Chapter 20: Writing Effective Routine and Positive Messages

Good writing is clear thinking made visible.
   — William Wheeler, journalist and author

The art of Letter writing is no mere ornamental accomplishment, but something that every educated person must acquire for practical reasons.
   — Wren and Martin

Communication is defined as intercourse by words, letters, symbols or messages and a way that one organisation member shares meaning and understanding with another.
   — DeBows, Gilson and Odiorne

The trouble with so many of us is that we underestimate the power of simplicity.
   — Robert Stuberg, author and speaker

20.1 Written Communication Mishaps

### Introductory Exercise

1. Take a few moments and think about communication. What does communication mean to you; how would you define communication? Clearly define your answers to these questions. Save your work; you will need it later.

### Learning Objective

1. How to create intentional messages

Written Communication Accounts for a Large Amount of Business Activity

BUT FIRST...
Two Shocking Miscommunication Facts You May Have Never Known:
An analysis of NASA documents by Professor Dorothy A. Winsor, Ph.D., showed a misunderstanding caused by “a history of miscommunication” through memorandums and was determined to be one of the root causes of the 1986 Challenger tragedy (Egan, 1995).

Hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent by an unnamed, world-class oil company to develop a new pesticide. Later, embarrassed officials noticed the same formula had been discovered five years prior. What’s worse? The company’s own technician had created the formula! This technician had written up his report on the formula so obtusely that no one in the company could finish reading it to begin with.

The above two examples are examples of why the importance of business writing continues to build year after year. Today, writing is the single most prevalent business activity conducted. Because a wealth of businesses focus on written communications to successfully conduct business, presidents and CEO’s cannot afford to release any document that has been poorly written. Furthermore, as noted in the oil company’s example above, non-effective or fanciful communication can prove to be dire for the life of an organization. Often times it is best to keep your message as simple and clear as possible.

What is the purpose of having dealings with others in today’s business world? The answer to this question could be answered any number of ways, and each answer will invariably include the term communication. Communication is not what we say, it is not how we say it; rather, good communication is based upon how we are heard, regardless of the form of genre. (Zoller & Preston, 2015) The message is not about the creator or author; it is about how the receiver(s) perceives the message and perceives the creator or author. Take the time to think about the outcome you are trying to achieve.

Written communication is not simply placing your thoughts and ideas on to paper. Writing clear, understandable, and professional messages can prove to be quite challenging, as well as time consuming. When your message is presented in a manner such that the recipient’s perception correlates to what was envisioned you have succeeded in communicating an intended message. Getting your intended message across to your audience, however, takes assiduous planning. The audience class or genre should be carefully considered to better transfer the intended message by
taking the most appropriate approach. Remember that time, thought, and effort should be placed into each routine message you create.

In fact, studies show business professionals will spend up to 70% of their day wordsmithing their messages before sending it on to the intended recipient (Egan, 1995). That is the equivalent of over five and a half hours of an eight-hour work day which is devoted solely to writing. Unless writing is your sole responsibility, this leaves you with two and a half hours to accomplish tasks. How can we begin to decrease this shocking amount of time spent on our writing and still maintain quality and clarity?

### Key Takeaway

1. Communication involves taking the time to achieve an outcome. When your message is presented in a manner such that the recipient’s perception correlates to what was envisioned you have succeeded in communicating an intended message.

### Exercise

1. Create a message quickly, without thought, trying to convey a message to a co-worker. Now revisit your message and evaluate it for how you think the intended receiver will interpret it. How can you construct the same message, applying thought and consideration to the content?

### References


### 20.2 Routine Messages

### Learning Objective

- How to create simple, routine messages using content that conveys a clear purpose to the audience
The Anatomy of Routine Messages: How to Compose Effective Routine Messages

Of the many common responsibilities in the workplace, making varying, routine business requests ranks among the highest. Routine messages are those messages which focus on routine business matters and are conducted in every form of communication medium available. The goal of routine messages is to deliver well-written, organized, and specific communication as quickly as possible in an error-free and appropriately formatted manner. Understanding routine communication has the single greatest influence on an organization’s effectiveness (Shetcliffe, 2004); it deserves more time and effort upfront to convey the intended messages effectively.

The Most Common Forms of Routine Messages in Business Communication

- **Email** - most popular and allows for most types of business communication: informational, makes recommendation(s), request action, sales and marketing - some more specific examples: appointment reminders, order confirmation or receipt for purchases, electronic bank statements, bill pay reminders, emergency notices, notices from various organizations & businesses. Think of the mail you receive from the post office on a daily basis; email is the electronic version of your physical mailbox only Email is more powerful in that it has the ability to attach documents, add visuals, link websites, and embed video(s)
- **Business letters** - though more formal than an email, makes a recommendation or requests action to be taken, mentions deadlines and supports author’s position
- **Memos** - make a recommendation or request for action
- **Faxes** – mostly replaced by email, faxes provide the same written messages as email or hard copies of letters and memos
- **Text messages** - provides a way to instantly get a message from the sender to one or more individuals instantly from one mobile device to another
- **Online chat** - real time text messaging
- **Social networking** - web based platform facilitating the sharing of social relations among like-minded people with similar interests
- **Collection letter** - request to pay a past due bill with deadline given
Create a Routine Message: Begin the Process

How do you decide which method of communication is most appropriate for your message’s purpose? To answer this question, one must carefully consider the following (Seglin & Coleman, 2012, pg. 3-10):

- **Audience**
  - Who do you want or need to hear you?
  - What do you know about your audience?
  - Use what you know about your audience to help structure your message.

- **Purpose**
  - Is this a formal or informal request?
  - What is the main focus of your message?
  - Can you clearly describe your purpose in simple terms and/or directions?

- **Content**
  - Introduction, body, conclusion
  - Keep it simple, short, and straightforward
  - Follow the KISS method as often as possible
  - You are writing to express, not impress

Once your audience, purpose and content have been determined you can now determine what method of routine message genre is best suited for your intended message and audience.

