Preface

Whether digital, face-to-face, handwritten, or printed, workplace communication is more than a value-neutral exercise in “information transfer.” Workplace communication is also a complex social transaction. From reports to proposals, job applications to email messages, video chats to oral presentations, every rhetorical situation has its own specific interpersonal, ethical, legal, and cultural demands. Moreover, today’s workplace professional needs to be a skilled communicator and a discriminating consumer of information, skilled in methods of inquiry, retrieval, evaluation, and interpretation essential to informed decision making.

Designed in response to these issues, Technical Communication, Fifteenth Edition, addresses a wide range of interests for classes in which students from a variety of majors are enrolled. The text explains, illustrates, and applies rhetorical principles to an array of assignments—from memos, résumés, and email to formal reports and proposals. To help students develop awareness of audience and accountability, exercises incorporate the problem-solving demands typical in college and on the job. Self-contained chapters allow for various course plans and customized assignments.

What’s New to the Fifteenth Edition?

Technical Communication, Fifteenth Edition, has been thoroughly revised to account for the latest innovations in workplace communication and today’s technologically sophisticated, diverse, and global workforce. Students will benefit from a variety of new content and features in this edition:

- The latest coverage of digital communication and social media. As in every edition of Technical Communication, the latest innovations in digital communication have been woven throughout the book (for example, using JAWS to make Web pages accessible for visually impaired users; the increasingly common use of video interviews; the use of PDF files for most online instructional material; using collaborative writing apps and spaces such as Google Drive; and more). In this edition, we’ve placed a special emphasis on the relationships between social media and technical communication, with social media considerations incorporated into nearly every chapter. In addition, the “Social Media” chapter itself (Chapter 25) has been updated and expanded to include new discussion of workplace uses of Instagram and creating instructional videos for YouTube and other social media, including a new “Guidelines for Creating Instructional Videos for Social Media” box.

- New discussions on the challenges of assessing credible information when using online sources. In addition to covering the latest in digital technology, we have included content on the challenges writers and everyday citizens face when using the Internet for research, including discussions in Chapters 7, 8, and 9 (on research) about confirmation bias and ways that online information tends to reinforce what people already believe or want to believe.

- Streamlined topical coverage within chapters. Although we have not changed the overall structure or sequence of chapters in the book, we have done extensive combining of related sections and reorganizing of topics within chapters for improved accessibility and fewer major sections for students to navigate. As in the previous edition, all major sections are tied
to the Learning Objectives that appear at the beginning of each chapter.

- **An extensively revised chapter on visuals.** Chapter 12, “Designing Visual Information,” now places stronger emphasis on planning visuals by placing the Planning Sheet for Preparing Visuals early in the chapter. In addition, the chapter includes a new section on understanding and creating infographics, as well as a new section on presenting visuals.

- **A revised and expanded chapter on email.** Chapter 14, “Email,” now includes a new section on the three major types of email (primary, transmittal, and formatted), as well as revised and expanded coverage of interpersonal issues when using email, updated coverage of global, ethical, and legal issues related to email, and new and revised sample emails throughout the chapter.

- **A thoroughly revised chapter on oral presentations.** Without changing any of the clear and practical advice on planning, preparing, and delivering oral presentations, Chapter 23, “Oral Presentations and Video Conferencing” has been revised to include a new section on when and how to use handouts during presentations, expanded discussion of the cautions of relying too much on presentation apps, more emphasis on considering the needs of off-site audiences when planning and preparing oral presentations, and updated figures throughout the chapter.

- **Extensively revised Projects.** The end-of-chapter Projects—which continue to be organized into General, Team, Digital and Social Media, and Global categories—have been fully revised for this edition.

**Hallmarks of Technical Communication**

*Technical Communication*, Fifteenth Edition, retains—and enhances or expands—the features that have made it a best-selling text for technical communication over fourteen editions. These include the following:

- **Complete coverage for any course in technical communication, business communication, or professional writing.** The topics move from basic foundational concepts to chapters on research, organization, style, visual characteristics, and document design, and finally to specific documents and applications. The appendix includes thorough coverage of the most recent MLA and APA documentation styles, and a handbook of grammar, mechanics, and usage.

- **A reader-friendly writing style that presents all topics clearly and concisely.** Simple, straightforward explanations of concepts and audience/purpose analyses of specific document types help differentiate technical communication from academic writing.

- **The most current and thorough coverage of workplace technologies, ethics, and global considerations in the workplace.** Always prominent in the book, these three topics have been updated and expanded throughout to keep up with the changes in the contemporary workplace.

