

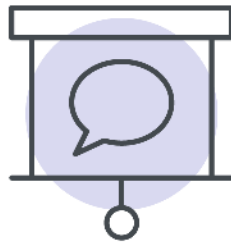
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CMN 279  
**MIDTERM EXAM**  
STUDY GUIDE

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# Lecture Notes

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## CMN279 – Class 1 Notes

- What is communication?
  - Getting a point across to somebody
  - Starting a conversation
    - Relation
    - Response
    - Feedback
  - Shared
    - Something we do with others
  - Multimodal
    - Takes many forms or modes
  - Contextual
    - Forms and modes may be similar or different in varying contexts
      - School
      - Home
      - Church
      - Work
      - Volunteering
  - Approximate
    - May be more or less effective
- What is professional communication?
  - Communicating with others that we work with
    - Workplace-oriented
  - Other realms
    - Ex: If we are not necessarily employed by a place, there is still a sense of professionalism that we must display in our writing and oral communication
  - There are standards
  - An evolving definition
    - Changes with new media, new practices, different people
    - There is no "one size fits all"
  - Communicating effectively within organizations
  - Accomplished using a variety of methods and modes
  - Knowing how to use those methods and modes effectively
    - Appropriate tone
    - Standard forms and formatting
  - An ethical practice
    - Not manipulative or reactive
    - Anticipates changes, problems
    - Listens, observes, empathizes
    - Conscious of privacy, differing values and beliefs
- The "New" Economy
  - Characteristics of the "new economy"
    - Shift to a "knowledge economy" (from manufacturing)
    - "Risk society" thinking: risks are everywhere and must be managed appropriately
      - Environmental
      - Data (identity, privacy)

- Flattened organizations (less hierarchy, more decentralized; more autonomy, cooperation, collaboration between employees; also more outsourcing and precarious/temporary/contact work)
- Sustainability and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)
- Globalization of business: internal to an organization; more interdependence with external partners (ex: software, outsourcing)
- More diverse employee base
- Team-based work environments
- Advancing communication technologies (ex: WWW/Internet; algorithms and AI; mobile technologies and apps)
- A Communication Process
  - Communication is a process
  - Key characteristics
    - Situated (particular environment and/or context)
    - Relational (responsive to that environment/context)
    - Transactional (adaptive to changes in context or agents)
  - Elements of the communication process
    - Shannon and Weaver's (1948) "mathematical model" of communication
    - Also called "transmission model"
    - Sender/receiver (or source/destination; uni- or multidirectional)
    - Signal (or code; or message)
    - Noise (Unintentional; affects the signal)
    - Feedback (Intentional; response)
- Barriers
  - Barriers to effective communication
    - Noise as a metaphor
    - Channel overload
    - Information overload
    - Emotional interface
    - Semantic interface
    - Physical/technical interface
    - Mixed message/channel barriers
    - Environmental interface
- Contexts
  - Communication contexts
    - Who is involved?
    - How many people?
    - In what role(s)?
    - What are the relationships between (and amongst) sender(s) and receiver(s)?
    - How important or unimportant is feedback?
    - How generic or specific are messages for their senders/receivers/audiences?
  - Examples:
    - Interpersonal communication
    - Small-group communication
    - Organizational communication
    - Intercultural communication
    - Mass communication
- Non-verbal

- Not just written language
- Not just the meaning of the words written/spoken
  - 7% of meaning is in the words spoken
  - 38% is paralinguistic
  - 55% is non-verbal expression
- Examples of non-verbal "displays"
  - Acoustic properties of speech (tone, inflection, speed, etc.)
  - Eye gaze and other facial expression
  - Body movement, posture, and gesture (including touch)
  - Appearance
  - Personal space
- The non-verbal augments (rather than replaces) spoken/verbal
- Five common roles the non-verbal plays in spoken communication
  - Repetition
  - Contradiction
  - Regulation
  - Substitution
  - Accenting and complementing
- A successful communicator should be able to
  - Encode the non-verbal
  - Decode the non-verbal
  - Regulate
- Several key features of the non-verbal
  - Use of space (proxemics)
  - Use of time (Chronemics)
  - Paralanguage/paralinguistic (Vocalics)
  - Body language (Kinesics)
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## CMN279 – Class 2 Notes

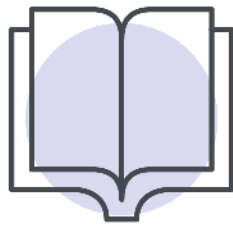
- Writing in context: Four key concepts
  - Context
    - What do you need to? What goal do you, or does your organization, need to achieve?
  - Genres
    - Forms or systems of writing that emerge through recurrent patterns of communicating
  - Discourse communities
    - A group of people with common communication goals, interests
    - A kind of "public" group bound by shared ideas and interests
  - Rhetorical situations
    - Common contexts where effective strategies can be deployed
    - Usually goal-oriented situations where persuasion is useful
- What must you say? To whom? To what end(s)?
- Organizational communication is
  - Goal-oriented or purpose-driven (pragmatic)
  - Audience-focused
  - Concise
- What is "business style"?
  - Direct style
  - Plain language/word choice
  - Concise, pointed
    - Getting to the point
  - Consistent and appropriate tone
- Word choice: step-by-step
  - Use familiar words
  - Use fresh/current language
  - Keep it specific, precise, and functional
  - Be factual and ethical
- What is a phrase? What is a clause?
  - Phrase
    - Contains a subject or a verb (not both)
    - Does not express a complete thought
    - Cannot stand by itself as a sentence
  - Clause
    - Contains a subject and a verb
      - Independent clauses can stand on their own as a complete sentence
      - Dependent clauses do not make sense by themselves (they use a dependent marker or relative pronoun)
- Simple sentences
  - One independent clause
    - E.g., "The library is very quiet."
- Compound sentence
  - Two independent clauses
    - E.g., "The elevators are working, and the library is very quiet."
- Complex sentence

- Dependent + independent clause
- E.g., "When the elevators are working, the library is very quiet."
- Compound-complex sentence
  - Dependent clause + two independent clauses
    - E.g., "When the elevators are working, everything runs smoothly, and the library is very quiet."
- Effective sentences
  - Start with short and simple
  - Vary simple and complex sentences to keep a reader's attention (and avoid sounding "choppy")
  - Active voice is easier to read, but passive voice may still have a place
- Effective paragraphs
  - For business writing or organizational communication, use short paragraphs
  - One key idea per paragraph
  - Use a topic sentence to frame the purpose
  - Employ differing strategies to write emphatically, or to de-emphasize your message
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## CMN279 – Class 3 Notes

- Direct Messages
  - Direct messages deliver an informative point and are not
    - Intended to be highly persuasive
    - A request for something
    - To evoke emotional response
  - They are to the point, neutral in tone, and deliver necessary information
- Memos
  - Memos are short for memoranda. They are notes intended to convey info to an individual or group
  - Memos are typically used within an organization
    - Internal
    - External
  - Designed to be read quickly
  - Straight to the point
- Memo Format: Header
  - A memo header usually includes the following
    - TO
    - FROM
    - SUBJECT
    - DATE
- Memo format: Informative
  - Guidelines
    - A clearly worded subject line
    - A direct opening
      - The first sentence should capture the key message in plain language
    - A clear explanation of the informative message
    - Instructions for following up
    - A positive closing
    - The message should provide details, ideally moving from most to least important
    - Closing sentences may reiterate the main point or emphasize a call to action
    - Where possible, use formatting to highlight key info (ex: bolding, italics, underline, etc.)
    - Break up long paragraphs into meaningful chunks
    - Use lists (ordered or unordered) if appropriate
      - Unordered list is a bulleted list
      - Ordered list is usually a numbered list (Indicate steps)
    - End with courtesy that is appropriate for the situation ("Thank you for your cooperation")
    - If appropriate, sign off with initials and/or name of a person or department
- Email
  - Electronic mail resembles memos, but with differences
    - Benefits
      - Paperless
      - Instant
      - Provides a record of communication

- Direct and can be sent to single or multiple recipients simultaneously
- Drawbacks
  - Accidental "Reply All"
  - Shorter attention spans
  - Needs simplicity (singular topics)
  - Easy to be misread or received negatively
- Tips
  - Keep emails brief, one topic per message
  - Keep the tone professional and courteous
  - Consider composing and saving more consequential emails in Word/Google
  - Never write an angry message
  - Always assume that email is never private (servers can be accessed, emails can be saved, printed, forwarded)
  - Consider other channels if more in-depth or continuous communication is needed (face-to-face, phone call)
  - Consider using an automatic signature with your name and contact info (brief but sufficiently detailed)
  - For compatibility and accessibility, limit media to necessity
  - Favour plain-text over rich-text formatting
    - Default
    - Default and uniform font sizing
    - Separate paragraphs with a blank line
    - Avoid tabs; use other indenting sparingly
    - Use simple formatting for ordered and unordered lists
- Routine messages
  - Informative and/or positive in nature (bad news and negative messages require special consideration)
  - Subject lines should clearly indicate the key message, avoid humour
- Request memos
  - Asking for compliance, action, etc.
  - What you are asking should be clear after the first paragraph
  - Subject should encourage not demand action
  - Tips
    - Main idea goes first; state request clearly and concisely
    - Provide a reason for the request; or state its benefit to motivate the reader to help you
    - Separate multiple requests into discrete paragraphs; use lists where appropriate
    - Anticipate and provide necessary details to avoid the reader requesting them
    - Be courteous yet firm
    - Close with positive language



# Textbook Notes

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## CMN279 - Chapter 1: Getting the Message Across

- Whatever the answer to raising Canada's position as an innovator might be, communication is a crucial part of it
  - Good communication matters - now more than ever in the world of business
    - Everyone communicates for a living
    - It is impossible to conduct certain projects in a workplace without having some form of communication
  - Spoken and written communication that is focused, reliable, and disciplined has the power to influence opinion and shape perceptions on which an organization's competitiveness, productivity, and success depend
    - Good communication plays a crucial role in building credibility and upholding standards of accountability in a global business environment, where relationships thrive on trust
    - Done well, your communication can empower you and be the means to promotion and success
      - Language is a powerful tool worth the effort of learning to use well
- Successful communication is the result of learning how to structure your information strategically - of using text, design, and technologies to achieve an intended purpose for a clearly defined audience
  - Delivering information effectively can depend on a fine balance between you and your audience, between a commitment to your business goals and an awareness of your audience's needs
- A soft skill is a social, interpersonal, or language skill that complements a person's technical skills
- A hard skill is a technical skill that a person requires for a specific job
  - The Canadian Advanced Technology Alliance (CATA) revealed that, among 100 Canadian business leaders, communication was a top attribute linked to leadership skills
- According to a survey of 120 human resources directors, American businesses spend \$3.1 billion annually training their employees to write
- The Conference Board of Canada argues that progress in the work world depends on the ability to do the following
  - Read and understand information in many forms
  - Speak and write to command attention and promote understanding
  - Actively listen and appreciate other points of view
  - Share information via a range of technologies
  - Use scientific and technological skills to clarify ideas
  - Manage information by gathering and organizing it through the use of technologies and information systems
  - Apply and integrate knowledge and skills from other disciplines'
- Profound changes are occurring in the Canadian workplace
  - This transformation encompasses several factors:
    - A change-over to a knowledge-based internet
    - The adoption of revolutionary information and communication technologies (ICT's)
    - New team-based work environments with flattened hierarchies to become more diverse employee base
    - Expectations for sustainability, ethical practice, and corporate social responsibility (CSR)

- Highly competitive global markets
- The knowledge economy
  - Whereas Canada's economy used to be based on the products people made from raw materials through manual labour, the information age has made it knowledge-based
    - The knowledge worker makes and sells some kind of idea-based product
      - Software
      - Consulting and financial services
      - Music
      - Design
      - Pharmaceuticals
    - The advantage that knowledge products have over those produced through manual labour is that their value can dramatically increase as the global market expands; the challenge in a knowledge economy is to ensure continued funding for research and development, to continue to draw on an educated workplace trained in critical thinking, and to fight the problem of "brain drain", the loss of experts to other countries
- The concept of the risk society
  - ICT's are technologies, such as mobile phone systems and the Internet, used for transmitting, manipulating, and storing data by electronic means
  - Piracy is the unauthorized reproduction and distribution of copyrighted material, including video games, software, music, and films
  - Cyberwarfare is a form of information warfare, usually the conducting of politically motivated sabotage through hacking
  - Identity theft is the act of acquiring and collecting an individual's personal information for criminal purposes
  - Risk communication is an interactive exchange of information and opinion on risk among risk assessors, risk managers, and other interested parties
- Flatter organizations
  - As organizations strive for greater cost savings, efficiency, competitiveness, and sustainability, management hierarchies may be flattened, with fewer divisions
    - This decentralization and democratization of the workplace, with fewer middle managers to pass along and interpret directions, make for shorter communication chains; therefore, every individual must be a skilled communicator if company products and services are going to make it into the market
- Sustainability and corporate social responsibility
  - Corporate social responsibility is a company's voluntary contributions to sustainable development through the support of non-profit organizations and/or the creation of socially conscious corporate policies
    - Movement was born in the 1990's amid growing stakeholder concerns over environmental catastrophes, the first sustainability reports from forward-looking companies such as Ben & Jerry's, and the emergence of the anti-globalization movement
    - Today, important initiatives such as the UNGC drive transparency on how corporations earn their money, treat their employees, and protect the planet's finite resources
      - UNGC asks companies to support, embrace, and enact core values related to particular areas
        - Human rights
        - Labour standards