Breaking it Down Further

- Consider the recipient(s)’ requirement or need for the information.
- Think about your purpose for communication; state your objective.
- Break the information into absorbable, easy to read sections.
  - Do not cause your reader a need to interpret your information; it should be clearly written and understandable. (KISS)
- Determine the placement of your main points for the best impact on the reader, which also creates a logical flow.
- Deadlines must always be clearly defined and noted.
- Whenever possible answer the 5 W’s:
  - Who?
  - Why?
  - What?
  - Where?
  - When?
Understanding the Rhetorical Triangle

What lies between the author and his or her communication possesses an intention to convey a persuasive tone within the message. The message now takes a distinct form and style that is based on the determination of the intended audience in addition to the purpose of the message. The message content should convey logic, yet be emotionally appealing to the intended audience. The message will build upon the author’s ethical credibility, or ethos.

Rhetorical Considerations

- Audience - tailor your communication to suit your audience.
- Message objective - what routine business form will you use? Remember to clearly define your purpose.
- Speaker - that is you! How will you portray yourself to others? You are building your reputation, so make it a good one!
Ethos - your reputation will be, in part, be developed by your writing presented writing skills.

Rhetoric - “...a good [writer] with persuasive power of ethos has three qualities - intelligence, character, and goodwill. (Hoffman & Ford, 2009, p. 37).”

Pathos - evokes a sadness or pitiful emotion.

Logos - principle of reason and judgement

Common Mistakes Can Lead to Big Problems

Yes, the English language can be tricky, but if not used properly it can cost business’ hundreds of thousands of dollars - and even lives - as we have learned earlier in this chapter. Lesson here: know proper grammar and punctuation.

Punctuation!

Yes, it matters! And, it can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars when used poorly and incorrectly. “Information released by the Federal Government under the Freedom of Information Act revealed that a nuclear-plant supervisor ordered ‘ten foot long lengths’ of radioactive material” (Egan, 1995). How can this order be misinterpreted? Did the plant supervisor mean ten foot-long lengths of radioactive material, or did he mean ten-foot long lengths? It turned out the latter was needed, but the former was what the recipient had interpreted. The plant was sent ten one-foot rods, at a cost so great it had been later classified.
Summary

Examples of one word options to replace common phrases & other verb phrasing suggestions to help keep your messages simple - K.I.S.S.!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ant-fluff technique</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use one-word options where available</td>
<td>Replace:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 'In the event of' with 'if'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 'As a consequence of this' with 'consequently'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 'Despite this above mentioned fact' with 'however'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use verb phrases instead of noun phrases where available</td>
<td>Replace:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 'The objective of the initiative is to...' with 'the initiative aims to...'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                                                          | • 'The completion of the first stage has...' with 'Completing the first stage has...'
Key Takeaway

1. What routine business form will you use? Understanding your audience and incorporating acceptable mediums according to your organizational culture will greatly influence what form of communication to utilize in a given situation.

Exercise

1. Compose a form of business communication that utilizes one word options and verb phrases, rather than noun phrases.

References


20.3 Understanding Each Communication Genre and Identifying When to Properly Use Each Method of Communication

Learning Objective

1. Defining the structure of the business communication hierarchy. Identifying each method of business communication and understanding the best uses that each individual form of communication brings to effective business communication.

Informing the Organization of the Basic Business Communication Structure

Results of effective communication are extremely important in the business world as it helps businesses keep the company successful, maximizes its profits, keeps its employees engaged and in a happy manner, and also helps them to sufficiently focus on their job for achieving the company’s goals. Communication is an organization’s main foundation, and an organization would cease to exist without it. Its main functions are to exchange information and options, drawing up proposals, plans and agreements, implementing decisions, forwarding orders or fulfilling them and in general, carry out sales. If organizational activity is the bloodstream of an organization, then communication is the heart, meaning that activities cease to exist without it.

Types of Communication in Organizations

There are two types of business communication in an organization, which are contained within the definition of “Vertical Communication”

- Internal Communication
- External Communication

All communication that pertains to internal matters and interaction between staff and employees in various forms is called internal communication. It serves as an excellent medium to address all concerns of employees, thereby enhancing goodwill, job satisfaction, productivity and safety aspects. It also serves to increase turnover and profits.

Components of Internal Communication

- Upward Communication

The flow of information and instructions that is initiated by lower ranks within the hierarchal structure to those in higher positions is referred to as upward communication. This type of communication can prevent the organization from experiencing a void of communication in terms of not only the proper receipt of information, but also solutions to other problems that the company may face. Undoubtedly, communication is a two-way street, but for it to work efficiently, information must originate at the bottom, and move upwards. The benefits of upward communication to the staff include the exchange of ideas and information, heightened staff enthusiasm, job satisfaction and the provision of feedback.
➢ Downward Communication

The flow of information and instructions from the top levels of the organization to its lowest levels, detailing the mission and the policies is referred to as **downward communication**. These may be in the form of specific instructions or guidelines to complete a full project. However, you must start establishing the procedure only after the upward communication has been successfully instituted. This information flow can be used to pass on important matters and instructions, announce decisions and promote mutual discussions, cooperation, and morale, enhance efficiency and obtain feedback.

➢ Horizontal/Lateral Communication

The flow of information between people with the same rank in the organization for the purpose of communicating with each other and collaborating while seeking to maintain common goals is referred to **horizontal or lateral communication**. Assigned work is best completed when employees at the same level utilize this method of communication. This kind of communication helps solve problems by enhanced teamwork, boosting efficiency, completing tasks and building goodwill.

Components of External Communication

**External communication** refers to communication by company supervisors and workers with agencies or individuals, working outside the company, for example, as with customers and vendors. The use of this type of communication and useful interaction can lead to:

- operational efficiency
- market credibility
- goodwill-building
- Positive corporate image
- customer satisfaction
- Clearly defined organizational goals
  - lead to higher performance
  - lead to increased sales volumes
  - lead to strong profit showing

Most of this external work is done by marketing departments who target markets in pursuit of a larger share of business and the purchase executives who are always sourcing better quality inputs at lower prices.

*When to Use Communication Genres*

**Face-To-Face Communication**

The oldest, but the most effective mode of communication is the face-to-face type that requires the physical presence of both parties involved, removing any form of misunderstandings and making absolutely certain that the points of the conversation have been mutually understood. Once this is achieved, further discussions can be held at any time without delay. You can also make your message shown in a manner that will directly incorporate your feelings, passion and commitments.
to an individual or at a group meeting. In the business world, this is the best form to make an impression the vital points pertaining to your company or your audience.