- **Strong coverage of information literacy.** According to the American Library Association Presidential Committee on Information Literacy, information-literate people “know how knowledge is organized, how to find information, and how to use information in such a way that others can learn from them.” Critical thinking—the basis of information literacy—is covered intensively in Part II and integrated throughout the text, especially in discussions about online information.

- **A focus on applications beyond the classroom.** Clear ties to the workplace have always been a primary feature of this book. This edition includes examples from everyday on-the-job situations and sample documents, as well
as dedicated chapters on ethics, teamwork, and global issues. Each chapter opener includes a quote from an on-the-job communicator.

- **Emphasis on the humanistic aspects of technical communication.** Technical communication is ultimately a humanistic endeavor, not just a set of job-related transcription tasks, with broad societal implications. Accordingly, situations and sample documents in this edition address complex technical and societal issues such as climate change, public health issues, environmental and energy topics, digital technology, and genomics.

- **Plentiful model documents and other useful figures throughout the book.** Descriptions and instructions for creating technical documents are accompanied by clear, annotated examples. Graphic illustrations throughout make abstract concepts easy to understand.

- **Highly praised pedagogical features.** Pedagogical features, including chapter-opening Learning Objectives, summary Guidelines boxes, real-world Consider This boxes, Case Studies, annotated figures, summary marginal notes, and end-of-chapter Checklists and Projects reinforce chapter topics. These features are outlined in more detail below.

### How this Book is Organized

*Technical Communication* is designed to allow instructors maximum flexibility. Each chapter is self-contained, and each part focuses on a crucial aspect of the communication process. Following are the five major parts of the book:

- **Part 1: Communicating in the Workplace** treats job-related communication as a problem-solving process. Students learn to think critically about the informative, persuasive, and ethical dimensions of their communications. They also learn how to adapt to the interpersonal challenges of collaborative work, and to address the various needs and expectations of global audiences.

- **Part 2: The Research Process** treats research as a deliberate inquiry process. Students learn to formulate significant research questions; to explore primary and secondary sources in hard copy and digital form; to evaluate and interpret their findings; and to summarize for economy, accuracy, and emphasis. Students are asked to think critically about online information and to consider the credibility and truthfulness of the source.

- **Part 3: Organization, Style, and Visual Design** offers strategies for organizing, composing, and designing messages that readers can follow and understand. Students learn to control their material and develop a readable style. They also learn about the rhetorical implications of graphics and page design—specifically, how to enhance a document’s access, appeal, and visual impact for audiences who need to locate, understand, and use the information successfully.

- **Part 4: Specific Documents and Applications** applies earlier concepts and strategies to the preparation of print and electronic documents and oral presentations. Various letters, memos, reports, and proposals offer a balance of examples from the workplace and from student writing. Each sample document has been chosen so that students can emulate it easily. Chapters on email, Web pages, and social media emphasize the ubiquity of digital communication in today’s workplace.

- **Part 5: Resources for Writers** includes “A Quick Guide to Documentation,” which provides general guidance as well as specific style guides and citation models for MLA and APA styles, and “A Quick Guide to Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics,” which provides a handy resource for answering questions about the basic building blocks of writing.

### Learning Enhancement Features

This book is written and designed to be a highly accessible document, so that readers can “read to learn and learn to do.” *Technical Communication,*
Fifteenth Edition, includes the following learning enhancement features that will help students access the material easily and use the ideas to become effective technical communicators:

- **Chapter opening quotations** demonstrate the real-world applications of each chapter’s topic.
- **Learning Objectives** at the beginning of each chapter tie in with the main headed sections of each chapter and provide a set of learning goals for students to fulfill.
- **Guidelines boxes** help students prepare specific documents by synthesizing the chapter’s information.
- **Cases and sample situations** encourage students to make appropriate choices as they analyze their audience and purpose and then compose their document.
- **Sample documents** model various kinds of technical writing, illustrating for students what they need to do. Captions and annotations identify key features in sample documents.
- **Consider This boxes** provide interesting and topical applications of the important issues discussed in various chapters, such as collaboration, technology, and ethics.
- **Notes callouts** clarify up-to-the-minute business and technological advances and underscore important advice.
- **Marginal notes** summarize larger chunks of information to reinforce key chapter concepts.
- **Checklists** promote careful editing, revision, and collaboration. Students polish their writing by reviewing key criteria for the document and by referring to cross-referenced pages in the text for more information on each point.
- **General, team, global, and digital and social media Projects** at each chapter’s end help students apply what they have learned.

