407
   Polishing Your Interview Style 409
   Presenting a Professional Image 409
   Being Ready When You Arrive 410
Interviewing for Success 411
   The Warm-Up 411
   The Question-and-Answer Stage 411
   The Close 412
   Interview Notes 413
Following Up After an Interview 413
   Follow-Up Message 410
   Message of Inquiry 414
   Request for a Time Extension 415
   Letter of Acceptance 416
   Letter Declining a Job Offer 416
   Letter of Resignation 416
The Future of Communication: Blind Auditions 417
   What's Your Prediction? 417
Chapter Review and Activities 417
Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress 417
Test Your Knowledge 418
Apply Your Knowledge 418
Practice Your Skills 419
Expand Your Skills 420
Improve Your Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage 422

APPENDIX A
Format and Layout of Business Documents 425
First Impressions 425
   Paper 425
   Customization 425
   Appearance 425
Letters 426
   Standard Letter Parts 426
   Additional Letter Parts 430
   Letter Formats 432
Envelopes 434
   Addressing The Envelope 434
   Folding to Fit 435
   International Mail 437
Memos 437
## Contents

**Reports** 438  
Margins 438  
Headings 438  
Page Numbers 438

### APPENDIX B

**Documentation of Report Sources** 441  
**Chicago Humanities Style** 441  
In-Text Citation—Chicago Humanities Style 441  
Bibliography—Chicago Humanities Style 442  
**APA Style** 444  
In-Text Citation—APA Style 444  
List of References—APA Style 444  
**MLA Style** 444  
In-Text Citation—MLA Style 444  
List of Works Cited—MLA Style 445

### APPENDIX C

**Correction Symbols** 449  
**Content and Style** 449  
**Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage** 450  
**Proofreading Marks** 451

**Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage** 453  
**Diagnostic Test of English Skills** 453  
**Assessment of English Skills** 455  
**Essentials of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage** 455

1.0 Grammar 455  
1.1 Nouns 456  
1.2 Pronouns 457  
1.3 Verbs 460  
1.4 Adjectives 464  
1.5 Adverbs 465  
1.6 Other Parts of Speech 466  
1.7 Sentences 468

2.0 Punctuation 472  
2.1 Periods 472  
2.2 Question Marks 472  
2.3 Exclamation Points 473  
2.4 Semicolons 473  
2.5 Colons 473  
2.6 Commas 474  
2.7 Dashes 476  
2.8 Hyphens 476  
2.9 Apostrophes 476  
2.10 Quotation Marks 477  
2.11 Parentheses and Brackets 477  
2.12 Ellipses 477

3.0 Mechanics 478  
3.1 Capitalization 479  
3.2 Underscores and Italics 480  
3.3 Abbreviations 480  
3.4 Numbers 481  
3.5 Word Division 482

4.0 Vocabulary 483  
4.1 Frequently Confused Words 483  
4.2 Frequently Misused Words 485  
4.3 Frequently Misspelled Words 486  
4.4 Transitional Words and Phrases 487

**Answer Key** 489  
Chapter 1: Self-Assessment—Nouns 489  
Chapter 2: Self-Assessment—Pronouns 489  
Chapter 3: Self-Assessment—Verbs 490  
Chapter 4: Self-Assessment—Adjectives 490  
Chapter 5: Self-Assessment—Adverbs 490  
Chapter 6: Self-Assessment—Prepositions and Conjunctions 490  
Chapter 7: Self-Assessment—Periods, Question Marks, and Exclamation Points 491  
Chapter 8: Self-Assessment—Semicolons, Colons, and Commas 491  
Chapter 9: Self-Assessment—Commas 491  
Chapter 10: Self-Assessment—Dashes and Hyphens 492  
Chapter 11: Self-Assessment—Quotation Marks, Parentheses, Ellipses, Underscores, and Italics 492  
Chapter 12: Self-Assessment—Capitals and Abbreviations 492  
Chapter 13: Self-Assessment—Numbers 493  
Chapter 14: Self-Assessment—Vocabulary 493

**Index** 495
About the Authors

Courtland L. Bovée and John V. Thill have been leading textbook authors for more than two decades, introducing millions of students to the fields of business and business communication. Their award-winning texts are distinguished by proven pedagogical features, extensive selections of contemporary case studies, hundreds of real-life examples, engaging writing, thorough research, and the unique integration of print and digital resources. Each new edition reflects the authors’ commitment to continuous refinement and improvement, particularly in terms of modeling the latest practices in business and the use of technology.

Professor Bovée has 22 years of teaching experience at Grossmont College in San Diego, where he has received teaching honors and was accorded that institution’s C. Allen Paul Distinguished Chair. Mr. Thill is a prominent communications consultant who has worked with organizations ranging from Fortune 500 multinationals to entrepreneurial start-ups. He formerly held positions with Pacific Bell and Texaco.

Courtland Bovée and John Thill were recently awarded proclamations from the governor of Massachusetts for their lifelong contributions to education and for their commitment to the summer youth baseball program that is sponsored by the Boston Red Sox.
New to This Edition

All new: The Future of Communication gives a glimpse into fascinating technologies that are beginning to reshape business communication, including real-time translation, haptic communication, virtual and augmented reality, gestural computing, and automated emotion recognition.

Nearly 70 new or substantially revised figures; the Eighth Edition has 66 annotated model documents, 27 examples of mobile communication in business communication, and 25 examples of social media.

Half the chapters have new Communication Matters insights from respected business professionals that highlight the principles covered in the chapter.

Revised annotations in model document before/after pairs make it easier for students to see the specific changes made to transform ineffective messages into effective ones.

More than 80 new questions and student activities; one-third of the communication cases are new.

Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress has been converted to quick-to-read bulleted lists for easier study and review.

Numerous sections are new or substantially revised, reflecting the latest research and practices in business communication:

- Communicating in an Organizational Context
- Developing Skills for Your Career
- Characteristics of Effective Teams
- Conflict Resolution in Team Settings
- Improving Your Nonverbal Communication Skills
- Workplace Etiquette
- Messaging
- Asking for Recommendations
- Writing Instructions
- Refusing Requests for Recommendations
- Giving Negative Performance Reviews
- Terminating Employment
- Using the Three-Step Writing Process for Persuasive Messages
- Balancing the Three Types of Persuasive Appeals
- Using Presentation Software to Create Visual Reports
- Keys to Being a Valued Networker
- Job-Specific Keywords
- Building an Effective LinkedIn Profile
- Understanding the Interviewing Process
- Common Types of Interview Questions
- Interviewing by Phone
- Interviewing by Video
Solving Teaching and Learning Challenges

Communication is the most valuable skill that graduates can bring into the workforce, but it is one of the most challenging to teach. *Business Communication Essentials* blends the timeless fundamentals of communication with contemporary techniques and an emphasis on business English improvement. To help students succeed from their first day on the job, *Business Communication Essentials* presents the full range of on-the-job skills that today’s communicators need, from writing conventional printed reports to using the latest digital, social, mobile, and visual media.

**COMMUNICATION MATTERS . . .**

“There’s nothing better than a new and enthusiastic team that, on a shoestring budget, tries to do something that’s never been done before.”

—Tricia Naddaff, president, Management Research Group

Tricia Naddaff’s observation about high-performance teams hints at the near-magic that collaboration can bring to business. With the right people in the right circumstances, teams can innovate and produce results far beyond what the individual team members could achieve on their own. At the other extreme, when things go sideways, team projects can be a demoralizing waste of time and money. The difference often comes down to communication. This chapter explores the communication skills you need in order to succeed in team settings, along with several other interpersonal communication topics that will help you on the job: productive meetings, active listening, nonverbal communication, and business etiquette.

Each chapter opens with insights from a successful professional, emphasizing concepts and valuable skills that students will explore in the chapter.

**COMPOSITIONAL MODES FOR DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

As you practice using digital media in this course, focus on the principles of effective communication and the fundamentals of good writing, rather than on the specific details of any one medium or system. Fortunately, with a few minor adjustments, your skills will transfer from one system to another without much trouble.

You can succeed with written communication in virtually all digital media by using one of nine *compositional modes*, each of which is well-suited to particular communication goals:

- **Conversations.** Although they take place via writing, some forms of digital communication function more like real-time conversations than the sharing of written documents. The section on messaging (see page 151) explores this important and ever-expanding communication format.

- **Comments and critiques.** One of the most powerful aspects of social media is the opportunity for interested parties to express opinions and provide feedback, whether it’s leaving comments on a blog post or reviewing products on an e-commerce site. Sharing helpful tips and insightful commentary is also a great way to build your

Annotated model documents are perhaps the most important feature of a business communication text, and *Business Communication Essentials* is packed with a balance of carefully chosen examples from real companies and original material created to illustrate specific concepts.

Going beyond covering the tried-and-true, Bovée and Thill make unique contributions to the pedagogy and practice of business communication, such as the nine compositional modes required to succeed with digital and social media.
BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS INNOVATING WITH MOBILE

As the third major revolution in business communication in the past two decades (after the World Wide Web and social media), mobile communication has the potential to change nearly every aspect of business communication. Here are a small sample of the ways companies are putting mobile to work.

Mobile Glossary

In addition to terms defined elsewhere in the book, here are some helpful mobile terms.

3G, 4G, and 5G
Learn about the generations of mobile phone technology.

Training

To face the changing demands of government regulations, and other factors on the business environment, developing and maintaining employee skill sets is an ongoing challenge for most companies. The challenge is made even more difficult when employees are constantly on the move or geographically dispersed. With training materials typically available online, convenient access to training can be a key strength of mobile devices.

MOBILE DEVICE ETIQUETTE

Your mobile device habits say a lot about how much respect you have for the people around you. Avoid these disrespectful choices: 61

- Using obnoxious ringtones
- Failing to mute your phone during meetings or other situations where it will interrupt people
- Talking loudly in open offices or public places
- Talking on your phone right next to someone else
- Making or taking unnecessary personal calls at work
- Invading privacy by using your phone’s camera without permission
- Taking or making calls in restrooms and other inappropriate places
- Texting during meals or while someone is talking to you
- Allowing incoming calls to interrupt meetings or discussions
- Using voice recognition to the extent that it disrupts others

As the most compact text in the Bové-Thill series, Business Communication Essentials is designed for high-efficiency learning. Students can scan concise bulleted lists to get important insights and writing tips on a wide variety of topics.

Today’s companies expect employees to put technology to effective use on human terms. Multiple features and thoroughly integrated coverage of contemporary tools help students hit the ground running.
provide a recommendation or serve as a reference. If it’s relevant, point out any benefits of complying with your request, whether it’s a per-

The hiring company or other organization involved, during which the person will answer

that follows these guidelines.

since your last contact, consider including an up-to-date

experience, skills, training, character, and fitness for the opportunity

Writing as a Process: A Step-by-Step Guide

Writing for Business and Industry: Process and Product

Planning business messages.

The three-step writing process will help you create more effective messages in any medium. As you get more practice with the process, it will become easier

Name and Contact Information

CHAPTER 13

fair to your current employer to use company resources for a job search, and doing so

degrees.23

job descriptions carefully. In contrast to the action verbs

beyond these two general questions, most employ-

screen candidates with tests designed to ensure compatibility with the job and with

information in your credit record, plug your name into multiple search engines to see

many employers now

Substance tests.