**Communication by Email**

Email is one of the most used communication modes, for its mostly cost effective, fast and various features, giving it an edge over others in communication with the remotest parts of the globe, benefitting both the sender and receiver. Though it may appear less personal than a face-to-face meeting or even a phone call, email allows for the opportunity to send documents, pictures or videos at the click of a mouse, with the same credibility as mailing a message or delivering it by hand. A sender must use proper grammar and etiquette to write the email clearly to avoid a misunderstanding between the sender and potentially multiple receivers, which could develop negative viewpoints of the person receiving the message.

**Telephones**

The phone is a more personal form of communication than email, and can add a personal touch to messages that are more complex in nature that need the clarity of a phone call to explain some more involved details that cannot be put into a written message. Its significant advantage is that you can reach people with clarity, at any given time around the globe when you want to confirm your associate’s accurate understanding of your message.

**Verbal**

Verbal communication includes direct, face-to-face meetings, video conferencing and telephoning. Additionally, it puts the message receivers at ease to pose questions to the sender and obtain his feedback, thus saving on response time and decision making. Of course, with the increased use of the verbal communication, you can see problems like language, social and cultural barriers and time difference in the different business cultures happening more often. You have to overcome these hassles to make a meaningful and useful message that has the least bit of confusion and complexity.

**Written Form of Communication**

Several forms of written communication including formal letters, posters, business memos, bulletin boards, and flyers are forms of communication. This is a good choice for those wanting to convey the same message in writing to several people at different locations. They can also convey technical messages with images and charts to make it easier for the recipients to analyze and comprehend. Another advantage of a written message is the trail that is created that necessitates the recipient to receive and acknowledge it. Such messages are also created for purposes of a record of corrections or for legal purposes.

**Electronic Form of Communication**

The constant evolution of technology has had an enormous effect on the way business communications are conducted in today’s business world, including web conferencing, email, social networking, text messaging, chat and online organizational websites. Most companies resort to electronic messaging to communicate quickly with multiple recipients outside of the company, such as stakeholders. **Stakeholders** may include employees, creditors, shareholders, unions, suppliers and the community. This method of communication has a benefit of costing less to the company than other forms of written communication. Different forms of electronic communication are used
by organizations to communicate with or send messages not only to diverse demographic clusters, but also individuals and organizations in the international arena.

**Web Conferencing**
Web Seminars, Webcasts, general web conferencing and web meetings on a peer level are some of the activities that the internet facilitates under a general umbrella of collaborative online services called web conferencing, especially on IP/TCP connections. This mode of communication permits one sender to send information to a cluster of destination computers simultaneously (Multicast communication) using the IP multicast in the internet layer, or sending communication on a real-time point to point basis using an IP protocol with a serial interface for communication between two computers. Web conferencing applications can include lectures, training modules, and presentations between computers that are web connected.

**Social Networking Services**
This is an ideal web based platform facilitating the sharing of social relations among like-minded people with similar interests. The participants in this platform create a public profile and a user list, share information and interact with each other on this social network, using the email and instant messaging services like Facebook, Twitter, and mobile messaging like WhatsApp etc. Social networking sites are diversified and include facile tools for communication, like mobile connectivity, blogging and video/photo sharing. Companies can use this type of communication at work and outside of work, and can stay connected to clients, stakeholders, and employees.

### Key Takeaway

1. Understanding the business communication structure of one’s organization is important to utilize effective communication. Choosing an appropriate genre of business communication is important to effectively convey the sender’s intended message to the receiver. One must be able to distinguish between the varieties of types of communication genres and be able to identify which one is best for the specific message at hand.

### Exercise

1. Identify as many different styles of business communication as you can. Differentiate in what certain situations you think each method of communicating would work best and why.

### References

20.4 Structure and Style of Effective Email Communication

Learning Objective

1. Understanding the principles and mechanics of sending a routine, positive email. Identifying what makes sending an email important and how to effectively utilize email as a genre of communicating.

Benefits of Email
With the advanced development and implementation of electronic communication throughout the years, businesses tend to utilize email as one the most used forms of business communication. As we discuss the benefits of email communication, such as reaching multiple targets and ability to be dispersed quickly, we are focusing in this section on the procedures of email communication. The need to communicate effectively and express the ideas and opinions that one has is important in the business world. As we should be aware of at this point, email allows persons to send and receive written messages instantly, with little delay.

With the increased use of email as an effective way of communicating with people, it becomes more and more important to use this genre of communication correctly. Long has passed since the days in which letters, memos, and reports were the preferred method of communication, that allowed a sender time to develop and edit a document. Currently, email is sent and received at such a rapid pace that the writer has sent the message before thinking too much about what was written, or taken time to reflect on how the receiver will interpret the message in the email. This development gives rise to an increased number of messages that may be misinterpreted, both in the context and structure of the messages, and the shared meaning of successful communication can become difficult to understand.

With this popular way of communicating via email comes with the responsibility of learning to communicate effectively. As with any written communication, senders are limited to words, which does not allow for interpretation of body language or voice inflection to help carry their messages.
To communicate effectively using email, it is important to look at some of the guidelines that have been recommended by Nelda Spinks, Barron Wells, and Melanie Meche in their article “Netiquette: A Behavioral Guide to Electronic Business Communication.” (1999). The following subjects all are included in effective email communication, these include:

- Principles of an email
- Proper Mechanics
- Email Guidelines
- Professionalism of the email

**Principles of an Effective Email**

- Messages should be concise.
- Messages should be brief. An email message should be no longer than 25 lines so that the entire message fits on one screen. Readers tend to lose interest in long email messages. Be brief. Don't use four paragraphs where a couple of sentences will do.
- The tone in email messages tends to be "flat". Senders should be careful not to include wording that may be interpreted as anger or other emotions that are not intended. On the other hand, emotions that are intended should be stated directly, such as, "I am angry that the shipment will not be received on time". Email messages written hastily when the sender is angry or frustrated with a situation can often cause problems. A good rule of thumb is to stay away from the "send" button and to wait overnight before sending an email message if one is angry. Another consideration is that one's email messages can be quickly and easily forwarded to anyone, anytime, anywhere.
- The style and tone of an email message should be tailored to the person receiving it. Messages should be written the way the sender would talk to the receiver. On the conservative side, last names are always appropriate unless the receiver has requested that the sender use first names. If the receiver is on the same level as the sender in the organizational hierarchy or one level below or above, first names may be appropriate.
- Email messages should not be sent, on occasion. When the sender is uncertain about how the receiver may react to a "touchy" subject, an alternate form of communication should be used. Also, when a confidential message is received, the sender should be respected and the message should not be forwarded to others.