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**Revel™**

Revel is an interactive learning environment that deeply engages students and prepares them for class. Media and assessment integrated directly within the authors’ narrative lets students read, explore interactive content, and practice in one continuous learning path. Thanks to the dynamic reading experience in Revel, students come to class prepared to discuss, apply, and learn from instructors and from each other.

The Revel features accompanying *Technical Communication* are as follows:

- **Journal Prompts** appear at the end of every major section in each chapter, encouraging hands-on practice through writing. Students are asked to perform brief writing activities that involve reflection, brainstorming, drafting a portion of a document, or analyzing a particular document.
- **Multiple-Choice Quizzes** help reinforce facts and concepts as students move through each major section in each chapter (the end of each major section quiz features three questions directly tied to that section) and then again at the end of the chapter (the end-of-chapter quiz provides five questions covering various sections of the chapter).
- **Table Drag-and-Drop** activities help students remember information by matching terms with their descriptions or placing parts of complex documents in the right order.
- **Fill-in-the-Blank and True/False Quick Check** activities are directly tied to the Guidelines boxes that appear in every chapter and provide a quick means of remembering concepts presented in these important boxes.
- **Shared Writing Activities** at the end of each chapter encourage students to share, discuss, and critique each other’s work.

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Pearson English Assignments Library

Available with your adoption of any © 2019 or © 2020 Pearson English course in Revel is the English Assignments Library comprising 500 essay and Shared Media prompts:

- A series of 300 fully editable essay assignments invite students to write on compelling, wide-ranging writing topics. You can choose from an array of writing prompts in the following genres or methods of development: Argument/Persuasion; Comparison/Contrast; Critique/Review; Definition; Description; Exposition; Illustration; Narration; Process Analysis; Proposal; and Research Project. Assignments can be graded using a rubric based on the WPA Outcomes for First-Year Composition. You can also upload essay prompts and/or rubrics of your own.

- 200 Shared Media assignments ask students to interpret and/or produce various multimedia texts to foster multimodal literacy. Shared Media activities include analyzing or critiquing short professional videos on topics of contemporary interest; posting brief original videos or presentation slides; and sharing original images—such as posters, storyboards, concept maps, or graphs.

Format Options

Below are format options by which Technical Communication is available.

Revel Access Card

Students can purchase a physical Revel access code card at their campus bookstore.

- INSTANT ACCESS Students can purchase access directly from Pearson to start their subscription immediately.

- PRINT UPGRADE Students can choose to have a printed loose-leaf version sent to them with free shipping

Revel Combo Card

The Revel Combo provides the Revel access code card plus a coupon for the loose-leaf print reference (delivered by mail). This option is perfect for students who need to purchase all of their materials from the campus bookstore.

Print Rental

Students can rent the text from their campus bookstore or directly from Pearson. Barnes & Noble and Follett bookstores are partners in this program.

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Supplements

Make more time for your students with instructor resources that offer effective learning assessments and classroom engagement. Pearson’s partnership with educators does not end with the delivery of course materials; Pearson is there with you on the first day of class and beyond. A dedicated team of local Pearson representatives will work with you to not only choose course materials but also integrate them into your class and assess their effectiveness. Our goal is your goal—to improve instruction with each semester.

Pearson is pleased to offer the following resources to qualified adopters of Technical Communication. Several of these supplements are available to instantly download from Revel or on the Instructor Resource Center (IRC); please visit the IRC at www.pearson.com/us to register for access.
• **TEST BANK** Evaluate learning at every level. Reviewed for clarity and accuracy, the Test Bank measures this material’s learning objectives with multiple-choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank questions. You can easily customize the assessment to work in any major learning management system and to match what is covered in your course. Word and BlackBoard versions are available on the IRC.

• **PEARSON MYTEST** This powerful assessment generation program includes all of the questions in the Test Bank. Quizzes and exams can be easily authored and saved online and then printed for classroom use, giving you ultimate flexibility to manage assessments anytime and anywhere. To learn more, visit www.pearsonmytest.com.

• **INSTRUCTOR’S RESOURCE MANUAL by Lee Scholder, M.S., J.D.** Create a comprehensive roadmap for teaching classroom, online, or hybrid courses. Designed for new and experienced instructors, the Instructor’s Resource Manual includes overall teaching strategies (including general teaching ideas, advice on how to use the Revel features accompanying *Technical Communication*, and sample syllabi) and chapter-specific resources (including chapter overviews, Learning Objectives, teaching tips, additional exercises, and quizzes). Available within Revel and on the IRC.

• **POWERPOINT PRESENTATION** Make lectures more enriching for students. The accessible PowerPoint Presentation includes a full lecture outline and figures from the textbook and Revel edition. Available on the IRC.

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