Integrity, personality, and cognitive ability tests.

●●

beyond these two general questions, most employ-

ready to begin preparing for your interviews. Preparation will help you feel more confi-

and if a company finds something negative, it must report that information to you

record, checking to see whether you have a criminal history, confirming your identity,

Many companies perform some level of drug and alcohol testing. If

ics, and problem solving.23

build their personal brands by providing expertise, and they

give companies the chance to address customer complaints and correct misinformation.

●●

As the earliest widely available digital channel, email was applied to a broad range of communication tasks—note that

was well suited for and some it wasn’t.

over time, newer media such as messaging and social net-

works have taken over some of these tasks.

email remains a tried medium that is optimum for more priv-

short to medium-length messages.

Learning Objectives: Check Your Progress

Objective 1: Identify the major digital channels used for brief business messages, and describe the nine compositional modes needed for digital media.

Primary digital media for short business messages include:

● Social networks

● Information- and content-sharing websites

● Email

● Messaging

● Blogging and microblogging

● Podcasting

The nine compositional modes are:

● Conversational

The unique and free Real-Time Updates—Learn More feature connects students with dozens of carefully selected online media items that complement the text’s coverage with additional examples and valuable insights. Media items range from interactive websites and online videos to infographics, presentations, and podcasts.

In addition, students can explore thousands of curated media items in the Real-Time Updates system and subscribe to weekly updates.
No other textbook comes close to offering the resources that Bovée and Thill provide free to students and instructors:

- Sponsored instructor communities on LinkedIn and Facebook with nearly two thousand members
- Tips and techniques in Bovée and Thill’s Business Communication Blog and Twitter feed
- The Bovée & Thill channel on YouTube
- Business Communication Headline News
- Videos and PowerPoint presentations on SlideShare
- Hundreds of infographics, videos, articles, podcasts, and PowerPoints on the Business Communication Pictorial Gallery on Pinterest
- The Ultimate Guide to Resources for Teaching Business Communication
- Curated magazines for business communication on Scoop.it

Links to all these services and resources can be found at blog.businesscommunicationnetwork.com/resources.

Expand your classroom resources with both curated content and original videos and presentations.

Bovée and Thill’s Business Communication Blog offers original insights and teaching tips to enhance your lectures.
MYLAB BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Reach every student with MyLab
MyLab is the teaching and learning platform that empowers you to reach every student. By combining trusted author content with digital tools and a flexible platform, MyLab personalizes the learning experience and improves results for each student. Learn more at MyLab Business Communication.

Deliver trusted content
You deserve teaching materials that meet your own high standards for your course. That’s why we partner with highly respected authors to develop interactive content and course-specific resources that you can trust — and that keep your students engaged.

MyLab Business Communication offers a variety of grammar exercises, flashcards, and audio lessons to test your learning and skills and get instant feedback.

Empower each learner
Each student learns at a different pace. Personalized learning pinpoints the precise areas where each student needs practice, giving all students the support they need — when and where they need it — to be successful.

Teach your course your way
Your course is unique. So whether you’d like to build your own assignments, teach multiple sections, or set prerequisites, MyLab gives you the flexibility to easily create your course to fit your needs.

Improve student results
When you teach with MyLab, student performance improves. That’s why instructors have chosen MyLab for over 15 years, touching the lives of over 50 million students. Learn more.
Developing Employability Skills

In addition to helping students develop a full range of communication skills, *Business Communication Essentials* will enhance a wide range of other skills that experts say are vital for success in the 21st-century workplace:

- **Critical thinking.** In many assignments and activities, students need to define and solve problems and make decisions or form judgments.
- **Collaboration.** Team-skills assignments provide multiple opportunities to work with classmates on reports, presentations, and other projects.
- **Knowledge application and analysis.** From the basic communication process to strategies for specific message types, students will learn a variety of concepts and apply that knowledge to a wide range of challenges.
- **Business ethics and social responsibility.** Ethical choices are stressed from the beginning of the book, and multiple projects encourage students to be mindful of the ethical implications that they could encounter in similar projects on the job.
- **Information technology skills.** Projects and activities in every chapter help students build skills with technology, including document preparation tools, online communication services, presentation software, and messaging systems.
- **Data literacy.** Report projects in particular present opportunities to fine-tune data literacy skills, including the ability to access, assess, interpret, manipulate, summarize, and communicate data.

Hundreds of realistic exercises, activities, and cases offer an array of opportunities for students to practice vital skills and put newfound knowledge to immediate use.

These resources are logically sorted by learning category, from conceptual recall to situational analysis to skill development.