**Proper Mechanics**

In the business world, the role of a good design and mechanics are important in delivering documents effectively. In an article written by William Baker (2001), he states “that the problem most students (people in the business world) have in grasping how to design pages effectively is an over reliance on the traditional printed page as their model, a page which is characterized by long uninterrupted passages of text. As a result, students continue to prepare email messages, memos, letters, proposals, and reports that do not incorporate good design features.” With the epidemic of business professionals constantly formatting their documents for messages incorrectly, Baker (2001) came to develop a procedure to properly address the constant misuse of document formatting. Baker developed the **HATS** procedure.

- **H-** Headings
The HATS acronym provides a clear path to follow in teaching document design, and it gives people in the business world an easy routine to use in polishing their documents.

Headings

When it comes to the aspect of heading in a document there are two features that are important to identify: **Adequacy** and **Hierarchy**.

- **Adequacy**
  - All documents, including memos and letters, should have an ample number of headings to serve as navigational signposts, enabling the reader to skim along the surface of the document, dropping in for detailed reading only when desired.

- **Hierarchy**
  - Headings should visually reveal the information structure, or architecture. Organizational hierarchy can be revealed by variations in typeface, size, style, and alignment so readers can easily discern differences in the levels of headings, such as first- and second-level headings.

Access

Access refers to the ease of finding and mentally digesting important information. Information access can be achieved by enhancing text, such as using bullets and numbers; and by using graphics, such as tables, graphs, process charts, and photographs. Too often, writers rely on text as their default means of communicating all types of information. Instead, they should first consider the nature of the information and then determine what form of display will most efficiently and effectively convey the message. People who send messages must see themselves as artists of the page when it comes to sending documents. With the use of message enhancers, the message itself is aided in rather than in standard text paragraphs.

Typeface

Predominantly in the US, serif typefaces, such as Times New Roman, are generally used for body text, and sans serif faces are usually reserved for headings, although this is not a rigid rule. In addition to serif and sans serif categories, display typefaces can be used for occasions when more typeface personality is needed. You must be careful on the overuse of specific typefaces. Such overuse can easily make their documents look cluttered and unprofessional. In general, I recommend using only two typefaces per document, one serif and one sans serif. The size and style of these two faces can then be varied for different levels of headings and different effects in body type.

Some authors suggest that for general audiences, the height of the text should be between 10 and 12 points. Other authors state that 12-point type is too large and that 11-point type is best for sustained reading. Baker (2001) suggests 11-point type as the most defensible default size, with 10-point type
being used for newsletters and other documents where text compaction is needed, and 12-point (or larger) type being reserved where larger size is appropriate. Because type height correlates with type width, a reduction in type height also produces a reduction in type width. Thus, a 10-point character is both shorter and narrower than an 11-point character, both factors working to increase text compaction.

Spacing

The more a sender uses text on a page, and the more tightly compact the text, the more dark and uninviting the page will appear, which will have an overall negative effect of the receiver. Therefore, Baker (2001) emphasizes that business professionals should not force so much information onto a page that it looks crowded and uninviting. Space gives visual relief, preventing reader fatigue, and enhances reader friendliness, encouraging readers to engage the content. Space also divides and frames elements on a page.

Baker then categorizes the concept of spacing into two aspects. **External Spacing** and **Internal Spacing**.

- **External Spacing**
  - Senders should ensure appropriate top, bottom, left, and right margins to frame all the elements on a page.
  - The length of a text line can be expressed either as inches or as the average number of characters or average number of words per line.

- **Internal Spacing**
  - An important readability principle is that the longer a text line, the greater the interline space needs to be.
  - A document with an average of 13 words per line needs greater inter-line spacing than a document with an average of only 9 words per line.

Displaying messages or parts of messages in all capital letters is the equivalent of screaming or shouting at receivers. Many people have a habit of using all caps. Not only is this display taboo in email, but it is also difficult to read (Netiquette and Strategies). Of course, if shouting really is appropriate, all capitals can be used; however, seldom would this be the case.

A maximum of four lines should be used in the signature footer. Persons’ names, titles, and email addresses should be parts of their signature lines.

Double spacing between paragraphs makes a message easy to read. Making lines 65 to 75 characters long by using the enter key at the end of lines will make messages look nice on most screens, if the wrap-around feature is not available. Emphasizing important information can be accomplished by using asterisks before and after a “word” or “phrase” to add emphasis. For showing the title of a publication, the _underline_ should be used before and after the title. Of course, things such as titles and headings may be written all in capital letters.

Replies to email messages should include either the original message or excerpts from it to save the sender and the recipient some time. A reply to an email message should not be sent without reminding the recipient of the original message. Many people send and receive many email
messages each day and may not remember the exact content of all their messages. However, in most cases, the entire original message should not be returned along with the reply - only a few lines should be returned to jog the sender’s memory.

Email messages may be accompanied by a voicemail message indicating that the email has been sent. Paper copies of email messages sent and received that may become issues later should be printed, since email messages may be deleted or otherwise lost.

**Proper Email Usage Guidelines**

Many of the guidelines for email usage are the same as for any other form of communication:

- Be considerate and respectful of the other person
- Use proper grammar and punctuation
- Use correct spelling
- Do not use profanity
- Remember that a person exists on the other side of the computer
- Do not write email messages that could not be said to that person’s face
- Be kind as a receiver when evaluating another’s email message. Generally a person writing a message does not write it to offend the receiver of the message. As the receiver of the message, one should be generous in overlooking misspellings and/or poor wording

Other guidelines are specific to the use of electronic communication media, as some are directed toward the use of the network. One should always check email daily and delete unwanted messages or store messages on a floppy disk to prevent an overload on the system. Also, one should run a virus scan frequently as a protection from contaminated downloaded files.