- The environment
  - Anti-corruption
- Sustainable development is an economic development that maintains natural resources for future generations and recognizes the relationship between economic, social, and environmental issues
  - 80% of companies listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange in 2008 reported some type of sustainability practice
  - Sustainability reporting can accomplish many objectives
    - Strengthen the link between a company and its stakeholders and increase stakeholder value
    - Boost financial performance
    - Showcase efficiency in production and lead to better use of company assets and innovative technology
    - Increase the company's appeal to socially responsible investors
    - Build industry credibility, set an example, and enhance company reputation
- Business on a global scale
  - Since 2000, the world seems to have shrunk due to the ever expanding global presence of business
    - This is due to
      - Web browsers promoting connectivity and the free flow of information
      - Software and other communication platforms promoting wider co-operation
      - Open-sourcing
      - Outsourcing and offshoring
      - "Amplifiers" that are digital, virtual, mobile, and personal
  - Provides new opportunities as well as challenges for Canadian workers and their organizations
    - Canadian products must compete in international markets
    - Investment from foreign-based companies and emerging super-economies such as China has jumped dramatically, and the trend toward outsourcing and offshoring customer service functions continues
    - The need to explore new markets, negotiate, buy and sell overseas, market products, and enter into joint ventures is anchored in effective communication with people from around the world, without which none of these functions could be accomplished
    - The ability to communicate across cultural barriers, time zones, and language divides - and to exercise intercultural sensitivity by respecting differences in customs, lifestyles, religions, and business etiquette - is crucial to the success of operations in this global economy
- More diverse employee base
  - Most employee constituencies in present-day Canada reflect differences in ethnicity, age, gender, race, physical abilities, and sexual orientation
    - All of this is a matter of good economic sense, as companies capitalize on talents, expertise, creativity, and strengths across diverse groups to obtain greater productivity and competitive advantages
  - Diversity is the understanding, acknowledging, valuing, and celebrating of differences among people with respect of gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, religious belief, and physical ability
- Team work environments
  - In the 21st century, business is conducted by teams

- Collaboration in the broadest sense is at work in "open data" and crowdsourcing initiatives
  - Collaboration through cross-functional teams, in which individuals of different areas of expertise come together to share information for a common goal, makes most of the workforce's creative potential by increasing individual involvement in decision-making and project development
    - Innovations in information technology and mobile communications have made it possible for employees to be part of virtual project teams, which can eliminate time and space barriers and still provide quality, low-cost solutions to organizational problems
    - Depends on good communication and interpersonal skills to overcome conflicts that arise when people with differing viewpoints must make joint decisions
- Advanced communication technologies
  - Communication is a transactional and relational process involving the meaningful exchange of information
  - Our communications are mediated through many different technologies and electronic forums
    - Allow us to communicate faster and father
    - Enable us to communicate around the clock
- Connectivity through the World Wide Web
  - Web 1.0 (read-only web) was invented in the early 1990's and continues to enable users to find information through tools such as browsers, search engines, and portals and to exchange information through applications such as e-mail
  - Web 2.0 (read-write) applications such as blogs, wikis, peer-to-peer file sharing, social networking platforms, and virtual worlds represent a giant leap forward because they allow users to communicate, collaborate, and socialize, as well as to create, distribute, and share content
  - Web 3.0 (transcendent web)
    - Encompasses artificial intelligence (AI) technology, social media, the semantic web (which allows for more sophisticated and personalized searching), and the Internet of things
    - Will transform business, especially the online media and retail industries, over the next five to ten years
    - Promises unprecedented ability to connect and to communicate with customers and, through real-time analytics, to capture data about their online activities that can then be used for sales and marketing as well as product development
- Mobile apps for business
  - 37% of Canadians have mobile business access
  - Of the 31% who own a smartphone, 57% have downloaded a mobile application
    - As a result, businesses have been quick to take advantage of mobile apps
      - Business-to-business (B2B) apps are used to support an organization's internal business processes
        - Fulfill different needs
          - Content-oriented apps answer the need for information, communication, entertainment, and socialization
          - Marketing-oriented apps promote brands and excel in targeting them to a younger, digitally native demographic
          - Service-oriented apps allow user to perform tasks such as online banking, shopping, or consulting schedules

- Communication theory is a system of ideas for explaining communication
- The US-based National Communication Association defines this field of research as one that, "focuses on how people use messages to generate meanings within and across contexts, cultures, channels, and the media. The discipline promotes the effective and ethical practice of human communications
  - Communication research continues to grow around the world
    - This growth, "reflects the need to seek answers to urgent social problems involving communication
    - It is now possible to think of communication studies as having many branches and as sharing theories and assumptions with a wide array of disciplines such as sociology, psychology, social sciences, etc.

TABLE 1.1 Areas of Communication Research

CONTEXT	CONCERNED WITH . . .
Communication and technology	psychological and sociological issues related to computer-mediated communication, human-computer interaction, social interaction and networking, and other impacts of technology
Communication law	communication policies that underlie law and regulation
Environmental communication	the interplay between the environment and communication in any setting
Global communication and social change	production, distribution, content, and reception of communications media at global levels
Health communication	the role of communication theory, research, and practice in health promotion and health care
Intercultural communication	the theory and practice of communication between and among different cultures
Intergroup communication	the ways in which communication within and between groups affects social relations
Interpersonal communication	small-group processes and relationship development
Mass communication	the transmission of messages through mass media, such as print and cinema, and the differing impacts of those messages
Organizational communication	the processes of communicating and organizing in global society and its contexts, such as government and non-government agencies, profit and non-profit organizations, health care co-operatives, and global corporations
Public relations	the understanding of communication between organization and target groups or publics
Visual communication	the meaning and function of all forms of visual representation, including still and moving images in print and digital media, film, television and video, and art and design

- Rhetoric is the use of language to persuade an audience
- Semantics is the study of the words and symbols we choose
- Semiotics is the study of how meaning is assigned and understood
- Cybernetics is the study of how information is processed and how communications systems function
- Communication can be understood in terms of three characteristics
  - Situated
  - Relational
  - Transactional
- Communication isn't simply something that is done to others; it is conducted together - a process in which both the sender and receiver are in a necessary if not entirely equal partnership

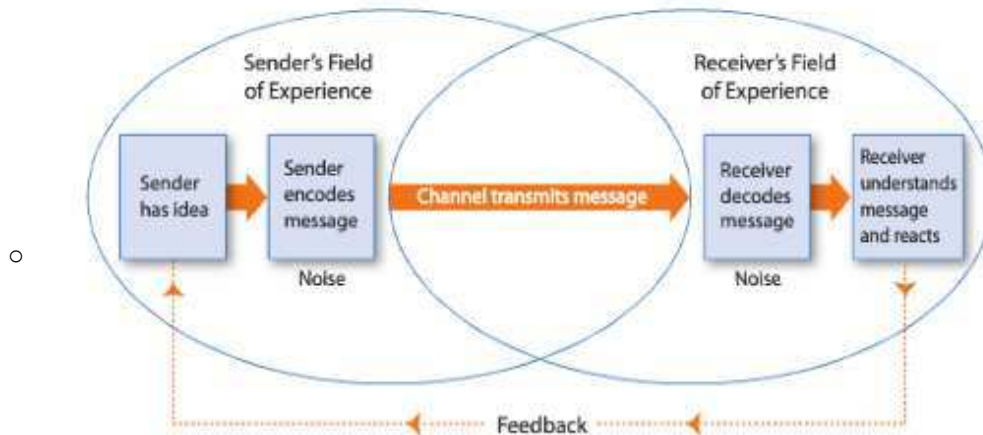


FIGURE 1.1

### Transactional Communication Model

- Can be thought of not as a thing but as a process of transferring data from a sender to a receiver as efficiently and accurately as possible
  - Exchange takes place through the use of a code - a language or set of signs and symbols - that transmits a thought through a channel and carries an agreed-upon meaning within a particular context, with the aim of eliciting a response from the receiver
  - Receiver must be able to understand, with certainty, what is significant about the data and make meaning out of it in order for this active, ongoing, and ever-changing process to be truly effective
- For communication to occur, according to the transaction communication model, there must both be a source and a destination - someone at the end to formulate and launch a message (Any type of oral, written, or non-verbal communication that is transmitted by a sender to the audience) and someone at the other end to receive it and respond to it
  - Success of this process depends on the extent to which a message received corresponds to the message transmitted or to which the input and the output correlate
  - The goal for the message is to be understood as it was intended
- A sender is the participant in the transaction who has an idea and communicates it by encoding it in a message
  - The form that the idea ultimately assumes - its content, tone, emphasis, and organization - is shaped by the sender's context, knowledge, attitudes, background, and other assumptions based on the sender's experience
- Encoding is the act of converting ideas into code in order to convey a written, oral, or non-verbal message
  - For this to happen, the sender must consider the receiver's context, knowledge, attitudes, and communication skills and then choose the right code to convey the intended meaning; otherwise, the communication transaction fails
- The channel is a communication pathway or medium over which a message travels
  - Choosing optimal channel depends on a variety of factors
  - Medium can be synchronous (enabling communication to take place directly, at the same time, or in real time) or asynchronous (allowing the transfer of

- information that is stored or archived and accessed later, so that the sender and receiver do not need to be present at the same time)
- Receiver is the person for whom a message is intended and who decodes the message by extracting the meaning from it
    - Decoding is the act of extracting the meaning from spoken, written, and non-verbal communication
    - Receiver's life experiences, knowledge, attitudes, and context can influence how he or she will interpret the message
  - Feedback is the receiver's response to a message that confirms if the original message was received and understood
  - Noise is any form of physical or psychological interface that distorts the meaning of a message
    - Refers to communication barriers (problems that affect the communication transaction, leading to confusion or misunderstanding)
    - Often referred to as the Murphey's Law of communication
    - Types of barriers
      - Channel overload
        - The inability of a channel to carry all transmitted messages
      - Information overload
        - A condition whereby a receiver cannot process all messages due to their increasing number
      - Emotional interface
        - Psychological factor that creates problems with the communication transaction
      - Semantic interface
        - Interface caused by ambiguity, jargon, language or dialect differences, or different of assigning meaning
        - Often involves bypassing
          - Misunderstanding that results from the receiver inferring a different meaning from a message based on the different meanings of the words that are used
      - Physical and technical interface
        - Technical difficulties arise
      - Mixed messages
        - Messages that are conflicting perceptions of a signal or message that may result in miscommunication
      - Channel barriers
        - Inappropriate choices of channel that impede communication
      - Environmental interface
        - Interface that results from preconceptions and differing frames of reference
    - How to overcome these barriers
      - Be timely and time-sensitive
        - Respond as soon as you have the information you intend to pass on
        - Choose the right time
        - Ease tensions by giving others the opportunity to cool down
      - Be purposeful
        - State your purpose for meeting, talking, or writing at the beginning
      - Be a good listener and a careful reader
      - Be context-sensitive

- Consider the communication situation and if the channel is right for that situation and audience
  - Be proactive
    - If you are in doubt about what you have heard or read, verify the facts and get more information as needed before proceeding
- Communication can be thought of in terms of several forms or contexts that involve differences in numbers and proximities of interactants, the relationships between roles of the sender(s) and receiver(s), the nature and amount of possible feedback, and the degree to which messages are adapted to their audiences
  - Effective communication on the job relies on the skills related to five forms
    - Interpersonal communication
      - An interactional process between two people (sender and receiver), either face-to-face or through mediated forms
        - Dyadic is a form of communication that involves a group of two
    - Small-group communication
      - An interactional process that occurs among three or more people to achieve common goals
    - Organizational communication
      - Communication within a hierarchical social system composed of interdependent stakeholder groups focused on common goals
        - Takes place in large businesses as well as organizations
    - Intercultural communication
      - The management of messages between people of different cultures, with necessary adaptation to account for differences between socially constructed forms of communication behaviour
    - Mass communication
      - An interaction in which a small group of people sends a message to a large anonymous audience; the transmission is indirect, often mediated through radio or television broadcasts or newspaper or magazine articles
  - Messages can be conveyed a sub-texts of non-verbal language, both unwritten and unspoken
    - Non-verbal elements
      - 7% of the meaning is in the words that are spoken
      - 38% of the meaning is paralinguistic (voice quality)
      - 55% of the meaning is non-verbal expression
  - Non-verbal communication is communication that does not use words but takes place through gestures, eye contact, and facial expressions
    - Communicate emotions, attitudes, greetings, and cues of status
    - Can play an important role in building and maintaining interpersonal relationships and managing impressions
    - How that message is interpreted or decoded
      - Tone, inflection, and other acoustic properties of speech
      - Eye gaze and facial expression
      - Body movements, body posture, gestures, and touch
      - Appearance
      - Personal space and use of time
    - Non-verbal behaviours is communication that takes place through gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, and posture
      - Can play 5 roles in relation to verbal communication