To help instructors zero in on specific learning needs, activities are tagged in multiple ways, from media usage to team skills.
# Table of Contents Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prologue</th>
<th>Building a Career with Your Communication Skills</th>
<th>Learn how this course will help you launch an interesting and rewarding career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 1</strong></td>
<td>Business Communication Foundations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: Professional Communication in Today’s Digital, Social, Mobile World</td>
<td>See what it means to communicate as a professional and learn essential concepts of ethics and diversity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Collaboration, Interpersonal Communication, and Business Etiquette</td>
<td>Learn how to work successfully in teams, collaborate on projects, and improve listening and etiquette</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 2</strong></td>
<td>The Three-Step Writing Process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Planning Business Messages</td>
<td>Discover a simple process that helps you write more effectively while spending less time and energy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Writing Business Messages</td>
<td>Learn how to build credibility and achieve a conversational tone in your business writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: Completing Business Messages</td>
<td>Make your writing more compelling with careful revision and produce attractive messages in any medium</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 3</strong></td>
<td>Brief Business Messages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: Crafting Messages for Digital Channels</td>
<td>Adapt what you already know about digital and social media to the challenges of professional communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: Writing Routine and Positive Messages</td>
<td>Maintain productive working relationships by writing routine messages quickly and easily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8: Writing Negative Messages</td>
<td>Learn the secrets of sharing negative information in a thoughtful way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9: Writing Persuasive Messages</td>
<td>Explore the techniques to make internal messages as well as marketing and sales messages more persuasive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 4</strong></td>
<td>Longer Business Messages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10: Understanding and Planning Reports and Proposals</td>
<td>Simplify the process of writing informational and analytical reports and business proposals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11: Writing and Completing Reports and Proposals</td>
<td>Create compelling visuals and put the finishing touches on formal reports and proposals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12: Developing and Delivering Business Presentations</td>
<td>Develop engaging presentations and conquer the anxieties that every speaker feels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 5</strong></td>
<td>Employment Messages and Job Interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13: Building Careers and Writing Résumés</td>
<td>Succeed with two of the most important documents you’ll ever write—application letters and your résumé</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14: Applying and Interviewing for Employment</td>
<td>Make sure your talent and value shine through as you progress through the job-search process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructor Teaching Resources

This program comes with the following teaching resources.

Supplements available to instructors at www.pearsonhighered.com

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features of the Supplement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor’s Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Chapter summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Chapter outline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Teaching notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Overcoming difficulties students often face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Suggested classroom exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Test Your Knowledge answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Apply Your Knowledge answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Practice Your Skills answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Expand Your Skills answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Case solutions (short message cases) and solution guidelines (report and proposal cases)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Improve your Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage answers and solutions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1: Self-Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2: Workplace Applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3: Document Critique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● More than 1,700 multiple-choice, true/false, and essay questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Answer explanations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Keyed by learning objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Classified according to difficulty level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Classified according to learning modality: conceptual, application, critical thinking, or synthesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Learning outcomes identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● AACSB learning standard identified (Ethical Understanding and Reasoning; Analytical Thinking Skills; Information Technology; Diverse and Multicultural Work; Reflective Thinking; Application of Knowledge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computerized TestGen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TestGen allows instructors to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● customize, save, and generate classroom tests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● edit, add, or delete questions from the Test Item Files.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● analyze test results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● organize a database of tests and student results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PowerPoints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slides include all the graphs, tables, and equations in the textbook PowerPoints meet accessibility standards for students with disabilities. Features include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Keyboard and screen reader access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Alternative text for images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● High contrast between background and foreground colors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acknowledgments

The Eighth Edition of Business Communication Essentials reflects the professional experience of a large team of contributors and advisors. We express our thanks to the many individuals whose valuable suggestions and constructive comments influenced the success of this book.

Reviewers of Previous Editions

Thank you to the following professors: Lydia E. Anderson, Fresno City College; Victoria Austin, Las Positas College; Faridah Awang, Eastern Kentucky University; Jeanette Baldridge, University of Maine at Augusta; Diana Baran, Henry Ford Community College; JoAnne Barbieri, Atlantic Cape Community College; Kristina Beckman, John Jay College; Judy Bello, Lander University; George Bernard, Seminole State College; Carol
Bibly, Triton College; Nancy Bizal, University of Southern Indiana; Yvonne Block, College of Lake County; Edna Boroski, Trident Technical College; Nelvia M. Brady, Trinity Christian College; Arlene Brocker, Lincoln University; David Brooks, Indiana University Southeast; Carol Brown, South Puget Sound Community College; Domenic Bruni, University of Wisconsin; Jeff Bruns, Bacone College; Gertrude L. Burge, University of Nebraska; Sharon Burton, Brookhaven College; Robert Cabral, Oxnard College; Dorothy Campbell, Brevard Community College; Linda Carr, University of West Alabama; Alvaro Carreras, Jr., Florida International University; Sharon Carson, St. Philip's College; Rick Carter, Seattle University; Dacia Charlesworth, Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne; Jean Chenu, Geneseo Community College; Connie Clark, Lane Community College; Alvin Clarke, Iowa State University; Jerrie Cleaver, Central Texas College; Clare Coleman, Temple University; Michael P. Collins, Northern Arizona University; M. Cotton, North Central Missouri College; Pat Cowherd, Campbellsville University; Pat Cuchens, University of Houston–Clear Lake; Walt Dabek, Post University; Cathy Daly, California State University–Sacramento; Linda Davis, Coppin–Lincoln Community College; Christine R. Day, Eastern Michigan University; Harjit Dosanjh, North Seattle Community College; Amy Drees, Defiance College; Cynthia Drexel, Western State College of Colorado; Lou Dunham, Spokane Falls Community College; Donna Everett, Morehead State University; Donna Falconer, Anoka–Ramsey Community College; Kate Ferguson Marsters, Gannon University; Darlynn Fink, Clarion University of Pennsylvania; Bobbi Fisher, University of Nebraska–Omaha; Laura Fitzwater, Community College of Philadelphia; Lynda K. Fuller, Wilmington University; Matthew Gainous, Ogeechee Technical College; Yolande Gardner, Lawson State Community College; Gina Genova, University of California–Santa Barbara; Lonny Gilbert, Central State University; Camille Girardi-Levy, Siena College; Nancy Goehringer, Monterey Peninsula College; Dawn Goelner, Berkel College; Robert Goldberg, Prince George's Community College; Jeffrey Goldberg, MassBay Community College; Helen Grattan, Des Moines Area Community College; Barbara Grayson, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff; Deborah Griffin, University of Houston–Clear Lake; Alice Griswold, Clarke College; Bonnie Grossman, College of Charleston; Lisa Gueldenzoph, North Carolina A&T State University; Wally Guyot, Fort Hays State University; Valerie Harrison, Guyamaca College; Tim Hartge, The University of Michigan–Dearborn; Richard Heiens, University of South Carolina–Aiken; Maureece Heinert, Sinte Gleska University; Leighanne Heisel, University of Missouri–St. Louis; Gary Helfand, University of Hawaii–West Oahu; Cynthia Herrera, Orlando Culinary Academy; Kathy Hill, Sam Houston State University; Pashia Hogan, Northeast State Tech Community College; Cole Holmes, The University of Utah; Sarah Holmes, New England Institute of Technology; Ruth Hopkins Zajdel, Ohio University–Chillicothe; Sheila Hostetler, Orange Coast College; Michael Hricik, Westmoreland County Community College; Rebecca Hsiao, East Los Angeles College; Mary Ann Hurd, Sauk Valley Community College; Pat Hurley, Leeward Community College; Harold Hurry, Sam Houston State University; Marcia James, University of Wisconsin–Whitewater; Frank Jaster, Tulane University; Jonatan Jelen, Parsons The New School for Design; Irene Joanette Gallio, Western Nevada Community College; Edgar Dunson Johnson III, Augusta State University; Mark Johnson, Rhodes State College; Joanne Kapp, Siena College; Jeanette A. Kajala, Winona State University; Christy L. Kinnion, Lenior Community College; Deborah Kitchin, City College of San Francisco; Lisa Kirby, North Carolina Wesleyan College; Claudia Kirkpatrick, Carnegie Mellon University; Betty Klein, Nichols State University; Fran Kranz, Oakland University; Jana Langemach, University of Nebraska–Lincoln; Joan Lantry, Jefferson Community College; Kim Laux, Saginaw Valley State University; Kathryn J. Lee, University of Cincinnati; Anita Leffel, The University of Texas, San Antonio; Ruth Levy, Westchester Community College; Nancy Linger, Moraine Park Technical College; Jere Littlejohn, University of Mississippi; Dana Loewy, California State University–Fullerton; Jennifer Loney, Portland State University; Susan Long, Portland Community College; Sue Loomis, Maine Maritime Academy; Thomas Lowerbaugh, University of
Preface