**Important Guidelines for Email**

- Email should be checked daily and should remain within the user’s limited disk quota
- Unwanted email messages should be deleted immediately since they take up storage. Messages remaining in mailboxes should be kept to a minimum. (Email messages can be downloaded to files for future reference.)
- Email messages are never private. One should assume that email can be read by anyone; others may be able to read or access email. Users should never send or keep anything that they would mind seeing on the evening news
- An email user ID or password should never be given to another person
- Messages and paragraphs within messages should be short and to the point
- The entire body of a message being replied to should not be forwarded along with the reply. It should be edited down to the minimum necessary to provide context for the reply
- Each message should focus on one subject, and the subject title for the message should be pertinent to the subject so that the receiver can locate the message quickly

**Professionalism of Email Content**
In the business world, email messages are a reflection of the sender just like any other type of message and should display the same professionalism as any of the other message genre. Email is intended for quick, informal communication and should not be held to the same standards as some of the other message mediums used.

Two divergent opinions, according to Spinks, Wells, and Meche (1999), have formed based on the formality and professionalism of email messages. One opinion indicated that senders of email messages are judged by the quality of their messages just as the senders of traditional letters, memos, and reports are. These messages should carry the same degree of professionalism as a document that bears the company’s letterhead. Therefore, email messages must be proofread for spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.

The second opinion that emerged concerning the professionalism needed in email messages indicated that email communication is fundamentally different from paper-based communication due to its speed and broadcasting ability. Since the "turnaround" time can be very fast, messages sent via email can be more conversational than traditional paper communications. Because of these differences, complete clarity and unambiguousness is not absolutely essential. Usually, the reader can ask for clarification immediately. Also, slaving over a message, making sure the spelling is faultless, the words are eloquent, and the grammar is beyond reproach is not worthwhile if, for example, the point of the message is to inform the recipient that the sender is ready to go to lunch.

Perhaps the better approach is to judge the formality and professionalism needed in email messages by the nature of the message being communicated and the intended audience. A message to a colleague that one is ready to go to lunch surely does not require formality and professionalism. On the other hand, many other email messages would seem to require the same formality and professionalism as a letter, a memo, or a report.

**Example of Poorly Constructed Email**

Figure 20.4.1

| To: | JoeAverage@example.email.com |
| Subject: | HEY GUIZ! |

HI Joe

thnx 4 emailing me da important word documint. i rly needed it 2 finish da work task ive got

THANKS AGAIN

BEN
Exercises

1. Examine the email in figure 1.1. Determine the errors in the email and construct a better suited email from the material discussed in the section.

2. Look at your messages in your inbox. How many of the subject lines clearly give you, the reader an indication as to the content of the email?

3. Review the latest email you have received from work. Decide whether or not the message of the email was expressed effectively. If not, write notes on how you feel the sender could have conveyed their message better. If the message was expressed effectively, write down what you feel was done appropriately by the sender.

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20.5 Pragmatic Functions

Learning Objective

1. To identify tone of voice used in email correspondence.

Tone of Voice
Tone of voice can be conveyed in two different voices. An authoritative voice is one in which the writer of the content creates a tone in which they purport their level of knowledge of the subject matter and the means in which they do so is their authoritative voice. A casual voice is one in which the writer does not exert a level of authority over the reader and uses language that is easily understood by the reader and therefore may be less complex. The use of less traditional forms such as the use of clip-art, design elements, and stylistic variances may be used. This tone may give the appearance of being less firm, more indirect, and have an overall feel of a lesser level of urgency. In regards to emails, the idea is that upon reading of the content, the reader hears the email aloud. In order to do so, a voice is given to the writer of the email. When reading an email, the reader may give a male or female voice to the writer, and may assign a voice that is authoritative or casual, for example. The idea is to decide the message you want to get across, who your audience is, and how you would like to present that information. The tone you use may need to change depending on any of those factors. You may choose to make adaptations in order to most effectively catapult others into action. Determine what you want a reader to understand, and adapt your tone accordingly to convey the content of the message.

Methods for Using Your Voice
Methods for conveying an authoritative voice may include the use of justified or centered text. The use of this method signifies for the reader to take head to the particular text that stands out from the rest of the message. In addition to justified or centered text, the use of stylistic cues such as boldface, underlining, and italic typeset draw a reader’s attention to ideas and concepts which should be weighted on a level that is not equal to the other information. Figure 20.5.1 demonstrates variation of the same words being used, to reflect tone, therefore potentially having very different meanings applied by the reader.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example 1:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YOU MUST respond to this email with your agenda by FRIDAY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example 2:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You must respond, to this email, with your agenda, by Friday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example 3:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You MUST respond to THIS email with your agenda by Friday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Example 4:                  |
According to DeKay (2010, p. 114), “Pragmatic functions are used to structure information by arranging contents in such a manner that readers will be able to organize meaning in a coherent manner.” Upon the reading of an email, whether it is written using an authoritative voice or casual voice, is less important than if it meets the expectations of the reader. Using an authoritative voice upon teaching or disseminating information will be received more readily by a reader if they were intending to hear the information from an expert or authority figure on the subject matter.

A casual voice can be depicted through the use of text that appears less traditional, may include clip art or other similar visual cues. Urgency to respond or need for follow up is not conveyed with a casual tone. As displayed in Figure 20.5.2, a use of synonyms is displayed which portrays the idea that the same words can be used to convey a very different message. The use of language is a powerful tool in conveying an idea or concept and has influence on the tone portrayed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASUAL</th>
<th>FORMAL</th>
<th>CASUAL</th>
<th>FORMAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESSENTIAL</td>
<td>IMPERATIVE</td>
<td>CONVERSATION</td>
<td>TRANSMISSION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>CRUCIAL</td>
<td>COMMENT</td>
<td>ASSESSMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPEFUL</td>
<td>SANGUINE</td>
<td>DISTINCTION</td>
<td>HETEROGENEITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRAGIC</td>
<td>CALAMITOUS</td>
<td>COMMENT</td>
<td>INSCRIPTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAND</td>
<td>VALLIANT</td>
<td>FIRM</td>
<td>ADAMANTINE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 20.5.2

It is important to keep in mind the context in which a message is being sent, and the overall content that the sender is intending to submit. The number and level of responses to emails will be dependent upon the clarity of the subject matter, the accepted use of language, and tone of voice used.