- Repetition
  - Non-verbal displays can repeat a message that is being delivered verbally in the same interaction
- Contradiction
  - Non-verbal messages can conflict with the message that the individual is trying to convey verbally, resulting in mixed messages and additional challenges for the decoder
- Regulation
  - Non-verbal displays can regulate conversations
- Substitution
  - Non-verbal display can stand in for a verbal message in sole means of communication
    - Sometimes actions can speak louder than words
- Accenting and complementing
  - Non-verbal displays can underline, amplify, or tone down a verbal message
    - Pounding down on the table and saying, "We have to cut our budget now", is an example of accenting
  - Complementary non-verbal cues reinforce or affirm a message, making it easier to remember
- Can be easily misinterpreted and particularly misleading and therefore taken out of context
  - Non-verbal cues therefore fall into 3 domains
    - Encoding
      - The ability to send non-verbal messages accurately to others
    - Decoding
      - The ability to accurately read another person's non-verbal cues
    - Regulation
      - The ability to control one's non-verbal displays and expressive behaviour to suit social situations
- Non-verbal communication consists of a range of features that are frequently used together to aid expression
  - Use of space (Proxemics)
    - The study of the use and perception of space
      - Specifically the amount of space that individuals maintain between each during conversation or interaction according to their cultural backgrounds
        - How is space used and manipulated?
        - How the framework for defining and organizing it is internalized?
    - Explains why invading someone's personal space by standing too close or overstepping what is appropriate in a particular social context can lead to misunderstanding and negative interpersonal perceptions on that part of the people involved
    - Spatial requirements

TABLE 1.2 Hall's Spatial Zones

Intimate distance	46 centimetres	for interacting with family and close friends
Personal distance	46 centimetres–1.2 metres	for communicating among close business associates
Social distance	1.2 metres–3 metres	for business conversations
Public distance	beyond 3 metres	for formal business exchanges and public speeches

- Use of time (Chronemics)
  - The study of time in non-verbal communication
    - Timing and frequency of an action - how punctual a person is, how long someone is willing to listen or wait for a reply, the pace of speech or tempo of a conversation - are factors that influence the interpretation of that interaction
  - Paralanguage (vocalics) is non-verbal vocal qualities of communication
    - Three classes
      - Vocal qualities
        - Properties that make each voice unique
      - Vocal characteristics
        - Sounds that may be recognized as speech but that primarily express emotion
      - Vocal segregates
        - Pauses or filters that punctuate, but get in the way of fluent speech
    - They reveal underlying emotions
      - Therefore, used to infer personality traits
- Body language (kinesics)
  - Non-verbal communication conveyed by gestures, eye contact, posture, and facial expressions
  - Meaning can be either positive or negative
  - Gestures
    - Five types
      - Emblems
        - Gestures that can be easily translated into unequivocal verbal statements
      - Illustrators
        - Non-verbal behaviours that accompany speech and depict what is being said
      - Affect displays
        - Gestures that convey emotion
      - Regulators
        - Gestures that control interaction
      - Adaptors
        - Body movements that aide the release of bodily tension due to new or anxious situations
  - Posture
    - Open body positions suggest openness, ease, comfort, and agreement
    - Closed body positions may be signs of defensiveness, a lack of receptivity, or physical or psychological discomfort
  - Eye contact
    - Direct and purposeful eye contact is a sign of honesty, sincerity, respect, and recognition

- Prolonged eye contact in any situation can mean a sign of intimidation
    - Averting the eyes can communicate stress or dishonestly; deliberately averting the eyes can indicate anger or lack of interest, although in some cultures it could mean a sign of deference
  - Facial expressions
    - Most expressions are short-lived, but each is an indicator of personality traits, judgements, attitudes, and emotional states
      - There are, regardless of culture, six universally recognized facial expressions: happy, sad, afraid, surprised, angry, and disgusted
    - Provide a useful, if not always reliable, source of feedback
  - Image
    - Clothing, possessions, and grooming communicate specific messages about an individual's integrity, professionalism, status, trustworthiness, interests, education, and work habits
- To stay in business and be successful, today's companies must communicate with two main audiences
  - The organization's internal audience (employees and owners)
    - Internal communication is communication through the channels of the organization
      - Supported by pathways such as memos, department reports, in-house newsletters or magazines, face-to-face conversations, group meetings, opinion surveys, speeches, and telephone conversations
      - Provide means for organizations to detect and solve problems, coordinate activities, foster decision-making and policy-setting, introduce and explain procedures, and persuade employees and managers to accept change
  - The organization's external audience (customers, government officials, suppliers, and the general public)
    - External communication is communication with audiences who are part of an external environment
      - Some functions include influencing consumer decisions through advertising and promotion, process orders and collect payment, answer customer service inquiries and handle complaints, respond to government agencies, and carry out purchase transactions
      - Carries company's value and reputation along with it
- Essential skills for workplace communication
  - Reading
    - Well-developed reading and comprehension skills enable you to absorb and analyze masses of sometimes complex and technical written information quickly, even when faced with distractions
  - Active listening
    - The most important thing a listener can do is pay close attention to everything that is said, not just a portion of the message, and to synthesize that information in his or her own words so it is both memorable and manageable
      - Part of this involves cognitive dissonance
        - The tendency to reject messages based on personal value systems
    - Effective listening means knowing the difference between the types of listening
      - Polite passive listening is a kind of mechanical listening that doesn't involve real response, just a pattern of pre-formulated statement and counter-statement

- Active listening is listening that demands close attention to the message's literal and emotional meaning and a level of responsiveness that shows the speaker the message that was both heard and understood
- Formal communications network is a system of communication sanctioned by organizational management
- Informal oral network is an unofficial internal communication pathways that carry gossips and rumours - sometimes accurate, sometimes not
  - Known as grapevines
    - They develop when individuals socialize by talking about work
    - Passed from one person to the next according to a pattern of serial communication, a message that travels through a grapevine spreads quickly but may not be entirely accurate or reliable
      - Regardless, the grapevine is still a major source of information in most workplaces, helping to alert managers to problems with morale, allowing them to test opinion, etc.
- Formal communication channels are official internal communications pathways that facilitate the flow of information through an organization's hierarchy
  - Flows in three directions
    - Upward
      - The movement of information from subordinates to superiors
      - Can help insulated upper management to stay in touch with workplace realities and give subordinates a valuable opportunity to provide input
    - Downward
      - The movement of information from superiors to subordinates
      - Used to clarify corporate strategies, explain policies, outline job plans, and give performance feedback
      - It is serial, travelling from person to person through various levels of the organization
        - The longer the chain, the greater the chance the message will undergo distortion, develop flaws, or change meaning in transmission through a simplification, reordering, or rephrasing of its details
  - Horizontal
    - The movement of information that enables individuals at the same organizational level to share ideas and exchange information
- Business ethics are the socially acceptable moral principals and rules of business conduct
- Ethical lapses
  - The safety-in-numbers rationalization
    - Belief that wrongdoing is not wrong if others happen to commit the same acts
  - The head-in-the-sand rationalization
    - Belief that ignoring an ethical problem will somehow make it go away
  - The between-a-rock-and-a-hard-place rationalization
    - Infractions are justifiable when committed out of necessity or for the purpose of achieving important objectives
  - The "its-no-big-deal" rationalization
    - Dismissive attitude helps to minimalize or excuse wrongdoing because of its alleged unimportance
  - The entitlement rationalization

- Some people may deceive themselves into thinking that their unethical actions are excusable or that they are entitled to break the rules
  - The team-player rationalization
    - Fear that confronting superiors or colleagues about their transgressions will have repercussions on performance evaluation and career advancement
  - Tell the truth
- Tips on how to be a good and ethical corporate citizen
  - Tell the truth
  - Avoid language that attempts to evade responsibility
  - Don't suppress or de-emphasize important information, including information that the public rightfully deserves to know or that people need to do their jobs
  - Offer good value for money
  - Be timely in your communication
  - Consider your obligations
  - Show respect and consider ideals and impacts
  - Avoid libel
    - A false published statement that is damaging to a person's reputation
  - Distinguish between fact and opinion
  - Know what you can do and cannot disclose to certain parties according to corporate disclosure practices, privacy law, and confidentiality agreements
  - Be especially careful communicating in cyberspace
  - Don't claim authorship of documents you have not written
- Through the growth of economic globalization, market borders and boundaries are now less significant than they once were.
  - Canadian companies, in their quest for success, may become players in a global economy and expand through acquisitions, alliances, and mergers.
    - They may look beyond home to an international marketplace, relying on the import and export of goods and services and conducting business with suppliers, customers, and distributors around the world
  - Functioning in isolation is no longer an option.
    - Businesses must interact with the rest of the world for survival.
    - The need for interconnectivity demands that employees learn to communicate effectively, in spite of the obstacles presented by differences in culture and language
- The communications hurdles associated with the rise of a global economy are equally part of another significant trend - the internationalization of Canada's workforce.
  - It is common to work with people of many different ethnic, national, and religious backgrounds.
    - Besides being one of the most multicultural countries in the world, Canada recently ranked first among 17 industrialized nations in its acceptance of diversity in its many facets (race, religion, language, culture, and sexuality).
  - Canada's future workforce promises to be even more diverse.
    - Statistics Canada predicts that, by 2031, between 11.4 and 14.4 million people (approximately one-third of the country; population and twice the number reported in 2006) could belong to a visible minority group.
- Culture is the shared customs and patterns of behaviour of a particular group or society, including its language, rules, beliefs, and structures.
  - Although it provides us with our identity and sense of self, culture is not part of our genetic code.

- It is something dynamic, constantly changing, that is passed from one generation to the next.
  - What we value, how those values influence our behaviour, how we perceive the world, and even how we communicate, are all determined by the culture in which we grow up and by which we continue to live into adulthood.
  - How and what we learn can be, and frequently are, culturally determined.
- The rules that apply in one culture may be entirely inappropriate in another.
  - Context is therefore an important concept in intercultural interactions.
  - Because people from different cultures encode and decode messages differently, there is always the potential for misunderstanding and, consequently, antagonisms to occur across cultural boundaries.
    - Part of the challenge in communicating intercultural is to defy ethnocentrism (the belief that one's own culture is superior), which serves only to intensify cultural misunderstanding.
  - Cross-cultural competence - the ability to communicate effectively with people from different cultural groups based on cultural knowledge, understanding, skill, and attitudes - is a learned skill that is becoming increasingly important for harmony in today's workplaces.
- Intercultural communication, as a specific branch of communication, developed in the 1950s and 1960s as multinational businesses looked for ways to overcome miscommunication and resolve the difficulties that resulted from the ways different cultures perceived reality.
  - The distinction between high-context cultures, where most of the information of a message is inferred from the message's context, and low-context cultures, which depend on explicit verbal and written messages, sheds light on cultural differences according to the beliefs, practices, and communication styles of each particular group.
    - Developed by Edward T. Hall, this system, with its general categorizations of complex cultures, is not meant to nor should it ever be misapplied in order to create or reinforce stereotypes or to distort the truth about individuals, who may in fact act independently of their cultural group.
    - Instead, it simply serves as a useful analytical tool in preparing for cross-cultural interactions and as a means of making broad assessments of national styles of communication and negotiation
- Cultures tend to differ in several important respects:
  - Attitudes to individualism and collectivity
  - Reliance on logic and feeling
  - The relative directness of their communication styles
  - Attitudes to the relational role of communication in business transactions
  - Attitudes to the elderly, life partnerships, and gender roles
  - Time orientation
  - Propensity for risk and uncertainty
  - The degree of formality and protocol that governs social interactions
  - Interpretations of non-verbal communication and body language
- 5 key dimensions of culture
  - Power distance
    - The degree to which less powerful members of a group expect and accept that power is distributed unequally
  - Uncertainty avoidance