Maryland–College Park; Jayne Lowery, Jackson State Community College; Lloyd Matzner, University of Houston–Downtown; Ron McNeel, New Mexico State University at Alamogordo; Dr. Bill McPherson, Indiana University of Pennsylvania; Phyllis Mercer, Texas Woman’s University; Donna Meyerholz, Trinidad State Junior College; Annie Laurie I. Meyers, Northampton Community College; Catherine “Kay” Michael, St. Edward’s University; Kathleen Miller, University of Delaware; Gay Mills, Amarillo College; Julie Mullis, Wilkes Community College; Pamela Mulvey, Olney Central College; Jimidene Murphey, Clarendon College; Cindy Murphy, Southeastern Community College; Dipali Murty-Hali, California State University–Stanislaus; Shelley Myatt, University of Central Oklahoma; Cora Newcomb, Technical College of the Lowcountry; Ron Newman, Crafton Hills College; Linda Nitsch, Chardon State College; Leah Noonan, Laramie County Community College; Mabry O’Donnell, Marietta College; Diana Otman, Central Washington University; Ranu Paik, Santa Monica College; Lauren Paisley, Geneseo Community College; Patricia Palermo, Drew University; John Parrish, Tarrant County College; Diane Paul, TVI Community College; John T. Pauli, University of Alaska–Anchorage; Michael Pennell, University of Rhode Island; Sylvia Beaver Perez, Nyack College; Melinda Phillabaum, Indiana University; Ralph Phillips, Geneva College; Laura Pohopien, Cal Poly Pomona; Diane Powell, Utah Valley State College; Christine Pye, California Lutheran University; Norma Pygon, Triton College; Dave Rambow, Wayland Baptist University; Richard David Ramsey, Southeastern Louisiana University; Charles Riley, Tarrant County College–Northwest Campus; Jim Rucker, Fort Hays State University; Dr. Suzan Russell, Lehman College; Storm Russo, Valencia College; Danielle Scane, Orange Coast College; Calvin Scheidt, Tidewater Community College; Nancy Schneider, University of Maine at Augusta; Brian Sheridan, Mercyhurst College; Melinda Shirey, Fresno City College; Bob Shirilla, Colorado State University; Joyce Simmons, Florida State University; Gordon J. Simpson, SUNY Cobleskill; Peggy Simpson, Dominican University; Eunice Smith, Bismarck State College; Jeff Smith, University of Southern California; Lorraine M. Smith, Fresno City College; Harvey Solganick, LeTourneau University–Dallas Campus; Stephen Soucy, Santa Monica College; Linda Spargo, University of Mississippi; W. Dees Hallings, Park University; Sally Stanton, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee; Mark Steinbach, Austin Community College; Angelique Stevens, Monroe Community College; Steven Stovall, Wilmington College; Alden Talbot, Weber State University; Michele Taylor, Ogeechee Technical College; Wilma Thomason, Mid-South Community College; Ed Thompson, Jefferson Community College; Ann E. Tippett, Monroe Community College; Lori Townsend, Niagara County Community College; Lani Uyeno, Leeward Community College; Wendy Van Hatten, Western Iowa Tech Community College; Jay Waggers, Richmond Community College; John Waltman, Eastern Michigan University; Jie Wang, University of Illinois at Chicago; Chris Ward, The University of Findlay; Dorothy Warren, Middle Tennessee State University; Glenda Waterman, Concordia University; Kellie Welch, Jefferson Community College; Bradley S. Wessner, Nova Southeastern University; Mathew Williams, Clover Park Technical College; Beth Williams, Stark State College of Technology; Brian Wilson, College of Marin; and Sandra D. Young, Orangeburg–Calhoun Technical College.