**Tactic to Use in Creating Emails**

If you feel as if you always come across to others in a negative light via email, one tactic to use when addressing your tone of voice is to employ the “T.W.O.-P.A.R.T” strategy, developed by Tami McCoy, co-author of this chapter. The strategy is simply this:

- First, write the email, but do not send it. Then,
- Employ the strategy which stands for and involves:
The idea is, to act first and put the words onto the computer screen. Next, as a leader, you must step back and evaluate and put yourself in place of the primary audience, or your follower, and check the message for tone. An author of anything, including an email, rarely discovers perfection in the outcome on the first attempt. It takes practice, just as does developing skill in a sport, or learning to like new foods. It has to be done more than once before habit forms.

What is Gained by Utilization of the “T.W.O-P.A.R.T” Strategy
In the process of thinking the words over, planning, and revising thoughtfully, chances are one might adapt language according to necessary revisions to display politeness. According to Ruiz (1997), we express our creative power through our words. “The word is a force; it is the power you have to express and communicate” (Ruiz, 2010, p. 26). The words that you express have the ability to captivate an audience and to move them into action. If those words are not carefully, thoughtfully, and strategically used, the outcome may not be as intended. Writing and writing differently than you may be accustomed to takes a level of creativity. “Creative confidence is about believing in your ability to create change in the world around you” (Kelley, T. and Kelley, D., 2013, p. 2). Communication requires confidence in your abilities, and your ability to change as necessary, becoming fluid with your audience.

Communication Arsenal
Two weapons in your communication arsenal that have favorable influence upon tone of voice in emails are empathy and politeness. According to Kelley & Kelley (2013) inspiration is drawn out of people through connecting with their needs and desires. When you know your audience and speak to them in a tone that they can interpret as positive, you can make a stronger connection than you would if the reader feels your message is negative and insincere. “Connecting with the needs, desires, and motivations of real people” (Kelley & Kelley 2013, p. 22) will foster an empathetic environment that seeks to relate to the reader, and will allow a writer to connect with the primary audience on a deeper level. This is an important tool to keep in mind when responding to email as well.

Relatability to an audience carries a distinct voice of its own, separate from authoritative or casual. An empathetic tone has a factor that outlines relatability and believability in a way that is distinct from other tones. Readers want to connect on a deeper level in order for the transmitted information to resonate with them.

While being cognizant of tone of voice when constructing emails, it is important to keep in mind the use of strategies. Communication is used to convey ideas, and the overall goal is to implement strategies that resonate with a reader. As leaders, we need to explore ways to reach our intended
audience and cause individuals to spring to action. This may entail framing the voice used to fit an audience, deciding terminology and language used to discuss ideas, and developing a relationship in which a reader feels safe to question the information contained in the communication for further clarification. Depending on the call to action, a reader may become less or more inclined to act, based on the method in which the message is transmitted. Therefore, judgment calls are necessary when considering the individuals involved. (Bennis and Goldsmith, 2010 p. 182)

### Key Takeaway

1. Tone of voice sets the stage for how a reader receives the intended message.

### Exercises

1. Construct an email containing a message using an authoritative voice.
2. Construct an email containing a message using a casual voice.
3. Construct one of the emails you created for exercise 1 or 2 utilizing an empathetic approach.
4. Read an email that you have received recently at work that was sent to you. Then re-read the message and develop a hypothesis of the tone the message has.

### References


20.6 Emails to Inform, Instruct, Interact and Connect

Learning Objective

1. To be able to define your target audience and speak to them on a level that creates a desirable outcome for the intended purpose of constructing the email.

What Preconceived Assumptions Do You Make When Reading a Message?

Have you ever read an email without looking at the name of the sender and thought, “A man, or a woman, must have written this?” Are items contained within an email that we tend to assign gender to the manifestation of the use of these tools? The key is to write to your primary audience, and set aside pre-conceived notions as the author and the reader.

Consistent throughout management text, gender is portrayed as having influence on leadership styles and traits of leaders are often described differently between men and women. Texts regarding communication give way to these same differences. Research however, does not depict differences that attribute any level of significance to gender.

In a research study by Plumlee, Wright, A., and Wright, D., (2016, p.79), differences between how men and women communicate differently through written communication. Their study looks at four aspects to see if differences exist. The study by Plumlee, et al. evaluates “length of response, readability of the writing, me versus you orientation, and overall tone” (p. 79). The study evaluated 218 samples of writing and in three of the four categories resulted in no significant difference between men and women in those areas. The one category that resulted in a difference was in the area of overall tone. While men and women alike both tended to write more negative messages, women overall wrote more positively.

The key point to this study is awareness. As a communicator, keeping in mind potential variables within the context of writing can aid in the construction of generally positive messages. As a leader, you must decide who you are, what you stand for, and how you will act. Communication is a way in which your leadership style can be expressed, and the goal is to be tactful, and maintain awareness. One way to accomplish this awareness is by refraining from using words with negative connotations. The use of this strategy will allow the reader to read the content and gain understanding through general context.

The construct of an email message must include language and format design that informs, instructs, interacts and connects with the intended primary audience. The overall goal of business communication is to write to the primary audience, or the intended recipient of the communication. The primary audience is neither male nor female, rather is the intended target audience. The correspondence should be clear and concise and inform the audience of the purpose that the email is being constructed. When the intention of an email is to instruct the primary audience to perform an action or to make them aware, the language used should avoid ambiguity.
A process exists within communication: leadership involves communication and communication involves leadership. In order to perform well in written communication and portray positivity within routine messages, one must resolve that it is a dynamic process that requires development, practice, and reflection. Upon reflection, revision may be necessary. In order to communicate well, whether it is via email, reports, letters, text, or through another genre, an understanding of the paradigm and acknowledgement of its existence as a dynamic process is crucial.

**COMMUNICATION AS A PROCESS**

Emails should be constructed in a fashion that serves to instruct the audience how to perform a task, informs them of ideas in which the writer of the communication intends to convey, interacts with the audience, and connects on a level that is easily understood. According to Plumlee, etal. (2016), differences did not exist in male and female correspondence other than what was evident as depicted through tone. Therefore goals of male and female authors as hypothesized were disproven through study. In this chapter, we have extrapolated the gender ideas of purpose of communication into one concept. Rather than stating that males inform and instruct in their communications, and that females tend to interact and connect in their communications, we have synthesized the ideas into one general platform for business communication through email to purport that all written emails should contain all four actions.