- A society's tolerance for ambiguity and comfort level with situations that are new, unstructured, or unknown
- Individualism vs. Collectivism
  - The degree to which people are integrated into groups.
- Masculinity vs. Femininity
  - Related to the distribution of emotional roles and values between genders
- Short-term vs. Long-term orientation
  - The degree to which societies are future focused (long-term orientation) or anchored in the past or present (short-term orientation).
- Low-context cultures
  - Communicators in low-context cultures (such as those in Germany, Scandinavia, and North America) convey their meaning exclusive of the context of a situation.
    - Meaning depends on what is said - the literal content of the message-rather than how it is said.
    - Information has to be explicit and detailed for the message to be conveyed without distortion.
    - Low-context communicators can say "no" directly.
      - They don't need to be provided with much background information, but they do expect messages to be professional, efficient, and linear in their logic.
    - Low-context cultures value individualism and the self-assertion that they regard as the means to achievement and success.
- High-context cultures
  - In high-context cultures (such as Japan, China, Korea, and Arab countries) communication relies heavily on non-verbal, contextual, and shared cultural meanings.
    - In other words, high-context communicators attach great importance to everything that surrounds the explicit message, including interpersonal relationships, non-verbal cues, and physical and social settings.
  - Information is transmitted not through words alone but also through non-verbal cues such as gestures, voice inflection, and facial expression, which can have different meanings in different cultures.
  - Meaning is determined not by what is said but by how it is said and by how social implications such as the communicators status and position come into play.
  - Because directness may be thought of as disrespectful, discussions in high-context cultures can be circuitous, circling key issues rather than addressing them head-on.
    - Communicating with high-context cultures can require you to focus on politeness strategies that demonstrate your respect for readers and listeners.
    - Doing business internationally can also involve a higher degree of formality and strict adherence to rules of social etiquette
- Communicating interculturally is something you may do in many settings:
  - In multicultural organizational work teams or in interactions with individuals on the job
  - In multinational teams when working globally and virtually with partnered organizations
  - In international audiences when working on assignment overseas, in global leadership, or in cross-cultural negotiations
- Oral messages
  - Speaking
    - Pay attention to non-verbal behaviours
    - Use simple English and slowly enough to enunciate clearly
    - Adjust the level of formality to what is considered culturally acceptable

- Excuse misunderstanding
  - Encourage feedback and test your audience's comprehension
  - Listening
    - Don't interrupt
    - Practice active listening
    - Be sensitive and patient
- Writing for culturally diverse audiences
  - Adapt formats that are used in the reader's country
  - Address readers for using their professional titles, not their first names
  - Use only those terms that can be found in English-language dictionaries
  - Keep sentences as direct and simple as possible
  - Use correct grammar
  - Include politeness strategies where they are required
  - Avoid humour, irony, and sarcasm
  - Use international measurement standards
- Privacy, according to legal scholar Alan Westin, is "the claim of individuals, groups, or institutions to determine for themselves when, how and to what extent information about them is communicated to others."
  - Doing business, in fact any commercial activity, involves the collection and retention of the personal information of customers, clients, patients, and employees.
    - In Canada, the Privacy Act explains how federally regulated public bodies can collect, use, and disclose your personal information.
    - The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) applies to commercial transactions in the private sector and organizations that are federally regulated.
    - According to PIPEDA, "personal information" includes information about an identifiable individual, such as these items:
      - Name, age, ID numbers such as a Social Insurance Number (SIN), income, ethnic origin
      - Bank account number, credit records, loan records, transaction histories, tax returns
      - Medical records, employee personnel files, and even voiceprints and fingerprints"
  - With technology now affecting almost all aspects of business activity and posing unwarranted intrusions and techno-threats, concerns about privacy - and the best way to protect personal or privileged information - have never been greater.
    - Despite the best efforts of most companies to safeguard the personal information of customers and employees, privacy breaches are becoming more common
  - To combat problems of this kind, PIPEDA and the Privacy Act set down rules for the management of personal information.
    - PIPEDA's privacy principles form the cornerstone of most corporate privacy agreements and state that organizations must meet ten criteria:
      - Provide accountability
      - Identify their reason for collecting personal information
      - Gain consent
      - Collect only necessary information
      - Use the information for the intended purpose only
      - Maintain accuracy of the information

- Provide safeguards
- Inform individuals of what the information will be used for
- Give individuals access to their own information
- Develop straightforward procedures for complaints
- Because governments and businesses collect such a wide array of information, compliance with PIPEDA has implications for communications practices at every level.
  - Adopting new protocols is a step in the right direction, and problems - such as the one CIBC experienced in 2004 - can be minimized or avoided altogether with a few simple safeguards:
    - Faxing personal information only when it must be transmitted immediately
    - Taking steps to prevent unauthorized individuals from seeing a document that contains personal information
    - Checking the recipient's fax number and verifying it in the machine's display window before you send the document
    - Identifying the sender and receiver on the fax cover sheet and including a warning or disclaimer that the document is intended for the recipient only
    - Calling the recipient to verify successful transmission of the document
- There are also several steps you can follow, as an employee, to help ensure your organization meets privacy standards:
  - Learn about the federal privacy laws and provincial privacy legislation that apply to you and your organization.
  - Identify what constitutes "personal information" in your workplace-what can be legitimately collected, used, and disclosed by fair and lawful means. Many organizations, such as TD Financial Group, have their own privacy agreements (see [www.td.com/privacy/agreement.jsp](http://www.td.com/privacy/agreement.jsp)).
  - Obtain written, verbal, electronic, or (in some circumstances) implied consent from customers for the collection, use, and disclosure of any of their personal information.
  - Be accountable for the personal information you collect, use, and disclose and be proactive in protecting it with security safeguards to prevent unwarranted intrusion, release, or misuse.

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## **Chapter 3: Business Style: Word Choice, Conciseness, and Tone**

- Word Choice
  - Plain Style
    - Plain style or plain language a style or writing that places value on simplicity, directness, and clarity.
    - Plain style makes it acceptable for you to write in the same everyday language that you use when you speak and helps you to reach your readers instead of putting your audience at a distance.
      - One of the aims of plain style is to banish dead and empty words in favour of lively, expressive ones that readers connect with immediately and remember easily.
      - Because it saves time, puts readers first, and makes ideas and information meaningful, plain language is good for business
    - Plain style, with its pared-down, keep it-simple approach, is characterized by a few common-sense principles:
      - Use common, everyday words, except for necessary technical terms.
        - Language should be familiar and accessible, not pretentious.
      - Use reasonable sentence lengths.
        - Aim for twenty words or fewer to avoid padding or needlessly overloading sentences.
      - Use active-voice verbs and phrasal verbs.
        - Active voice verbs show who or what performs an action.
        - Phrasal verbs are simple and informal, combining verbs and prepositions to deliver their meaning (for example work out instead of devise).
      - Use personal pronouns: I, you, and we.
        - Personal pronouns, used in moderation in all documents except formal reports, give you the fluency to say what you need to with as little awkwardness as possible.
      - Use unambiguous language.
        - Ambiguity refers to an inexact expression that has multiple meanings and is therefore open to interpretation
        - Good communicators do their best to prevent ambiguity from creeping into their writing.
      - Place the subject as close as possible to the verb.
        - The meaning of a sentence relies on the clear relationship of its subject and verb.
        - Tangled sentences result when long modifying phrases separate these all-important elements
  - Some writers have a hard time accepting plain style because they think it will make their writing dull or simplistic, but such fears are unfounded.
    - Communicating in a plain style won't require you to oversimplify or "dumb down" your content.
      - In fact, an effective plain style gives daily communication energy, impact, and precision that sustains readers' interest and enables them to grasp complicated ideas and activities easily.

- Step 1: Use Familiar Words
  - The following tips will help you avoid common word traps:
    - Curb your use of words ending in -ize and -ization.
      - Verbs ending in -ize and nouns ending in -ization may sound rich and sophisticated, but they can also lead to an inflated, heavy-handed style that grinds comprehension to a frustrating halt
    - Use words derived from French sparingly.
      - Words that the English language has borrowed from French can sound prestigious and distinctive when used sparingly, adding formality to your writing.
      - If overused, though, they can sound contrived and affected when compared with simpler English alternatives
    - Avoid foreign words and phrases.
      - Phrases such as ad hoc (for a particular purpose) and pro bono (for free) are used in legal documents and formal writing, where they are part of an established idiom.
      - Otherwise, use foreign expressions only when absolutely necessary.
    - Use only job-related jargon.
      - Jargon is the special vocabulary for a group, trade, profession, or sphere of activity.
      - Terminology of this kind is essential to conducting business and describing sophisticated concepts and activities accurately and concisely.
      - Certain types of jargon once thought of as specialized—such as computer jargon—are now the stuff of common knowledge
    - Bypass buzzwords.
      - Buzzwords are fashionable, often technical-sounding pieces of jargon.
      - Known as trendy attention-getters, buzzwords sound fresh, current, and suitably corporate.
      - Their trendiness is part of their appeal, but it is also a large part of their drawback because they tend to go out of style quite quickly, often through overuse
- Step 2: Use Fresh and Current Language
  - Replace clichés.
    - Clichés are descriptive expressions that have been drained of meaning through overuse.
    - Once vibrant and full of impact, they are now trite.
    - Unless a cliché adds uniqueness or, by way of analogy.
    - Sums up something that is otherwise impossible to describe, replace it with fresh and direct language
  - Retire outdated business expressions.
    - Many commonly used business expressions have outlasted their usefulness.
    - As holdovers from a centuries-old tradition of business protocol, stock phrases of business jargon have slowly lost their meaning for modern readers, who see them more as artifacts than as communicative tools.

- Unless your organization recommends a very formal or traditional style, substitute stiff, outmoded business expressions with modern phrases, especially if you want to project a modern, contemporary image for your organization and yourself
- Eliminate slang.
  - Slang is the term for colourful, highly informal words or figures of speech that have meaning specific to a particular era, locality, or occupation.
  - Words that fit this category may be new words or familiar words used in new and sometimes humorous ways
  - Because slang is extravagant and street-smart in its appeal, it has the power to shock readers who are unprepared for it, making it unsuitable for most professional communication.
  - An exception is slang that is specific to business and management, including widely accepted terms such as telephone tag, team player, walk
- Avoid instant messaging abbreviations and emoticons.
  - The popularity of e-mail, texting, and social media has brought about a new lexicon special to high-speed communicators.
  - At the same time, the popularity of instant messaging (IM) and its adoption by businesses as a productivity tool is having implications for business style.
  - Features of IM style-smiley-face icons, deliberately misspelled words, and e-friendly acronyms-make typing dialogue in real time quicker and easier; however, anyone unfamiliar with this cyber-shorthand may view it as an unwelcome secret language
  - Limit your use of Internet abbreviations and emoticons
- Step 3: Keep Language Specific, Precise, and Functional
  - Provide specific details that help readers act on information and requests.
    - Concrete nouns (things knowable by the senses-computer, annual report, resume) are easier to grasp than abstract nouns (intangible things knowable through only the intellect- integrity, loyalty, justice).
    - Use concrete language as much as possible to support and explain abstract words and show readers exactly what you mean.
      - Because the language of business is full of intangible abstracts - security, prestige, profitability, leadership - hard data can be used to make difficult concepts meaningful to readers.
  - Quantify facts and avoid vague qualitative statements.
    - Tell readers how much, how many, or what type you mean, specify when something happened or happens, and identify by title or name the agents and recipients of particular actions
  - Avoid ambiguous and non-idiomatic expressions.
    - Ambiguous statements-statements that are open to interpretation-can be confusing for readers.
      - For instance, a sentence such as She said on Thursday she would drop by the office can mean two things-either that the statement was made on Thursday or that the visit would occur that day
    - Using idiomatic expressions can also reduce confusion.
      - Idioms are word groupings that "sound right" to a typical reader and have special meaning distinct from their literal meaning: hand in

- (submit), look up (search for information), and find out (determine or discover information)
- Used correctly, these phrasal verbs add punch to your writing, but they can also be difficult for anyone new to English to remember or decipher.
    - Idiomatic usage also applies to the pairing of prepositions with adjectives (different from) and nouns (use for)
  - Use comparisons and analogies to clarify.
    - Likening an unfamiliar or complex concept to a familiar one is a common form of explanation.
    - In fact, the business world is full of descriptive analogies, such as brain drain (a general term used by management for the cross-border or overseas migration of specialists), which make fuzzy concepts clear and tangible.
    - When there is no other way to - explain a concept, a comparison can help to bring it into sharper focus
  - Step 4: Practise Factual and Ethical Communication
    - Be reasoned, factual, and moderate in your judgments.
      - Keep personal biases out of your workplace communication and use only inclusive, non-discriminatory language
    - Consider the impact your communication has on others as well as yourself.
      - Make sure the actions you endorse are legal and that your communication would reflect well on you if it were disclosed publicly.
      - Bending the rules, even on a trusted colleague, might compromise your integrity.
    - Consult qualified colleagues.
      - If you suspect that what you are writing is contentious or incriminating, seek out experienced co-workers to help you navigate ethical minefields and find feasible solutions to the wording of important messages and documents.
    - Avoid libellous language.
      - Common law protects every person against libel (printed character defamation).
      - Words that are harmful and potentially libellous include drunk, lazy, crazy, crooked, corrupt, incompetent, stupid, maniac, drug addict, junkie, thief, and crippled.
    - Be timely and accurate in your communication.
      - Avoid unjustified delays in replying or processing information.
      - Retain print or electronic copies of important documents.
    - Avoid untrue, deceptive, or misleading statements.
      - There are stiff penalties for all forms of misrepresentation, including false advertising
    - Know what you can and cannot disclose to certain parties.
      - Familiarize yourself with corporate disclosure practices and confidentiality agreements and handle your organization's intellectual property with care.