REVIEWERS OF DOCUMENT MAKEOVERS

We sincerely thank the following reviewers for their assistance with the Document Makeover feature: Lisa Barley, Eastern Michigan University; Marcia Bordman, Gallaudet University; Jean Bush-Bacelis, Eastern Michigan University; Bobbye Davis, Southern Louisiana University; Cynthia Drexel, Western State College of Colorado; Kenneth Gibbs, Worcester State College; Ellen Leathers, Bradley University; Diana McKown, Indiana University; Bobbie Nicholson, Mars Hill College; Andrew Smith, Holyoke Community College; Jay Stubblefield, North Carolina Wesleyan College; Dawn Wallace, Southeastern Louisiana University.
PERSONAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We extend a heartfelt thanks to our many friends, acquaintances, and business associates who provided materials or agreed to be interviewed so that we could bring the real world into the classroom.

A very special acknowledgment goes to George Dovel, whose superb writing skills, distinguished background, and wealth of business experience assured this project of clarity and completeness. Also, recognition and thanks to Jackie Estrada for her outstanding skills and excellent attention to details. Her creation of the “Peak Performance Grammar and Mechanics” material is especially noteworthy.

We also feel it is important to acknowledge and thank the Association for Business Communication, an organization whose meetings and publications provide a valuable forum for the exchange of ideas and for professional growth.

In addition, we thank Susan Schanne and Maureen Steddin for their assistance in preparing supplements for this new edition.

We extend our warmest appreciation to the devoted professionals at Pearson Higher Education for their commitment to producing high-value, student-focused texts, including Donna Battista, Vice President, Business, Economics, and UK Courseware; Stephanie Wall, Director of Portfolio Management; Daniel Tylman, Portfolio Manager; Ashley Santora and Melissa Feimer, Managing Producers, Business; Yasmita Hota, Content Producer; Jeff Holcomb, Director of Production, Business; Becky Brown, Product Marketeer; and Lenny Ann Kucenski, Field Marketing Manager. We are also grateful to Nicole Suddeth and Debbie Ryan of SPi Global and Bincy Menon of Cenveo Publisher Services.

Courtland L. Bovée
John V. Thill
BUILDING A CAREER WITH YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Using This Course to Help Launch Your Career

This course will help you develop vital communication skills that you’ll use throughout your career—and those skills can help you launch an interesting and rewarding career, too. This brief prologue sets the stage by helping you understand today’s dynamic workplace, the steps you can take to adapt to the job market, and the importance of creating an employment portfolio and building your personal brand. Take a few minutes to read it while you think about the career you hope to create for yourself.

GETTING READY TO TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR CAREER

Today’s job market offers an exciting range of possibilities, from multinational corporations to small companies to entrepreneurial startups. Or, like many professionals, you might take the leap and invent your own job as an independent contractor.

No matter which path you choose, keep two important points in mind. First, don’t wait for your career to just happen: Take charge of your career and stay in charge of it. Explore all your options and have a plan, but be prepared to change course as opportunities and threats appear on the horizon. Second, don’t count on employers to take care of you. The era of lifetime employment, in which an employee committed to one company for life with the understanding it would return the loyalty, is long gone. From finding opportunities to developing the skills you need in order to succeed, it’s up to you to manage your career and look out for your own best interests.

Are you comfortable working on your own? Independent workers have become an important part of the global workforce.
How Employers View Today’s Job Market

From an employer’s perspective, the employment process is always a question of balance. Maintaining a stable workforce can improve practically every aspect of business performance, yet many employers want the flexibility to shrink and expand payrolls as business conditions change. Employers obviously want to attract the best talent, but the best talent is more expensive and more vulnerable to offers from competitors, so there are always financial trade-offs to consider.

Employers also struggle with the ups and downs of the economy. When unemployment is low, the balance of power shifts to employees, and employers have to compete in order to attract and keep top talent. When unemployment is high, the power shifts back to employers, who can afford to be more selective and less accommodating. In other words, pay attention to the economy; at times you can be more aggressive in your demands, but at other times you need to be more accommodating.

Companies view employment as a complex business decision with lots of variables to consider. To make the most of your potential, regardless of the career path you pursue, you need to view employment in the same way.

What Employers Look for in Job Applicants

Given the complex forces in the contemporary workplace and the unrelenting pressure of global competition, what are employers looking for in the candidates they hire? The short answer: a lot. Like all “buyers,” companies want to get as much as they can for the money they spend. The closer you can present yourself as the ideal candidate, the better your chances of getting a crack at the most exciting opportunities.

Specific expectations vary by profession and position, of course, but virtually all employers look for the following general skills and attributes:

- **Communication skills.** The reason this item is listed first isn’t that you’re reading a business communication textbook. Communication is listed first because it is far and away the most commonly mentioned skill set when employers are asked about what they look for in employees. Improving your communication skills will help in every aspect of your professional life.

- **Interpersonal and team skills.** You will have many individual responsibilities on the job, but chances are you won’t work alone very often. Learn to work with others and help them succeed as you succeed.

- **Intercultural and international awareness and sensitivity.** Successful employers tend to be responsive to diverse workforces, markets, and communities, and they look for employees with the same outlook.

Communication skills will benefit your career, no matter what path or profession you pursue.
● Data collection, analysis, and decision-making skills. Employers want people who know how to identify information needs, find the necessary data, convert the data into useful knowledge, and make sound decisions.

● Digital, social, and mobile media skills. Today’s workers need to know how to use common office software and to communicate using a wide range of digital media and systems.