Research completed by Jansen and Janssen (2010) evaluates the use of and number of politeness strategies within refusal letters. While this chapter does not focus on letters, rather addresses emails, the tools that can be utilized are similar. Their study looks at the effect that the use of strategies have on the evaluation that the conclusions that the reader determines. Utilizing positive strategies has a greater positive effect upon the reader than using other strategies. Style, grammar, spelling, tone, politeness and other pragmatic functions can influence a reader’s evaluation.
For the purpose of explaining actions to be used when constructing emails in this chapter, we subscribe that the application of the “T.W.O.-P.A.R.T.” strategy can create a more positive experience between writer and reader, and create a less hostile transaction. After all, creating business communication undoubtedly requires creativity and practice.

**How to Achieve Your Goal Using Design Thinking Principles**

**Design Thinking Process**

The creation of effective business communication that seeks to invoke action by the reader, as discussed is influenced by tone, positive strategies, and politeness. Regardless of the expected outcome, one can properly design effective communication by implementing design thinking principles. This principle can be applied, and are not limited to areas of engineering, fashion, graphic design, or other creative business realms. The concept is applicable to communication during the construction of routine and positive messages. Design thinking principles include empathizing, defining, ideating, prototyping, and testing. While design thinking is typically utilized in the development of products and services, we encourage the employ of the same process when constructing routine, positive communications in emails. The reason for this is that the sender of the email is instructing, informing, interacting, and connecting, in order to invoke action from the reader. When utilizing design thinking in other areas such as to invoke social change, the concept is the same as utilizing in emails: seek to invoke action.

**The Stages of Design Thinking Involve:**

- **Empathy**

According to the Institute of design at Stanford, the empathetic stage is the initial stage of the design thinking process which requires knowing and understanding your audience. This may include
understanding the existing culture to gain insights, to determine what language and form used will be acceptable.

- Define
The next stage is the define mode, in which one moves to drawing conclusions from their observations and engagement to understand context, in order to address the problem or issue. After all, you have a reason for constructing the email, right?

- Ideate
The next stage in the process is ideating, where the goal is to generate solutions and requires brainstorming. This stage is where utilization of leadership skills developed over the years can manifest. Leaders must plan and revise; plan and revise.

- Prototyping
The next stage, prototyping, involves making your ideas come to fruition, and getting rid of the ones that do not work. Prototyping in business communication can involve the creation of multiple emails that you do not send, in order to decide which one will ideally serve your purpose and audience.

- Testing
In the testing stage, perhaps showing the email construction to supervisors or co-workers to gain feedback would aid you in deciding the best format to use and send. This will benefit you by gaining experience in understanding your audience, providing content that is understood, creating a positive experience for you and the reader, and ultimately invoking the action you seek to obtain.

Key Takeaway

1. Create emails that instruct, inform, interact and connect to the reader and utilize design thinking principles. Seek to invoke action within readers.

Exercises

1. Construct an email that seeks to inform your staff of a policy change. Keep in mind the organizational culture. What language will you use? Check the message for tone.

2. Now create a second email that seeks to inform your staff of a policy change and walk through the design thinking stages of empathizing, defining, ideating, prototyping and testing. The prototyping phase will require you to brainstorm with others. The testing phase will require you to test the email out on some friends for feedback on how they received your message. Was it positive? Did it instruct, inform, interact and connect effectively? Were they clear on the intended message and action needed?

3. Create a scenario and construct an email that emphasizes a problem within your company. As the boss you need to inform employees of the problem. What should be included in the email, how will you connect with others, and what should the email contain in the first paragraph?
References


http://gvsu.summon.serialssolutions.com/search?s.q=positive+messages&spellcheck=true#!/s earch?ho=t&fvf=IsScholarly,true,f&l=en&q=positive%20written%20communication

20.7 Communication Behavior in Emails

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Communication behavior should mimic leadership that seeks to be positive and be transformative between sender and receiver.</td>
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</table>

How Do You Get What is in Your Mind into Another's, so that it is Understood?
Leadership Influences Communication

The building block to communication in emails is to apply leadership concepts. According to Thompson (2014), leadership goals need to be clear and need maintenance. The word maintenance implies that leadership skills are not static. They require development, reflection and revision for effectiveness. Well executed communication subscribes to the same concepts of clarity, maintenance, reflection and revision for the purpose of effectiveness.

Leadership styles differ and fall into several categories such as servant leadership, transactional leadership, transformational leadership and organic leadership to name a few. Through leadership styles, specific traits manifest and are evident. Despite various theories on leadership, individuals can reflect upon leaders they have had interactions with and create a list of traits and styles those leaders held. Incorporated into their style are their communication behaviors.

If you subscribe to the theory that different categories of leaders exists, that leaders are comprised of various traits, and that leaders communicate differently, commonality must be determined to develop cohesive, positive construct of communication through email. Communication behavior, like leadership goals, must:

- Be clear, maintain focus on the goal, and avoid ambiguity
- Be polite in use of language
- Utilize language that suits the type of communication dependent on the intended receiver
- Discard assumptions of the reader’s level of knowledge
- Employ transformational tactics
- Remain open
- Be evaluated for maintenance purposes

In a study by Men (2014), quality relationships are built through understanding preferred methods to receive information within companies, evaluates how messages are sent, and the influence a leader has through utilization of communication channels. Symmetrical communication within organizations is most effective as seen in the study by Men (2014), when the messages are founded in trust, are open, and are credible. Employee satisfaction may be increased when symmetrical communication is practiced which allows for close interaction and a questioning process to take place between sender and receiver, or leader and follower. Maintaining ethical standards, utilizing writing that is true to your word, reading responses wholly and addressing all items raised in an email, and not making assumptions about the sender or the contents of the email are vital standards to follow to maintain levels of satisfaction in the communication relationship.

According to Keyton, Caputo, Ford, Fu, Leibowitz, Liu, Polasik, Ghosh, Wu (2013), in their study that evaluated workplace communication, actions are initiated in sequence by behaviors. Visualize an elaborate maze of dominos that are set up so that when the first piece is knocked down, it initiates a chain reaction, causing all the other dominos to fall in sequential order. Communication behaviors are just like dominos; the onset of motion of one has sequential impact on what occurs next.
Tactical Relevance

Communication may often mirror the design of a tactical team. No matter the design of a tactical team, the composition requires:

- An objective that may be problem solving in nature, and the objective is clear and concise (Thompson, 2014, p. 77-79).
- That the team sees connections (Bennis & Goldsmith, 2010, p. 179).
- A clearly define starting point-planning strategy (Bennis & Goldsmith, 2010, p. 193).
- Practice; Mistakes are evaluated honestly, and practice takes place to increase awareness (Ruiz, 1997, p. 81).
- That questions need to be asked to see connection to a larger purpose (Preskill and Brookfield, 2009, p. 227).
- Questioning what behavior you are intending to affect, then design your words accordingly (Kelley & Kelley, 2013, p.200).