- Follow proper channels of communication, know what you can or must communicate, and carefully weigh both sides of an issue before you act or comment on it.
  - Distinguish between fact and opinion.
    - Let readers know the difference between unsubstantiated belief or conjecture and verifiable fact.
    - Passing off an opinion as a fact is misleading and unethical.
  - Don't claim authorship of documents you have not written.
    - The consequences of plagiarism - not giving credit where credit is due - are serious.
    - Always acknowledge your sources through notes or citations, and never take credit for ideas that aren't your own
- A modest amount of time spent in crafting a concise, easy-to-read, well-organized message is time saved for your readers
  - In turn, time saved translates not just into money earned or saved but into goodwill from the busy people you communicate with on a regular basis
  - While conciseness is a virtue in business communication, the same cannot be said for conciseness that is overdone, leading to messages that sound uneven, too blunt, or too rude
    - Readers may begin to have problems, though, when they encounter a writing style that is so telegraphic that there is not enough detail or development to make a message lucid, understandable, or complete
  - Conciseness means using the fewest words to say what you need to accurately and completely
  - Nine ways to make your messages concise
    - Eliminate long lead-ins
    - Revise noun conversions
      - Verbs are words that describe actions, occurrences, or states of being
      - Nouns are words that name people, places, things, and abstract concepts
      - Noun conversions or nominalizations are verbs that have been converted into nouns with the addition of -ment or -tion endings
    - Eliminate redundancies
      - Unplanned repetitions
    - Eliminate or revise empty words and phrases
    - Use strong, precise, accurate verbs
      - Active voice is a writing style in which the grammatical subject of a sentence performs the action
      - Passive voice is a writing style in which the grammatical subject of a sentence is acted upon
    - Revise prepositional Phrases
      - A phrase beginning with a preposition and functioning as a modifier
        - In, to, at, of, after, with, between, etc.
    - Eliminate fillers
      - Expletive constructions as they are called
        - A phrase such as there is/are or it is/was at the beginning of a clause, delaying the introduction of the subject
    - Shorten multiple that/which/who clauses
    - Combine shorter sentences, reduce clauses and phrases
- Tone is the implied attitude of the author to the reader, as reflected by word choice

- Tone in written communication creates an impression based purely on the words that are used and the length and structure of sentences the writer happens to choose
- Tone of a message should support its content and remain fairly consistent from beginning to end
  - Must of the tone depends on the writing situation, purpose, and channel of communication
- Denotation is a word's literal or dictionary definition
- Connotation is a word's implied or associative meaning, often coloured by emotion
  - Implied meaning has the power to shape perceptions
  - Helps you anticipate your reader's reaction to the words you choose
- Formality is the level of writing; whether the writer is using the appropriate register based on an observance of the rules and conventions of writing
  - Mostly depend on word choice, sentence length, and sentence structure
  - Most business writing, with the exception of formal reports, meets the needs of a wide audience with a mid-level style that is fairly conversational and moderately informal
  - A written style that is too informal or casual - with noticeable slang, colloquialisms, and grammar abuses - can give the impression of carelessness and even suggest poor work habits
- Personal style is a style of writing that seems warm and friendly based on its use of first - and second - person pronouns
  - The impression it gives is one of warmth, friendliness, and candour, helping to build rapport and engage readers
  - Characterized by the following elements
    - Short sentences
    - Personal pronouns
    - First names and personal references
    - Active voice used throughout
- Impersonal style is a style of writing that seems objective and detached based on its use of third-person pronouns
  - Commonly used for announcements and policy statements
  - Warmth gives way to efficiency, but the result is not necessarily stuffy or pretentious
  - Characterized by the following elements
    - A mix of sentence lengths, including long sentences
    - No personal pronouns
    - No first names or personal references
    - Legitimate use of the passive voice
- Positive wording makes messages reader-friendly and inviting
  - Unless you are issuing a warning meant to stop or deter certain actions, it is useful to emphasize what the reader can do instead of what the reader can't
- When readers feel that their opinions matter and have been taken into consideration, they are more likely to follow instructions and comply with requests
  - To write in a reader-focused style, edit your messages with the following suggestions in mind
    - Present meaningful content
    - Develop a positive you-attitude
      - A writing style that focuses on the reader rather than the writer

- A good way to involve readers is by using a compliance-boosting we-attitude
  - A writing style that focuses on the shared goals and values of the writer and reader(s)
    - Emphasize benefits to readers
      - Appeal to readers and their interests by indicating what they stand to gain
- Politeness creates a humane environment of mutual respect and consideration where work gets done more easily
  - Rudeness, pushiness, sarcasm, and abruptness - whether actual or perceived - can alienate readers
  - Being courteous involves more than just adding a simple please or thank you to brief or routine messages: courtesy is a mindset with zero tolerance for sarcasm, condescension, presumptuousness, or anger
  - Extreme politeness, on the other hand, can be mistaken for coldness or insincerity
    - It can undermine your assertiveness or authority, especially if you suppress or censor what you need to say for fear of sounding impolite
- Using inclusive, bias-free language that treats all groups equally and fairly shows sensitivity, consideration, and respect, all of which build goodwill and better business relations
  - Don't make discriminatory comments
  - Use only gender-neutral job titles and salutations
    - Salutations is a greeting at the beginning of a letter
  - Use masculine pronouns reasonably
- A confident tone encourages readers to accept your decisions and opinions rather than question them
  - Apply the following strategies
    - Use definite, forward-looking language
  - Don't make unnecessary apologies
  - Use strong, assertive phrasing rather than "weasel words"
  - Be knowledgeable and informative
  - Guard against overconfidence

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## CMN279 – Chapter 4: Business Style: Sentence and Paragraphs

### Textbook Notes

- A phrase is a group of words containing a subject (The word or group of words in a phrase, clause, or sentence that acts or is acted upon.) or a verb (The word or group of words in a phrase, clause, or sentence that describes an action, occurrence, or state of being.) but not both
  - Phrases function as parts of speech - as nouns, verbs, and modifiers - but they do not express complete thoughts, so pay attention to how they're used.
  - A phrase punctuated like a complete sentence is a sentence fragment, a potential source of confusion
- A clause is a group of words containing a subject and a verb.
  - There are two types:
    - Independent clauses are grammatically complete and can stand on their own as sentences:
    - Dependent clauses are grammatically incomplete and reliant on independent clauses for their meaning.
      - Dependent clauses begin in one of two ways:
        - With a dependent marker (a word such as if, as, because, since, or although) or with a relative pronoun (that, which, or who)
- Simple sentences are straightforward and emphatic.
  - The shorter they are, the more emphasis they have, although simple sentences may have up to twenty words.
  - There are two potential drawbacks.
    - Without the connecting words typical of other sentence types, a simple sentence may not fully show relationships among ideas.
    - A string of simple sentences can be flat and monotonous
- Compound sentences join related sentences with coordinate conjunctions such as for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so.
  - Compound sentences stress the equivalence or equal value of the ideas they express.
  - It is important to use this connecting technique-known as coordination- only for related sentences. Over-coordinated sentences skew logic and lack unity
- Complex and compound-complex sentences are best at showing the relative importance of ideas and encompassing details

Sentence Type	Consisting of	Example
1. Simple sentence	one independent clause	We will vote on the issue.
2. Compound sentence	two or more independent clauses	John will present his report, and we will vote on the issue.
3. Complex sentence	one dependent clause and one independent clause	When we meet Thursday, we will vote on the issue.
4. Compound-complex sentence	one dependent clause and two or more independent clauses	When we meet Thursday, John will present his report, and we will vote on the issue.

- Good writing relies on a natural mix of sentence styles and lengths; however, you do not need to be a "sentence contortionist," constantly shaping and reshaping sentences just for the sake of variety.

- Let the patterns of normal, everyday speech be your guide to fresh and energetic writing.
- The following tips will help you break sentence monotony and create useful distinctions among ideas
  - Vary the rhythm by alternating short and long sentences.
    - Sentences of ten or fewer words have the greatest impact and readability; however, sentences of up to twenty words also have a high rate of reader comprehension.
  - Turn a clause into a prepositional phrase.
    - A prepositional phrase is a group of words beginning with a preposition (a word such as with, at, to, of, by, against, toward, from, above, on, or in that relates a noun or pronoun to another word in the sentence).
  - Convert a sentence defining or describing something into a phrase or clause.
    - Use commas to set off the descriptive phrase or clause - called an appositive - from whatever it follows and renames
- Declarative sentences - sentences that make statements - are useful for relaying facts and decisions, but what if your goal is to get information?
  - Asking questions is an important part of doing business, but there is, of course, more than one way to go about it.
    - The type of question you ask depends on the type of response you seek-a quick confirmation, a probing analysis, or a creative breakthrough.
    - Asking the right type of question is the first step in getting the information you need.
    - Here are three types of questions you can ask
      - Closed questions can be answered with a simple yes or no or, when you are fact checking or seeking verification, one or two words.
        - Closed questions follow inverted word order and do not feature question-forming words such as why, what, and how
      - Open questions call for a fuller, more thoughtful response than is possible with just a single word
      - Hypothetical questions ask readers to suppose that circumstances are different from what they actually are.
        - These "what is" scenarios are useful for brainstorming and contingency planning.
- Occasionally, sentences may need a sharper focus for their exact meaning to be clear to readers.
  - Here are a few tips for revising fuzzy, ambiguous sentences
    - Avoid broad references using this, that, and it.
      - When you use this, that, and it by themselves, make sure the reader fully understands what the pronoun renames and replaces.
      - Check that the pronoun reference (the relationship between a pronoun and the antecedent to which it refers.) isn't ambiguous (i.e., that the pronoun doesn't refer to more than one thing).
      - If necessary, repeat the noun after the pronoun that renames it.
    - Avoid embedding dependent clauses.
      - Put dependent clauses at the beginning or end of a sentence, not in the middle where they can come between the all-important subject and verb.
    - Limit multiple negatives.
      - Multiple negatives are sometimes used for rhetorical effect or as euphemisms (bland terms substituted for blunt ones), but the range of meaning a multiple negative may have sometimes results in confusion.

- Observing the rules of consistency - by sticking to certain grammatical principles and patterns that shape your writing - is another good way to banish awkward, unreadable sentences.
  - Readers like the predictability of sentences that follow through with their initial promises by staying consistent in the following ways:
    - Number.
      - Don't switch from singular to plural when referring to a particular thing.
    - Person.
      - Don't shift the frame of reference from first person I to second person you or third person he/she/one.
    - Verb tense.
      - Show time changes only when logic requires them.
    - Voice.
      - Don't shift unnecessarily from active to passive voice.
- Parallelism involves delivering similar content in a similar way.
  - The consistency of a repeated pattern helps readers absorb and remember information more easily.
  - Balanced constructions - matching nouns with nouns, verbs with verbs, and phrases with phrases - have a rhythmic appeal that makes sentences more forceful and compelling
    - Unbalanced:** Britannia Capital's chief analyst proposes three strategies for debt servicing: **slowing** spending, **issuing** equity to pay down debt, and **to sell** assets.
    - Parallel:** Britannia Capital's chief analyst proposes three strategies for debt servicing: **slowing** capital spending, **issuing** equity to pay down debt, and **selling** assets. [parallel construction matches -ing nouns]
    - Unbalanced:** We anticipate expansion into **underserviced regions, border areas, and markets that are located overseas.**
    - **Parallel:** We anticipate expansion into **underserviced regions, border areas, and overseas markets.** [parallel construction matches nouns]
    - Unbalanced:** Our priorities are to **improve** employee morale, **reduce** absenteeism, and **encouraging** professional development.
    - Parallel:** Our priorities are to **improve** employee morale, **reduce** absenteeism, and **encourage** professional development. [parallel construction matches verb infinitives]
- Emphasis - the act of making facts stand out - is a matter of mechanics and style.
  - These approaches can be used on their own or in combination.
  - Use Eye-Catching Mechanical Devices, Punctuation, and Formatting
    - These strategies can enhance the visual appeal of the written word.
    - The most common of these simple strategies include

underlining**boldface***italics*

- modified font sizes

ALL CAPS

text boxes

colour

- Add Emphasis through Style
    - Style adaptations for emphasis require more planning but are generally worth the extra effort in terms of their impact on readers.
    - Techniques for creating emphasis through style involve three basic principles:
      - Placement
      - Sentence length and structure
      - Word choice
    - Here is a closer look at techniques that give power to your writing through emphasis:
      - For maximum impact, put important facts first or last.
        - The most emphatic, "high wattage" placements are first and last in a sentence.
        - Avoid creating an "information sandwich" that embeds crucial facts and details in the middle of a sentence: or paragraph where surrounding words may cloud or lessen their impact.
- Unemphatic:** A new deadline of **March 18** has been set for all funding applications.
- Emphatic:** **March 18** is the new deadline for all funding applications.
- Unemphatic:** **No one can deny** that the bear market has had a substantial impact on pension funds. [*No one can deny* is an empty phrase given emphatic initial placement. The most important idea, *the bear market has had a substantial impact*, is slotted in the middle where it is less noticeable.]
- Emphatic:** Undeniably, the bear market's impact on pension funds has been substantial.
- Use short, simple sentences to spotlight key ideas.
    - The fewer words there are in a sentence, the more impact each or its words has.
    - A short, uncluttered sentence, consisting of a single independent clause, rewards readers instantly with information

**Short and emphatic:** The on-site fitness centre opens next Wednesday.

- **Long and unemphatic:** The on-site fitness centre opens next Wednesday, at which time all employees will be invited to try out top quality equipment that includes exercise bikes and rowing machines.