● Time and resource management. If you’ve had to juggle multiple priorities during college, consider that great training for the business world. Your ability to plan projects and manage the time and resources available to you will make a big difference on the job.

● Flexibility and adaptability. Stuff happens, as they say. Employees who can roll with the punches and adapt to changing business priorities and circumstances will go further (and be happier) than employees who resist change.

● Professionalism. Professionalism is the quality of performing at the highest possible level and conducting oneself with confidence, purpose, and pride. True professionals strive to excel, continue to hone their skills and build their knowledge, are dependable and accountable, demonstrate a sense of business etiquette, make ethical decisions, show loyalty and commitment, don’t give up when things get tough, and maintain a positive outlook.

Adapting to Today’s Job Market

Adapting to the workplace is a lifelong process of seeking the best fit between what you want to do and what employers (or clients, if you work independently) are willing to pay you to do. It’s important to think about what you want to do during the many thousands of hours you will spend working, what you have to offer, and how to make yourself more attractive to employers.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

Economic necessities and the vagaries of the marketplace will influence much of what happens in your career, of course, and you may not always have the opportunity to do the kind of work you would really like to do. Even if you can’t get the job you want right now, though, start your job search by examining your values and interests. Doing so will give you a better idea of where you want to be eventually, and you can use those insights to learn and grow your way toward that ideal situation. Consider these questions:

● What would you like to do every day? Research occupations that interest you. Find out what people really do every day. Ask friends, relatives, alumni from your school, and contacts in your social networks. Read interviews with people in various professions to get a sense of what their careers are like.

● How would you like to work? Consider how much independence you want on the job, how much variety you like, and whether you prefer to work with products, technology, people, ideas, numbers, or some combination thereof.

● How do your financial goals fit with your other priorities? For instance, many high-paying jobs involve a lot of stress, sacrifices of time with family and friends, and frequent travel or relocation. If location, lifestyle, intriguing work, or other factors are more important to you, you may well have to sacrifice some level of pay to achieve them.

● Have you established some general career goals? For example, do you want to pursue a career specialty such as finance or manufacturing, or do you want to gain experience in multiple areas with an eye toward upper management?

● What sort of corporate culture are you most comfortable with? Would you be happy in a formal hierarchy with clear reporting relationships? Or do you prefer less structure? Teamwork or individualism? Do you like a competitive environment?
You might need some time in the workforce to figure out what you really want to do or to work your way into the job you really want, but it’s never too early to start thinking about where you want to be. Filling out the assessment in Table 1 might help you get a clearer picture of the nature of work you would like to pursue in your career.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO OFFER?

Knowing what you want to do is one thing. Knowing what a company is willing to pay you to do is another thing entirely. You may already have a good idea of what you can offer employers. If not, some brainstorming can help you identify your skills, interests, and characteristics. Start by jotting down achievements you’re proud of and experiences that were satisfying, and think carefully about what specific skills these achievements demanded of you. For example, leadership skills, speaking ability, and artistic talent may have helped you coordinate a successful class project. As you analyze your achievements, you may begin to recognize a pattern of skills. Which of them might be valuable to potential employers?

Next, consider your educational preparation, work experience, and extracurricular activities. What do your knowledge and experience qualify you to do? What have you learned from volunteer work or class projects that could benefit you on the job? Have you held any offices, won any awards or scholarships, mastered a second language? What skills have you developed in nonbusiness situations that could transfer to a business position?

Take stock of your personal characteristics. Are you aggressive, a born leader? Or would you rather follow? Are you outgoing, articulate, great with people? Or do you prefer working alone? Make a list of what you believe are your four or five most important qualities. Ask a relative or friend to rate your traits as well.

If you’re having difficulty figuring out your interests, characteristics, or capabilities, consult your college career center. Many campuses administer a variety of tests that can help you identify interests, aptitudes, and personality traits. These tests won’t reveal your “perfect” job, but they’ll help you focus on the types of work best suited to your personality.

TABLE 1 Career Self-Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity or Situation</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>No Preference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I want to work independently.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I want variety in my work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I want to work with people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I want to work with technology.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I want physical work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I want mental work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I want to work for a large organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I want to work for a nonprofit organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I want to work for a small business.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I want to work for a service business.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I want to start or buy a business someday.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I want regular, predictable work hours.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I want to work in a city location.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I want to work in a small town or suburb.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I want to work in another country.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I want to work outdoors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I want to work in a structured environment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I want to avoid risk as much as possible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I want to enjoy my work, even if that means making less money.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I want to become a high-level corporate manager.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW CAN YOU MAKE YOURSELF MORE VALUABLE?

While you’re figuring out what you want from a job and what you can offer an employer, you can take positive steps toward building your career. First, search for job openings in the professions and companies in which you are interested and identify the skills and attributes those employers want. If you lack any key elements, look for opportunities to gain additional experience or training. Consider part-time jobs, temporary positions that let you build important skills to apply in your dream job, and volunteering opportunities. Search the project listings at freelancing sites such as Upwork (www.upwork.com) to see whether you can compete for any of the available projects. Also consider applying your talents to crowdsourcing projects, in which companies and nonprofit organizations invite the public to contribute solutions to various challenges.

These opportunities help you gain valuable experience and relevant contacts, provide you with important references and work samples for your employment portfolio, and help you establish your personal brand (see the following sections).

Second, learn more about the industry or industries in which you want to work and stay on top of new developments. Join networks of professional colleagues and friends who can help you keep up with trends and events. Many professional societies have student chapters or offer students discounted memberships. Take courses and pursue other educational or life experiences that would be difficult while working full time.