Development of effective communication requires dispelling previous assumptions and “getting past preconceptions or routine ways of thinking” (Kelley & Kelley, 2010, p. 103) and framing questions, concepts, and ideas in new ways. As Malala Yousafzai describes in her book, “I am Malala,” “We should learn everything and then choose the path to follow,” and “we should focus on practical issues” (Yousafzai, 2013, p. 162, 223). Communication should subscribe to the same concepts of learning knowledge to use, decide when and what knowledge we choose to use, and make our communications speak to others on a level that they understand and want to take action on.

Dialogue between parties will be the most beneficial to all parties involved when the methods used clearly instruct, inform, interact and connect and deviate from the use of negative speech patterns (Kelley & Kelley, 2010, p. 199). Exhibiting behavior that is positive, that refrains from being too complex, and that does not assume what is being stated, rather is explicitly clear when corresponding in emails should be the focus.

Key Takeaway
1. Communication should display qualities that are similar to transformational leadership roles, tactical teams and be reflective of your positive leadership attributes.

**Exercises**

1. Design an email keeping in mind a tactical team. Design an objective, see connections to the issue, define the starting point strategy, practice and evaluate for errors, question and make clear the larger purpose, keep in mind the behavior you are intending to affect.

2. Read an email you received. Based on the construction of the email, would you say the words used came from a transformational leader? Why or why not?

3. Read an email that you received. What did you like about it, and why? What suggestions would you make for improvement? What was similar or different about that particular email than ones you have sent recently?

**References**


20.8 Positive, Routine Messages

**Learning Objective**

1. Define positive, routine messages and know their purpose. Helpful hints for the creation of effective messages include using positive, rather than negative phrases.

Positive, routine messages are messages meant to build a sense of goodwill with the purpose to foster, maintain, and solidify relationships (Communicating Routine… n.d.). Goodwill is the positive emotion or feeling created to encourage people to maintain a good, working business relationship. Therefore, your goal in creating positive routine messages is to communicate good news, provide requested feedback, share relative and helpful information, etc. all while leaving your audience with a good impression of you (“Writing Routine…” n.d.). Not only are you fostering your business relationships, you are building your ethos.

Research shows that when a person feels they are treated fairly, positive results are cultivated, supporting the conclusion stated earlier... with the purpose of fostering, maintaining, and solidifying relationships. In business communication, employees who are treated positively increase reliable and decisive output (Westerman & Westerman, 2013). Providing positive messages or feedback will help promote an elated feeling of just treatment and goodwill.

There are various types of positive routine messages, of which each will most times leave the recipient open to change and become more apt to accept decisions, or simply make him or her feel good. On the other hand, if an employee, for instance, presents an insightful idea or suggestion to his or her supervisor, the employee will likely receive praise. However, if the idea or suggestion is disliked, the employee may become discouraged and less willing to make future suggestions or allow his or her voice to be heard again. A relationship of goodwill built amongst business colleagues, supervisor and employee, or business person to vendor is critical to the productivity and success of a business. It is the quality of those relationships that keep an organization effective and profitable.
### Positive, Routine Message Examples & Helpful Hints

#### Use Positive Wording

“Effective business writers choose positive wording to communicate their messages, even in negative situations. Positive wording creates an optimistic, encouraging, and often more informative message. For example, consider the sentences [displayed here]. The sentences on the left are expressed as negative ideas. Note how, in each example, subtle changes in wording focus on the positive expression of the same ideas. *(Managing the communication...n.d., pg. 49)*”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Positive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• We will not be able to approve a new budget until the analysis is complete.</td>
<td>• We will be able to approve a new budget when the analysis is complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The board has not yet voted on the salary increases.</td>
<td>• The board will vote on the salary increases at the next meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If you do not sign the form before 5 p.m., we will not be able to fund your travel request.</td>
<td>• If you sign the form before 5 p.m., we will be able to fund your travel request.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Though there are various schools of thought on the best way to individualize each one of the aforementioned message types, if you follow a few simple rules you will properly design your positive message to avoid errors, make your message easy to understand, and ensure your tone and expression is suited for your audience. This will also build your ethos to your audience. Remember, the message’s content should convey logic while building intentional, emotional appeal to your intended audience, as previously discussed using the rhetorical triangle.

A.C.E.

Analyze

Set the Stage
Analyze the purpose of your message. Do you want to inform, persuade, request, report, or propose? Why are you communicating and what outcome do you expect? Be specific with your content. What medium or message genre will you use to deliver your message?

Compose

Use What You Learned When Analyzing
Determine your content and how you will organize and include the content into your message. Now draft and format your message.

Evaluate

Review the Message
Have you included the necessary content suited for the purpose? Does the word style fit the purpose? Does your format and approach communicate a professional image?

Positive routine messages build goodwill. These messages are crucial in creating good business relationships and maintaining established business relationships. Incorporating positivity into your routine messages will not only accomplish the task at hand it will build on the goodwill already created, or begin to foster better business relationships putting sincere goodwill to use.

Challenge

Sometimes we get so caught up in our daily routine of checking emails, responding to requests, taking phone calls, placing orders, and checking off those boxes on our “to-do” list that, before we know it our day is almost finished. Think about those types of days. Do you make a point to send a message of goodwill - a positive message to foster your working relationships?

You have been challenged to gift someone each workday for one week for purposes of forming goodwill and promote superb working relationships with colleagues, business partners, and/or staff. A simple thank you message or a word of congratulations on a job well done will make an individual feel good. Investing a mere 15 minutes each day to make someone feel good is building goodwill.
Key Takeaway

1. Positive wording creates an optimistic, encouraging, and often more informative message.

Exercises

1. Create a message that purports goodwill. Have you applied the A.C.E. steps when doing so? Analyze the purpose of your message. Determine your content. Does the word style fit the purpose?

References

Communicating routine messages and building goodwill. n.d. In class handout.


Writing routine and positive messages. n.d. In class handout.
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