- Use tags and labels to flag important ideas.
  - Simple word-markers such as most importantly), most of all, above all, particularly, or crucially alert readers to an idea's significance.
- Present important ideas in list form.
  - As previously mentioned, horizontal and vertical lists give extra emphasis through their distinct formatting.
  - Horizontal lists that number items within a sentence are less emphatic than vertical lists that tabulate items

The newly created Employee Integrity Website has links to several vital resources:

- - Haskell Networks Employee Code of Conduct
  - professional development seminar information
  - citation guides

- Use precise and specific words to identify the main point.
  - Avoid generalization and obfuscation.
  - If something is good, describe the way in which it is good.
  - Specifics are more involving because they show rather than tell.
- Repeat key words in a series for rhetorical effect.
  - Advertisers and marketing specialists sometimes rely on repetition to persuade customers of the value of a product, concept, or service.
  - Because this technique can easily induce boredom instead of acceptance, it does not necessarily work well in other, more subtle forms of writing:

Look how far **we've** come. **We were the first** Canadian company to receive the Gold Award from the International Customer Service Association. **We were among the first** in the world to introduce service breakthroughs like voice dialling, Internet access from your cellphone, and 1X technology. **We simplified** the prepaid world by making cellphone minutes available at bank machines, and **we simplified** the banking world by facilitating cellphone transactions. **We're working hard** to continue to earn your business.

- Apply Opposite Rules for De-emphasis
  - News that is unfavourable to your readers or merely less significant can be de-emphasized by applying principles opposite to those used for emphasis.
  - Here are a few simple tips to follow:
    - Use complex sentences to de-emphasize bad news.
      - Complex sentences have a dual advantage: their independent clauses emphasize while their subordinate clauses de-emphasize.
      - Capitalize on these strengths by putting the bad news in the opening subordinate clause and using the independent clause that follows for better news

- **Bad news emphasized:** Although the quality of the applications has never been higher, the number of applications is down.
- **Good news emphasized:** Although the number of applications is down, the quality of the applications has never been higher.
  - De-emphasize unpleasant facts by embedding them.
    - Unfavourable information seems less harsh and less noticeable when buried mid-sentence or mid-paragraph.
  - **Mid-sentence de-emphasis:** Our best-selling global positioning device, **though currently out of stock**, will be reissued in a new deluxe model next month.
- The active voice, a staple of good writing, is energetic, forceful, and direct.
  - In the active voice, the question of "whodunit" is always clear because the grammatical subject "acts" by performing the action of the sentence: The supervisor [ACTOR] approved [ACTION] the changes [RECEIVER].
  - Use the active voice in the following situations:
    - To state good and neutral news clearly and directly
    - To emphasize the doer of an action.
- The passive voice is less vigorous and forthright.
  - To some readers, it sounds flat, weak, and evasive because it is not always clear who or what performs the action of the sentence, only that the action is done to the subject.
  - Passive constructions invert the order of the active voice: The changes [RECEIVER] were approved [ACTION] by the supervisor [ACTOR].
  - Emphasis falls on the action itself, not on who or what performs it. Look for three common elements to check for passive constructions:
    - **the verb TO BE (am, is, are, was, were, be, been) + past participle + by ...**
    - The term institutional passive refers to the practice of concealing the performer of an action (by omitting the word or words after by).
    - Use the passive voice in the following situations:
      - To conceal the doer of an action when that information is unimportant, unknown, or harmful.
      - To de-emphasize negative news
      - To show tact and sensitivity.
      - To reduce intrusive first-person pronouns
      - To maintain consistency or avoid awkward shifts in focus
- Sentence errors detract from the professionalism of your messages and reduce readers' confidence in what you have to say.
  - Writing under pressure can increase the likelihood that errors will occur, but recognizing the types or errors you tend to make is the first line of defence against a finished product that fails to communicate thoughts and ideas in the way you intended.
  - Here is a guide to some of the most common grammatical errors:
    - Sentence fragments.
      - Phrases or dependent clauses punctuated like complete sentences--called sentence fragments--create ambiguity and distortion.
      - To detect them easily, work backward, proofreading from last sentence to first in order to separate the fragment from the grammatical unit that completes it.

**Fragment:** We will discuss the Orkin account. **Which has been experiencing problems lately.** [relative clause punctuated as a complete sentence]

**Revision:** We will discuss the Orkin account, which has been experiencing problems lately.

**Fragment:** Sales figures for the year were strong. **Even though there was weakness in the third quarter.** [subordinate clause punctuated as a complete sentence]

**Revision:** Sales figures for the year were strong even though there was weakness in the third quarter.

**Fragment:** The company has experienced numerous setbacks. **For example, the failure of its light industrial division.** [The example cannot stand on its own as a sentence.]

**Revision:** The company has experienced numerous setbacks—for example, the failure of its light industrial division.

- Run-on (fused) sentences.
  - Run-ons, or fused sentences, are marathon sentences that combine two or more independent clauses without an adequate full stop (semicolon or period) or connecting element (comma and conjunction).
  - To put a stop to the run-on, opt for one of these forms of correction

**Run-on:** Most companies reported moderate growth this year some anticipate similar growth next year.

**Revision:** Most companies reported moderate growth this year, and some anticipate similar growth next year.

**Revision:** Most companies reported moderate growth this year. Some anticipate similar growth next year.

- Comma splices.
  - In a comma splice, independent clauses are strung together with nothing more than a comma to separate them.
  - To eliminate the splice, add a conjunction or change the comma to a period or semicolon

**Comma splice:** I decided against purchasing an extended warranty, however when my credit card statement arrived this month I noticed an extra \$149 charge from Info Service, Inc.

**Revision:** I decided against purchasing an extended warranty; however, when my credit card statement arrived this month, I noticed an extra \$149 charge from Info Service, Inc.

- Misplaced modifiers.
  - A modifier is a word or word group that describes another word or words.
    - Modifiers that end up where they do not belong can be unintentionally funny and make your meaning ambiguous.



- To fix a sentence featuring an is when or is where construction, drop when or where, add a classifying word, or substitute another verb for the verb to be
    - **Faulty predication:** *Direct channel is when you sell and distribute products directly to customers.*
      - **Revision:** *Direct channel is a marketing term for selling and distributing products directly to customers.*
  - The expression the reason ... is because is redundant (akin to saying because ... because); replace it with the reason is that:
    - **Faulty predication:** *The reason he can't travel overseas is because he has family obligations.*
      - **Revision:** *The reason he can't travel overseas is that he has family obligations.*
      - **Revision:** *He can't travel overseas because he has family obligations.*
  - In a sentence of mixed construction, the sentence starts in one grammatical form, then shifts to another.
    - Common culprits in mixed construction sentences are introductory phrases such as the following:
      - **Mixed construction:** *The fact that more job seekers submit their resumés electronically than they do by more traditional methods.*
      - **Revision:** *The fact is that more job seekers submit their resumés electronically than they do by more traditional methods.*
      - **Revision:** *More job seekers submit their resumés electronically than they do by more traditional methods. [drops troublesome opening phrase]*
  - Sentences sometimes feature an illogical sentence subject:
    - **Mixed construction:** *By reviewing job performance on a semi-annual basis was how we aimed to increase productivity. [By reviewing cannot be the subject of a sentence. The same applies to any phrase made up of a preposition and an -ing verbal.]*
    - **Revision:** *By reviewing job performance on a semi-annual basis, we aimed to increase productivity.*
    - **Revision:** *Reviewing job performance on a semi-annual basis was aimed at increasing productivity.*
- A paragraph is a unit of meaningful thought, a group of sentences that introduces a subject and makes one or more points about it.
  - Paragraphs are the building blocks of effective writing-tidy information packages held together by a controlling idea and a clear sense or development.
    - The white space that separates paragraphs alerts the reader to a change in subject, paving the way for new ideas and mapping out information so it is easier to understand and remember

- A well - constructed message usually relies on a natural mix of paragraph lengths. Therefore, choose from a range of short, moderate, and long paragraphs to match your purpose and support your content:
  - Single-sentence paragraphs (or paragraphs of up to two sentences) are common message openers and closers.
    - Brief and serviceable, they are also useful for lending emphasis to especially important facts or ideas and have a special place in e-mail.
    - A series of single-sentence paragraphs, however, can be mistaken for point form, robbing your message of coherence and development.
  - Short paragraphs of up to five or six sentences (or eight lines of text) are standard in most types of business messages.
  - Long paragraphs of up to eight sentences belong in reports, where the complexity of the material merits full and thorough development.
    - Beyond the eight-sentence limit, consider regrouping sentences into smaller, more manageable units.
- Most paragraphs-not just ones with complicated information to pass on - benefit from having a topic sentence.
  - A topic sentence, usually the first sentence, announces the paragraph's purpose.
    - It previews the paragraph so readers can decide on the relevance and usefulness of what follows.
    - Documents that feature topic sentences are easy to scan because the most important information is front-loaded into each block of text.
      - Placed at the beginning, the controlling idea also prevents paragraph sprawl and helps maintain focus.
        - Once it is clear that a sentence in the grouping is no longer related to the first one, it is time to start a new paragraph
- A paragraph's form depends on how you develop the main idea introduced at the beginning.
  - Typically, your purpose may be to do one of the following:
    - describe a chronological sequence of events
    - compare or contrast one idea with another
    - evaluate causes or relate them to effects
    - analyze a topic or offer a solution to a problem
    - classify the parts of a whole
    - illustrate an idea or support a claim with examples/data
    - define terms
  - Identifying your subject and purpose are the first steps in writing a clear, effective paragraph.
    - While it may not be possible to get your whole message across in a single paragraph, these methods of development can be sustained over as many paragraphs as it takes to accomplish your purpose thoroughly.
  - All except the shortest paragraphs of one or two sentences require supporting sentences that explain and amplify.
    - A typical paragraph should follow a logical pattern that builds and expands on the topic sentence in a relevant and meaningful way.
- Good "flow"- the free and continuous movement of sentences from one to the next - is a quality many writers strive for.
  - Flow is really a matter of coherence, the logical and semantic links between sentences.

- In other words, the sentences in a group have to make sense in sequence and sound as though they belong together.
- Coherence is lost when logical gaps and unrelated sentences appear within a paragraph.
  - Lack of flow is tolerated only in very short e-mail messages.
  - To make your sentences fit together seamlessly, focus on linking and bridging techniques that enable you to guide your readers through a paragraph from beginning to end.
- Creating Logical Coherence
  - Develop a paragraph game plan: know your line of reasoning and order your ideas accordingly.
  - Anticipate where your sentences will lead and what readers will expect next.
  - Consider if a sentence is meant to show a cause-and-effect relationship or consequence.
    - **Despite an increase in revenue, the company showed a decline in profit.**
- Creating Coherence through Word Choice
  - Fluid, unified writing is easily achieved through a few simple techniques.
    - Carry over a topic from sentence to sentence
    - Use pronouns to carry over a thought from a previous sentence.
    - Use transitional words and phrases to segue from sentence to sentence.
      - Because transitional expressions show logical, temporal, and spatial relationships, they act as helpful signposts, preparing readers for what comes next and building them with precision through the twists and turns of your train of thought.
      - For every relationship - contrast, contradiction, consequence, development, illustration, concession, conclusion - there are expressions that reinforce that particular meaning
      - Transitional expressions can play a number of roles:

- **To add a point**  
also, and, as well, besides, for the same reason, furthermore, in addition, likewise, moreover, similarly
- **To illustrate**  
for example, for instance, in fact, in particular, namely, to be specific
- **To show cause and effect (or explain a previous point)**  
as a result, because, in this way, in view of, since
- **To show contrast or reversal**  
although, at the same time, but, by contrast, conversely, despite, however, in contrast, in spite of, instead, nonetheless, on the contrary, on the other hand, still, whereas, while
- **To show similarity**  
in the same way, likewise, similarly
- **To summarize or conclude**  
accordingly, consequently, for this reason, hence, in short, so, therefore, thus
- **To concede a point**  
certainly, granted, naturally, of course
- **To show time sequence**  
at this point, concurrently, currently, during, finally, first, last, meanwhile, now, second, then, third, to begin

The following paragraph highlights some of these transitional expressions:

**Once** a drug patent expires, generic competitors usually introduce copies that retail at a fraction of the price, **meaning that** brand-name manufacturers' share prices can be hit hard. **For example**, Biotex Corp. has declined from over US\$55 a share in early 2001 to less than US\$20 recently **because** its patent on the blood pressure drug Ambutroxin expired last May. **Altogether**, patents on brand-name drugs with about US\$40 billion a year in sales will expire over the next three years. **As a result**, even fund managers have trouble picking pharmaceutical stock.