BUILDING AN EMPLOYMENT PORTFOLIO

Employers want proof that you have the skills to succeed on the job, but even if you don’t have much relevant work experience, you can use your college classes to assemble that proof. Simply create and maintain an employment portfolio, which is a collection of projects that demonstrate your skills and knowledge. This can be a combination of print and digital materials. Your college might offer hosting for e-portfolios, which let you display your résumé, work samples, letters of recommendation, relevant videos or podcasts you have recorded, any blog posts or articles you have written, and other information about you and your skills. To see a selection of student e-portfolios from colleges around the United States, go to real-timeupdates.com/bce8, select Student Assignments, and locate the link to student e-portfolios.

Throughout this course, pay close attention to the assignments marked “Portfolio Builder” (they start in Chapter 6). These items will make particularly good samples of not only your communication skills but also your ability to understand and solve business-related challenges. By combining these projects with samples from your other courses, you can create a compelling portfolio when you’re ready to start interviewing. Your portfolio is also a great resource for writing your résumé because it reminds you of all the great work you’ve done over the years. Moreover, you can continue to refine and expand your portfolio throughout your career; many professionals use e-portfolios to advertise their services.

As you assemble your portfolio, collect anything that shows your ability to perform, whether it’s in school, on the job, or in other venues. However, you must check with employers before including any items that you created while you were an employee, and check with clients before including any work products (anything you wrote, designed, programmed, and so on) they purchased from you. Many business documents contain confidential information that companies don’t want distributed to outside audiences.

For each item you add to your portfolio, write a brief description that helps other people understand the meaning and significance of the project. Include such items as these:

- **Background.** Why did you undertake this project? Was it a school project, a work assignment, or something you did on your own initiative?
- **Project objectives.** Explain the project’s goals, if relevant.
- **Collaborators.** If you worked with others, be sure to mention that and discuss team dynamics if appropriate. For instance, if you led the team or worked with others long distance as a virtual team, point that out.
Constraints. Sometimes the most impressive thing about a project is the time or budget constraints under which it was created. If such constraints apply to a project, consider mentioning them in a way that doesn’t sound like an excuse for poor quality. If you had only one week to create a website, for example, you might say that “One of the intriguing challenges of this project was the deadline; I had only one week to design, compose, test, and publish this material.”

Outcomes. If the project’s goals were measurable, what was the result? For example, if you wrote a letter soliciting donations for a charitable cause, how much money did you raise?

Learning experience. If appropriate, describe what you learned during the course of the project.

Keep in mind that the portfolio itself is a communication project, so be sure to apply everything you’ll learn in this course about effective communication and good design. Assume that potential employers will find your e-portfolio site (even if you don’t tell them about it), so don’t include anything that could come back to haunt you. Also, if you have anything embarrassing on Facebook, Twitter, or any other social networking site, remove it immediately.

To get started, first check with the career center at your college; many schools offer e-portfolio systems for their students. (Some schools now require e-portfolios, so you may already be building one.) You can also find plenty of advice online; search for “e-portfolio,” “student portfolio,” or “professional portfolio.”

BUILDING YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

Products and companies have brands that represent collections of certain attributes, such as the safety emphasis of Volvo cars or the performance emphasis of BMW. Similarly, when people who know you think about you, they have a particular set of qualities in mind based on your professionalism, your priorities, and the various skills and attributes you have developed over the years. Perhaps without even being conscious of it, you have created a personal brand for yourself. If you’re not comfortable with the notion of presenting yourself as a brand, think instead of your professional promise. When people hear your name, what do you want them to think about you and your professional attributes and qualifications?

You will have multiple opportunities to plan and refine your personal brand during this course. For example, Chapter 6 offers tips on business applications of social media, which are key to personal branding, and Chapters 13 and 14 guide you through the process of creating a résumé, building your network, and presenting yourself in interviews. To get you started, here are the basics of a successful personal branding strategy:

• Figure out the “story of you.” Simply put, where have you been in life, and where are you going? Every good story has dramatic tension that pulls readers in and makes them wonder what will happen next. Where is your story going next? Chapter 13 offers more on this personal brand-building approach.

• Clarify your professional theme. Think in terms of a theme you would like to project. What do you want to be known as? Brilliant strategist? Hard-nosed, get-it-done tactician? Technical guru? Problem solver? Creative genius? Inspirational leader?

• Create a headline. Distill your professional promise down to a single headline, also known as a tagline or elevator pitch. The headline should be a statement of compelling value, not a generic job title. Instead of “I’m a social media specialist,” you might say “I help small companies get the same reach on social media as giant corporations.” If you don’t yet have professional experience in your chosen field, express your headline in terms of educational qualifications: “With my degree in computer science and robotics, I am ready to help build the next generation of assistive technologies for people with motor, vision, and cognitive impairments.”
- **Reach out and connect.** Major corporations spread the word about their brands with multimillion-dollar advertising campaigns. You can promote your brand at little or no cost. The secret is networking, which you’ll learn more about in Chapter 13. You build your brand by connecting with like-minded people, sharing information, demonstrating skills and knowledge, and helping others succeed.

- **Deliver on your brand’s promise—every time, all the time.** When you promote a brand, you make a promise—a promise that whoever buys that brand will get the benefits you are promoting. All of this planning and communication is of no value if you fail to deliver on the promises your branding efforts make. Conversely, when you deliver quality results time after time, your talents and professionalism will speak for you.

**USING ALL THE JOB-SEARCH TOOLS AT YOUR DISPOSAL**

As a final note, be sure to use all the job-search tools and resources available to you. For example, many companies now offer mobile apps that give you a feel for what it’s like to work there and let you search for job openings. A variety of apps and websites can help you find jobs, practice interviewing, and build your professional network.

We wish you great success in this course and in your career!

**Endnote**