

Chapter 1

Achieving Success Through Effective Business Communication

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Achieving Career Success Through Effective Communication [pp. 2-12]

- Characteristics of Effective Communication
- Communication in Organizational Settings

Understanding Why Business Communication Is Unique [pp. 12-16]

- The Globalization of Business and the Increase in Workforce Diversity
- The Increasing Value of Business Information
- The Pervasiveness of Technology
- The Evolution of Organizational Structures
- The Growing Reliance on Teamwork
- Barriers to Effective Communication

Communicating More Effectively on the Job [pp. 17-22]

- Minimizing Distractions
- Adopting an Audience-Centred Approach
- Improving Business Communication Skills
- Making Your Feedback Constructive
- Being Sensitive to Business Etiquette
- Applying What You've Learned to the Communication Process

Using Technology to Improve Business Communication [pp. 22-24]

- Keeping Technology in Perspective
- Using Technological Tools Productively
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Making Ethical Communication Choices [pp. 24-27]

- Distinguishing an Ethical Dilemma from an Ethical Lapse
- Ensuring Ethical Communication
- Samples Code of Business Conduct document

Applying What You've Learned [p. 27]

LECTURE NOTES

OBJECTIVE 1

Explain why effective communication is important to your success in today's business environment.

Communication is the process of sending and receiving messages.

Communication is effective only when people

- Understand each other
- Stimulate others to take action
- Encourage others to think in new ways

Effective communication benefits both you and your organization by helping you

1. Increase productivity—both yours and your company's
2. Anticipate problems
3. Make decisions
4. Coordinate workflow
5. Supervise others
6. Develop relationships
7. Promote products
8. Shape the impressions you make on stakeholders (colleagues, employees, supervisors, investors, customers)
9. Understand and respond to the needs of stakeholders

Your ability to communicate effectively

- Increases your chances for career success
- Helps you adapt to today's changing workplace

We must adapt to workplace changes such as

- The continuing advances in technology
- The globalization of the marketplace
- The need to access vast amounts of information
- The increased use of teams

Technology affects the way businesses communicate:

- Increasing the speed and frequency of communication
- Making it possible for more and more people to telecommute
- Showcasing your communication skills
- Extending the reach of your messages through intranets and extranets
- Increasing e-commerce

OBJECTIVE 2

Identify eight communication skills that successful employers expect from their employees.

1. organize ideas and information logically and completely
2. express and present information coherently and persuasively
3. listen to others effectively
4. communicate effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and experiences
5. use communication technologies effectively

6. follow accepted standards of grammar and style
7. consistently demonstrate principles of contemporary business etiquette
8. communicate ethically

OBJECTIVE 3

Describe the five characteristics of effective business communication.

People with good communication skills have an advantage in today's workplace.

To improve communication skills, you need to

1. Practice
2. Gain experience
3. Make the most of the opportunities presented in this course

5 characteristics of effective business communication:

1. practical
2. factual
3. concise
4. precise
5. persuasive

Communicating in Organizations

When you join an organization, you become a link in its information chain: you have information that others need, and they have information that you need.

Internal communication is the exchange of information and ideas within an organization.

Effective internal communicators use both formal and informal channels.

Formal internal communication channels are defined by the official chain of command.

Information flows up, down, and across the formal organization:

Information flowing downward lets managers direct activities of employees.

Information flowing upward helps managers monitor performance and obtain ideas.

Information flowing horizontally (across or diagonally) from department to department or from peer to peer helps employees do their jobs more efficiently.

Informal internal communication channels

Reflect the organizations actual communication practices

Have no set hierarchical path

Are often called the grapevine

The **grapevine** is

Used by savvy managers to spread and receive informal messages

Minimized by sophisticated companies by making certain that the official word gets out

External communication is the exchange of information and ideas with outsiders.

External communication can be in the form of a letter, a Web page, a phone call, a fax, an e-mail, a videotape, a face-to-face meeting, etc.

Formal external communication programs include

- Marketing: formal communication aimed at selling goods and services

- Public relations: formal communication aimed at establishing an organization's reputation

One function of public relations is to anticipate problems and outline steps to deal with them.

The reaction to a crisis can profoundly affect a company's future.

Organizations depend on informal external communication with customers, colleagues, competitors, suppliers, government officials, community representatives, and investors.

Informal outside communication

- Helps organizations learn about customer needs

- Often enters the organization through you, making you responsible for communicating it to your colleagues

- Often exits the firm through you, making you responsible for creating the right impression

For networking, top managers rely on contacts with

- Fellow executives

- Customers and frontline employees

Understanding the Communication Process

The seven phases of the communication process are repeated until both parties finish expressing themselves:

- The sender has an idea.

- The sender transforms the idea into a message (encoding).

- The sender chooses a medium.

- The sender transmits the message.

- The receiver gets the message.

- The receiver interprets the message (decoding).

- The receiver reacts and sends feedback to the sender.

Communication succeeds only when the receiver understands the message the sender intended.

Objective 4

Discuss six factors that make business communication unique.

Globalization affects the way businesses communicate, both at home and abroad:

- Encouraging businesses to cross national boundaries

- Diversifying the work force

- Requiring business people to understand the laws, customs, and business practices of many countries

The value of business information continues to grow. Valuable information includes

- Competitive insights
- Customer needs
- Regulations and guidelines

Technology has an influence over almost all aspects of business communication.