- Accurate documents are ones that writers have taken the trouble to read and review.
  - It is important to get in the habit of proofreading messages before sending them, even if it means just casting your eye over a quick e-mail on-screen or a printout of a routine message.
  - Effective proofreading is reading with a difference.
    - It involves reducing your reading speed, reading word for word, and gaining the objectivity you need to spot errors before they cause you embarrassment.
    - The point is to read what is actually written on the page or screen, not what you think you have written.
    - To give you the objectivity you need to read impartially and analytically, it always helps to have a "cooling period" between the composing and proofreading steps - as little as a few seconds for a brief e-mail or considerably longer for a formal report
  - It may be necessary to make several passes over an especially significant document or message, each time reading for two or three potential problems:
    - Accuracy of names, facts, and figures:
      - Double-check important facts for accuracy; compare figures with source material to eliminate typographical errors; transcribe names
    - Appropriateness of format:

- View page-layout options or print a document to see if it appear balanced and uncluttered and con forms to
- Correctness of grammar:
  - Remember that diagnostic software often nags passive-voice constructions, sometimes unnecessarily.
  - It may also underscore clauses beginning with that or which.
  - Try substituting one for the other until the problem corrects itself.
- Spelling:
  - Spell-checking software is good hut nowhere near perfect.
  - It may not always detect errors in usage, such as the transposition of commonly confused words (accepted/excepted).
  - It may also flag proper (i.e., Canadian, British, or American) nouns that are spelled correctly.
  - Choose the proper spelling setting so words spelled correctly (cheque/check) won't he nagged unnecessarily.
- Punctuation:
  - Follow the basic rules of comma usage and watch for misplaced terminal punctuation responsible for sentence fragments.

## **CMN279 – Chapter 5: Memorandums, E-mail, and Routine Messages Textbook Notes**

- Memorandums, more commonly known as memos, can be many things - reminders, instructions, records of actions and decisions, data-gathering tools, and aids to problem-solving
  - They are a fast, efficient way of putting information in the hands of people who need it and getting answers from the people who can provide them
  - The paper memo, with its distinctive style and structure, was once the primary means of inter-office communication
    - It has left its mark on e-mail, the channel for both internal and external messaging that has essentially replaced it, thanks in large part to organizations' need to conduct their business more sustainably
      - E-mail brings the best of memo style to internal and external communication, adhering to the time-saving format and straightforward approach of a hard-copy memo but eliminating its wasteful paper trail
- Memos and e-mail are the workhorses of business communication, indispensable aids to the tasks of gathering, sharing, and analyzing information about products, day-to-day operations, services, stakeholders, and personnel
  - Bringing corporate levels together, the paper memo and its electronic counterpart are the most common ways for managers to inform employees of policies and decisions and for employees to stay informed and offer their input
  - Everyone from upper management down uses memos and e-mail
- The advantage of a typical memo is its simplicity
  - It is designed to be read quickly, even when it is organized like a report or conveys vital information
  - Usually less formal than a standard letter, a well-written memo with its purpose - the main idea or primary action - and is presented so that it makes sense even to secondary readers
  - Common traits
    - Single-topic focus
    - Brevity
    - Two-part structure, consisting of a header (Date, To, From, Subject guide words) and message (divided into an opening, body, and closing)
  - The longer or more complicated a message happens to be, the more it requires additional formatting techniques such as headers (a block of text appearing at the top of a document), subreadings, boldfaced elements (a thick, black typeface used for emphasis), bulleted items (visual cues, usually large dots or squares, that set off items in a vertical list of emphasis lines), and lists
- Memo format
  - The Date, To, From, and Subject headings or fields tell readers exactly what they need to know about a message's content and distribution
    - They appear in horizontal or vertical format
  - It is common practice to type guide words in capitals, leaving a double space between headings and three lines before the body of the memo
    - The fill-in information following each guide word should be aligned, usually two or three spaces following the longest guide word (SUBJECT)

Each heading in a memo serves a particular purpose:

- DATE:** Provides the complete and current date. To reduce confusion, follow company practice in choosing between North American (May 1, 2014) and European (1 May 2014) styles.
- TO:** Identifies the destination or the person(s) to whom the message is addressed. The job title of the addressee is optional, except when the name alone isn't enough to ensure that the message reaches its destination. Courtesy titles (Ms., Mr.) and professional titles (Rev., Dr.) may also be omitted unless you are addressing a superior. Dispense with surnames only if you are on a first-name basis with the addressee. If your memo is directed to several people, list their names alphabetically or in descending order of importance in the company hierarchy. Crowded address lines can be avoided by simply using a group designation ("Claims Processors," "Marketing Group," etc.).
- FROM:** Identifies the author or origin of the message. Job titles and the department name can be used if your name alone is not sufficient to identify you as the writer. Courtesy titles generally aren't used because they're too formal to suit this relatively informal mode of communication. The practice of initialling the end of the line applies to hard-copy memos only.
- SUBJECT:** Identifies the topic and/or purpose of the message for reading and filing. The more old-fashioned "RE" (from the Latin for "about" or "concerning") is sometimes also used to designate the content of the message. Ideally, the subject description should not exceed one line. It does not have to be a complete sentence and can be abbreviated (leaving out articles—the, a, and an). Nevertheless, it must be specific enough to give readers a full and accurate idea of what follows (i.e., instead of "Estimate" write "Cost Reduction Estimate") or how they are to act on your information ("Cost Reduction Estimate for Review").
- CC:** This abbreviation stands for "carbon copy," an obsolete term for the generic "copy." Insert the name(s) of anyone who will receive a copy of the message but is not an addressee. In the case of e-mail, avoid unnecessary copying that will clog receivers' inboxes and e-mail systems. Learn what others want and need to be copied on!

- Memo Organization

- Most positive and neutral messages conveying routine or non-sensitive information can be organized in the following way

- To write an effective memo, use the **opening** for your most important information, purpose for writing, or required action. Don't waste time mechanically restating the **subject line**. Instead amplify it by filling in the *who, what, where, when, why, and how* that can't be

supplied by the subject line alone. Get to the point as quickly as possible. As an option, include a few words of context, giving a reason for your request or telling readers why they need to know the information you're sharing: "To maintain productivity levels during power outages, our company has leased an on-site power system from Energy Now." One to three sentences are usually sufficient to summarize your central idea.

In the **body** of the memo, move on to particulars and more detailed information. Expand on, discuss, or explain the problem, assignment, request, or action you wish the reader to take. Pare down details to include only the ones your readers must know to act on your information. If you are relaying a sequence of actions or several requests, put them in a grammatically parallel list prefaced by a summary statement that gives readers an overview or glimpse of the "big picture." Points may be presented in the following ways:

- 1. chronologically, sequenced from beginning to end or start to finish
  2. in order of specificity, from most to least specific or vice versa
  3. in order of importance, from most to least important or vice versa

Make sure the middle paragraph(s) provide sufficient background, bringing readers up to speed on preliminaries and clearly identifying deadlines and people involved.

In **closing**, summarize your request or call for action, clearly indicating who should do what, by when, and for how long. If compliance isn't assured, point out alternatives or benefits to readers. It may be appropriate to end-date requests, cite reasons for them, invite feedback, provide contact information, tell readers where they can get more information, or state what happens next. Avoid canned or mechanical phrases that do not suit the situation. Show courtesy and appreciation as the situation merits.

- Double-spacing between paragraphs marks off one topic from another and reinforces good organization
  - Graphing highlighting techniques can help emphasize key information, but be aware that some e-mail systems may not allow you to use boldface, italics (sloping letters used for emphasis or to distinguish foreign words), or other more sophisticated typographical features, only plain text
  - For memos longer than a page, open with a summary statement (a condensed version of the memo highlighting purpose and action sought)
  - Organize the rest of your information under headings - even ones as basic as "problem," "situation," and "solution" - so ideas and initiatives can be understood and easily acted on
- When you must deliver bad news or write persuasively, use an indirect start-with-the-evidence strategy
  - Readers are more likely to accept a decision, even a negative one, when they are prepared for it and know it is logical and well justified
- A list is a group of at least three logically related items
  - Its purpose is to give order and emphasis to important information - breaking up solid blocks of text, sequencing events and actions, and making concepts easier to understand, remember, and reference
  - It puts into practice the principles of balanced, parallel construction and thus helps improve readability
  - To be effective, any list must have these features

- A lead-in introducing, explaining, and putting in context the items that follow
- At least three and, ideally, not more than eight items
- Parallel phrasing for every item
- Semantic and grammatical continuity between the lead-in and items (in other words, every item must read grammatically with the lead-in)
- Adequate transition to the sentences that follow after the list
- Formatted in two ways
  - Horizontally (give minimal emphasis but are also less intrusive)
    - We will discuss the following items at next Monday's meeting: the need for new quality control measures, the performance of our customer service hotline, and the proposed switch to voice-recognition phone technology.
    - As director of commercial real estate finance, you will monitor market trends, provide information and support on our lending programs, and recommend refinements to existing programs.
  - Vertically
    - Best-known and most frequently used design elements
    - Higher visual impact
      - ☒ Our company
        - has one segment that deals with investing
        - has another segment that takes care of mortgages
        - also has leasing operations
      - - ☒ Our company has three key business segments:
          - investing
          - mortgage operations
          - leasing operations
- Apply the principles of chunking - a yardstick for list design - to determine the number of items that a vertical list can accommodate
  - The average person's short-term memory can store seven pieces of data, plus or minus two, depending on the complexity of the information
  - The more complex each item, the fewer items a reader can reasonably be expected to remember
  - List should be brief and kept to a maximum of seven or eight items
- There are instances where a hard-copy memo is preferable, when legality, confidentiality, or document integrity are primary concerns
  - Traditional paper memos do without the informal salutations and complimentary closes sometimes used in e-mails

FIGURE 5.1

## Sample Paper-Based Memo

Opens directly with a polite command and uses active-voice sentence

Explains the opening request, offers details, and supplies end date for action

Explains enclosed material, cites reader benefits, and offers additional information

Expresses appreciation for action.

TO: Tomas Simic, Campus Planning

FROM: Arley Simpson, Registrar

RE: Fall Registration for Continuing Education Courses

DATE: July 23, 2013

Please distribute the enclosed calendars and remind your staff that the Department of Continuing Education is now accepting registration for its fall courses, beginning September 9.

College staff members are eligible to enrol tuition-free in up to five full courses per year. A \$25 processing fee is applicable to each course registration. Please note that the registration closes September 5.

Enclosed are five copies of the fall 2013–summer 2014 calendar listing over 200 personal enrichment and professional development courses. Courses in areas such as IT management and computer applications offer staff the opportunity to upgrade work-related skills for professional success. For detailed course descriptions and easy online registration, visit our new website at <http://omnistudies.manitou.ca>. Please call me if you have questions about our range of programs or require additional calendars.

Thank you for your help in distributing the calendars.

AS: ml

Enc. 5

- E-mail is now an unavoidable fact of business life; it is an indispensable, multi-use tool of management work and the most common means of transmitting workplace documents and files
  - Its advantage - and ironically its disadvantage - is that messages can be produced easily and quickly and transmitted instantaneously
  - E-mail's versatile capabilities and wide availability make it an ideal productivity tool - a cheap and convenient way to access, exchange, and process information
  - Collaborative work can be carried out more easily than before, due in no small part to the interaction and more equal participation that e-mail fosters
- While e-mail has certainly changed the way companies do business, many of the e-mail practices that are meant to boost efficiency can result in poor, lazy behaviours that waste time and energy and leave recipients frustrated and vexed by unwanted messages
  - Set of problems
    - Clogged inboxes
    - Indiscriminate distribution lists
    - Serious privacy violations
    - Uncooperative servers
    - Unsolicited, sloppy, inflammatory, or undeliverable messages
    - Difficult-to-follow "thread" e-mails
- Netiquette is the informal code of conduct governing polite, efficient, and effective use of the internet
- General considerations for successful electronic communication
  - Keep it brief
  - Remember that e-mail is not your only option
  - Compose crucial messages offline
  - Follow organizational rules for e-mail
  - Don't use company e-mail systems for personal communication

- Spam is an advertising message - electronic junk mail - sent widely and indiscriminately
  - Aim for a balance of speed and accuracy
  - Keep your messages professional
  - Understand that e-mail is not guaranteed to be private
  - Don't "write angry"
    - Flaming is the act of sending out an angry e-mail message in haste without considering the implications of airing such emotions
  - Don't send unnecessary messages
  - Protect yourself and your company
- Manage your email and maintain professionalism by following a few common-sense principles
  - Schedule time for reading and writing e-mail
  - Do regular inbox clean-ups
  - Scan the entire list of new messages in your inbox
  - Use filtering options and anti-spam software
  - Capture your e-mail in a recognizable records system
- As you prepare to write, follow these tips to ensure your message stays on target and gets the attention it deserves
  - Type the e-mail address correctly
  - Compose an action-specific subject line
  - Wrap text after 70 characters
  - Use a regular mix of upper- and lowercase letters
  - Keep paragraphs and sentences short
- As you begin to compose your message, keep in mind the following strategies for shaping its content
  - Use appropriate greetings to soften messages
    - Salutation is the greeting in a letter, used to address the person being written to
  - Get to the point immediately
  - Use lists without overloading them
  - Sign off with a complimentary close and your name
    - Complimentary close is a formulaic closing, usually a word found after the body of a letter and before the signature
  - Tell people who you are
  - Edit your text and run a spell-check
  - Follow common-sense rules for attachments
    - Attachment is an independent computer file with a regular e-mail message
  - Don't be impatient for a reply
- Guidelines to consider when writing responses
  - Reply as promptly as possible
  - Modify your distribution list
  - Don't automatically include the sender's original message with your reply
  - Avoid indiscriminately forwarding e-mails
  - Make provision for your absences from the office
  - Protect and respect authorship
- E-mail is so flexible and adaptable that it accommodates a range of styles
  - Semi-formal or conversational style applies to most e-mail messages, especially routine communication

- It resembles the proceedings of a well-conducted meeting transcribed without the pauses and, hopefully, without errors
- Personal pronouns, contractions, and active-voice constructions are what make this style crisp and accessible
- Tends to be somewhat more informal than other forms of communication; however, a telegraphic style marked by abrupt shifts in topic and omitted subject words is not recommended for most e-mail messages
  - Formal style is reserved for documents that are e-mail only by virtue of their transmission - reports, policy statements, and proposals
- Informative memos and e-mail convey announcements, company policies, guidelines, instructions, and procedures
  - Informative messages must be clear and direct in order for readers to put directive into practice and carry through on initiatives
  - A clearly worded subject line, direct opening, clear explanation, and follow-up instructions, good closing, and positive emphasis support the message's informative aim

FIGURE 5.2

**Ineffective Informative E-mail Draft**

Subject line is vague and uninformative

Slow opening paragraph makes it unclear what message is about

Uneven tone affects readability

Random order and lack of details contribute to fuzzy or unclear focus

**Subject:** Food, Glorious Food!  
**Date:** Mon., Jan. 13, 2014, 9:45 AM  
**From:** Tyler Fisk <Tyler.Fisk@clicksnmortar.ca>  
**To:** Ella.Bridges@clicksnmortar.ca, Pho.Nguyen@clicksnmortar.ca, Dora.Juarez@clicksnmortar.ca

Arranging for catering has always been a major headache. Remember those meetings where all we had to eat was a box of soda crackers and a few cubes of cheese? Well, those days are over and we have our new partnership with Gusto Fine Foods to thank for it. Now we'll have tasty low-cal and low-carb snacks for all our boardroom meetings, on-site seminars, and receptions. There will be a tasting session on January 17 so you can try some of these unbelievable sandwiches and hors d'oeuvre.

Soon it will be possible to order food like this online. Ordering is easy—just remember to specify quantities and dates required. There are so many food choices it's hard not to order every single thing.

Of course, it's possible to over-indulge even in healthy food, so forget about ordering catered lunches and snacks every day.

And don't forget to order at least 24 hours in advance, otherwise you might be out of luck (and hungry). By the way, you can find Gusto Fine Foods online at [www.gustofinefoods.com](http://www.gustofinefoods.com). Bon appétit!

**FIGURE 5.3**  
**Effective Informative E-mail**

Accurate and descriptive subject line creates focus for message.

Opening paragraph focuses on action to be taken.

Explanation highlights benefits.

Hyperlink makes additional information available.

Procedure outlined in list form.

Reader benefits emphasized.

**Subject:** New Catering Requisition Procedures  
**Date:** Mon., Jan. 13, 2014, 10:15 AM  
**From:** Farah Aswan <Farah.Aswan@clicksnmortar.ca>  
**To:** Ella.Bridges@clicksnmortar.ca, Pho.Nguyen@clicksnmortar.ca, Dora.Juarez@clicksnmortar.ca

Effective February 3, all requests for office and event catering should be made online through the Gusto Fine Foods website.

As you know, Clicks 'n' Mortar, Inc. recently awarded Gusto Fine Foods, Inc. a contract to cater all board meetings, on-site training sessions, client consultations, and receptions. Gusto Fine Foods specializes in offering health-conscious businesses low-carbohydrate and low-calorie alternatives to traditional office fare. During the six-month introductory period ending July 31, you may choose from a specially priced product line that includes fruit platters, hot and cold hors d'oeuvre, light lunches, fresh juices, specialty coffees, and VQA Ontario wines.

You can ensure prompt and efficient delivery of your order by placing it 24 hours in advance and following this procedure:

1. Visit the Gusto Fine Foods website: [www.gustofinefoods.com](http://www.gustofinefoods.com).
2. Click on "Orders."
3. Enter your department number and password.
4. Make your menu selection.
5. Fill in the time, date, location, and guest-number fields.
6. Submit your order and print out a hard copy of the requisition.

The cost of each order, plus applicable taxes, will be automatically deducted from your departmental hospitality allotment, up to a maximum of \$400 per month.

To learn more about Gusto's extensive catering services, you and members of your department are invited to an information session on **January 17, from 5:00-7:00 p.m.** in the Central Atrium. Giorgio Delmonico, president of Gusto Fine Foods, will be on hand to answer your questions and offer you the best from his tasting menu.

Following the order guidelines established through this new partnership will improve the quality and efficiency of our in-house amenities and client hosting. Call me at ext. 211 if you have any questions about the new procedure.

- If you seek routine information or action, always use the direct approach
  - Request memos are messages that ask the reader to perform a routine action

FIGURE 5.4

**E-mail that Requests**

Subject clearly indicates that a response is required

Opening combines statement of benefits with polite command

Multiple requests presented in a numbered list

Explanation establishes the necessity for the request

You-attitude, active-voice verbs, and reason for end date help to encourage action

**Subject:** Your Reaction to Proposed Power Conservation Plan  
**Date:** Fri., Apr. 18, 2014, 8:30 AM  
**From:** Derwin Waters <dwaters@aerosport.com>  
**To:** Sandy McPhee <smcphee@aerosport.com>

To help us meet new government guidelines for workplace power conservation, please answer the following questions regarding your energy consumption and preferences on the job.

1. Would raising summer office temperature to a maximum 24 degrees Celsius be acceptable?
2. Could overhead lighting be reduced in well-lit work areas?
3. Based on your use of office kitchen equipment, could you do without the refrigerators and automatic coffee makers located on each floor?

The recent blackouts and power outages have put the issue of energy conservation high on our agenda. Our aim is to create an environmentally responsible yet still comfortable workplace by reducing power consumption by as much as 15 per cent.

Your answers to these questions will assist us in establishing new recommendations to reduce power consumption and related costs. Please respond by May 12 so we may compile data and act on your input when the Health and Safety Committee meets on May 16.

- This directive is usually expressed as a polite command or a direct question
  - Multiple requests can be introduced by a summary statement and then listed as numbered or bulleted questions
  - For ease of response, readers can be invited to reply within the original message
  - Explanations and justifications belong in the body of the message
    - While politeness is key to gaining compliance, citing a reason for the request, reader benefits, and an end date can build goodwill and help ensure a useful and timely response
- Responses are messages that answer a request or query
  - Using the direct approach, you can write an effective response that is complete, focused, and well organized
    - Open by announcing the most important fact or answer, sharing good news, or introducing multiple responses by way of a summary statement
      - Arranging these responses according to the order of the original requests saves time and increases coherence
      - It may be appropriate to provide additional information relevant to the original request
    - The closing sums up your response or offers further assistance

FIGURE 5.5

E-Mail that Responds

Opening refers to the previous message and provides a summary statement to introduce responses to individual questions

Responses arranged as bulleted points in order of original requests; boldfaced catchphrases summarize original questions

Final paragraph summarizes overall response and offers assistance

**Subject:** Reaction to Proposed Power Conservation Plan  
**Date:** Mon., April 21, 2014, 9:42 AM  
**From:** Sandy McPhee <smcphee@aerosport.com>  
**To:** Derwin Waters <dwaters@aerosport.com>

Here are my reactions to the proposed power conservation plan you inquired about in your message of Apr. 18.

- **Raise summer office temperature?** Yes, this would be a welcome change. Staff members have complained that the overly efficient air conditioning system leaves them in a "deep freeze" throughout the summer. Many people bring extra clothing with them to wear at their desks. Raising the office temperature would improve our overall comfort level.
- **Reduce overhead lighting?** Possibly. Most workstations have more than ample lighting, especially the outside offices that have a good supply of sunlight. After the 2003 blackout, overhead lighting was temporarily reduced by one third with no ill effects on safety or productivity. I think we should proceed cautiously with this recommendation and explore potential health and safety concerns.
- **Remove unused office kitchen equipment?** Yes, only a few department members use the refrigerator and coffee maker on a regular basis, especially since the specialty coffee franchise opened on our premises. I think we should keep the coffee maker, which was purchased only a year ago and requires little power. The 25-year-old refrigerator, however, could be scrapped or replaced with a smaller, more energy-efficient model. Instead of having one refrigerator per floor, we could make do with one or two for the entire building.

I agree that most of the proposed changes could be implemented with minimal disruption to operations and little inconvenience to staff. Let me know if I can provide further assistance in making our organization more energy efficient.

- Goodwill messages are messages that enhance the value of a business beyond its tangible assets by creating a bond of friendship and establishing trust and mutual understanding between the writer and recipient
  - These type of messages use the direct approach, first identifying the situation, then including a few reader-focused details and ending pleasantly, often with a forward-looking remark

FIGURE 5.6

Thank-You E-mail Message

**Subject:** Thanks for Making a Difference  
**Date:** Tues., Oct. 8, 2013, 9:23 AM  
**From:** Greg Stockwood <gstockwood@baxtercable.com>  
**To:** Trish Corelli <tcorelli@baxtercable.com>

Trish, thanks for helping to make Sunday's Run for the Cure a runaway success. By completing the 20-km course, you and your Baxter Cable teammates helped raise over \$5,000 for breast cancer research.

Your commitment to the community is something to be proud of. In recognition of your achievement, Baxter Cable will match the money raised on Sunday by making a \$5,000 donation to the Canadian Cancer Society.

Thanks again for so generously giving your time and devoting your energies to such a worthy cause.

Opening paragraph conveys thanks to the recipient for services provided and describes those services in detail

Second paragraph describes the benefit derived from that service

Closes pleasantly with further thanks and recognition of the positive effort recipient has made

- A follow-up message provides a record of a meeting, including its time, place, purpose, and any agreements that may have been made

- Serves as a reminder of the names and titles of participants and sometimes even the terms of a verbal agreement or the roles of a working relationship
- Restating basic facts and major directives, decisions, and issues ensures that each person's version of what took place is the same

**FIGURE 5.7**  
Follow-Up E-mail Message

**Subject:** Confirmation of Conversation about Seminar Details  
**Date:** Wed., Mar. 5, 2014, 4:53 PM  
**From:** Jo Costello <jcostello@solutionsplus.ca>  
**To:** Rebecca Cohen <rcohen@solutionsplus.ca>

Thanks, Rebecca, for talking with me yesterday about how to assist in upgrading the writing skills of your department members. This message confirms the details of the on-site course we agreed on in our conversation.

- A three-session course for 20 accounting personnel will be held from 4:00–6:00 p.m. on March 11, 18, and 25.
- Ryan Mackenzie of Stylus Writing Services will conduct the course. Mr. Mackenzie, who is under contract to our company, has presented similar courses to customer service and marketing personnel. Feedback on the two previous courses was very positive.
- The course will include grammar review but will focus primarily on how to write letters and e-mails in a plain-language style. A full course outline will be distributed to registrants by February 28.
- Each registrant will receive a 30-page learning guide. Individualized feedback is available on request.

I am confident that this six-hour intensive course will help members of your department achieve their writing goals and improve communication with internal and external stakeholders. If this message accurately reflects the details of yesterday's conversation, please confirm your agreement by return e-mail.

Opening identifies the date and subject of the meeting

Major details and points agreed upon are listed as bulleted items

Uses positive tone and forward-looking approach; message ends with allowance for correction of details

- Instant messaging (IM) is the exchange of messages over the Internet between two or more users who are online simultaneously
  - While there is no consensus among IT managers that instant messaging is the way of the future for maximizing productivity and profitability, many users claim they can't do business without it
  - IM combines features of synchronous, real-time communication (face-to-face meetings, telephone call) with traits more commonly identified with e-mail
  - Many of the guidelines for using e-mail also apply to IM
    - Limit the use of abbreviations
    - Use a neutral mix of upper- and lowercase
    - Keep conversations to a few people at a time
    - Inform people about your availability