Organizational structures are evolving, with flatter structures often allowing for more efficient communication.

The corporate culture reflects the company's values, traditions, and habits.

Team-based organizations affect the way businesses communicate:

- Pushing decision-making down the hierarchy for quicker, more competitive action
- Making it necessary to interact with co-workers from diverse departments, functions, and backgrounds

- Making it necessary to understand how groups interact, reach decisions, work together, and resolve conflict

Recognizing Communication Barriers

A communication barrier (or noise) is any interference in the communication process that distorts or obscures the sender's meaning.

Perceptual differences interfere with communication because of differences in

- Language
- Culture
- Age
- Education
- Social status
- Economic position
- Religion
- Life experience

Restrictive environments interfere with communication. These environments result when

- Formal communication networks limit the flow of information in any direction
- Managers use a directive and authoritarian leadership style

Distractions interfere with communication. Distractions include

- physical distractions (bad connections, poor acoustics, illegible copy, uncomfortable chairs, poor lighting, health problems, etc.)
- Poor listening
- Emotions
- Information overload

Deceptive tactics interfere with communication and include illegal or unethical messages that

1. Exaggerate

2. Present information inaccurately
3. Hide negative information
4. State opinions as fact
5. Leave out crucial information
6. Portray graphic data unfairly
7. Seek personal gain
8. Allow personal preferences to influence perception

OBJECTIVE 5

Describe five strategies for communicating more effectively on the job.

Effective communicators work hard at perfecting the messages they deliver, and they learn from their mistakes.

Effective communicators share five traits:

- Perception
- Precision
- Credibility
- Control
- Congeniality

Five ways to improve communication:

1. Minimize distractions
2. Adopt an **audience-centred** approach
3. Improve your business communication skills
4. Make your feedback constructive
5. Be sensitive to business etiquette

An audience-centred approach focuses on ways to get your message across in a way that is meaningful to your audience.

To write and speak from your audience's point of view, try to

1. Learn as much as possible about your audience's biases, education, age, status, knowledge, and style
2. Project yourself into your audience's position

An audience-centred approach helps you fulfill the three other guidelines:

Because you want to know your audience's needs and what they think of your message, you work for an open communication climate inside and outside your organization. Because you value your audience's time and anticipate their expectations, you create lean, efficient messages and use technology responsibly. Because you sincerely wish to satisfy your audience's needs, you approach communication situations with good intentions and high ethical standards.

How to foster an open communication climate:

1. Make sure information flows freely down, up, and across the organization.
2. Encourage candour and honesty.

3. Reduce the number of levels in the organizational hierarchy or the number of steps in the communication chain.
4. Facilitate feedback from others.

Create lean, efficient messages by

- Deleting unnecessary information
- Making necessary information easily available
- Trying to give information meaning (rather than just passing it on)
- Setting priorities for dealing with overall message flow

Successful communicators overcome information overload by

- Reducing the number of messages
- Minimizing distractions
- Using technology responsibly

OBJECTIVE 6

Explain three strategies for using communication technology successfully.

1. Use technology to improve business communication, not just because it's available.
2. Use technology to improve productivity; develop your competencies.
3. Use technology selectively, not as a substitute for face-to-face communication.

OBJECTIVE 7

Discuss the importance of ethics in business communication and differentiate between an ethical dilemma and an ethical lapse.

Ethics are the principles of conduct that govern a person or group.

Ethical communication

- Includes all relevant information
- Is true in every sense
- Is not deceptive in any way

An ethical dilemma involves choosing among alternatives that are not clear-cut:

- Two conflicting alternatives that are both ethical and valid
- Two alternatives that lie somewhere in the vast gray area between right and wrong

An ethical lapse involves making a clearly unethical or illegal choice.

For guidance when making an ethical choice, obey the law.

When you must rely on your own judgment, remember that

- If your intent is honest, the message is ethical, even though it may be factually incorrect
- If your intent is to mislead or manipulate, the message is unethical, even if it's true

How to test whether a message is ethical:

Is it legal? Does it comply with the law?

Your first priority is to obey the law.

When the law does not apply, consider the moral implications of the message.

Is it balanced? Is it fair to all concerned?

Figure out who it will benefit or harm.

Find out how much benefit or harm it will do.

Is it a message you can live with? Does it make you feel good about yourself?

Ask how you would feel if a newspaper published it.

Ask how you would feel if your family knew about it.

Is it feasible? Can it work in the real world?

Consider your position in the company.

Consider your company's competition.

Consider the likely costs or risks.

Consider the time available.

Some companies try to motivate ethical choices by

Using a written code of ethics

Using ethics audits to monitor ethical progress

Setting a good, ethical example for others

The first priority is to obey the law; when law doesn't apply, consider the moral implications of the message:

The balance of good and harm

The way the decision makes you feel

The way the decision works in the real world

Begin strengthening your communication skills by

Assessing where you stand right now

Practicing your writing and speaking

Learning from successful business communicators

Ethical Boundaries: Where Would You Draw the Line?

1. Here are several other things students might expect from their employees:

- Discretion about the company's operations
- Support for other members of the organization
- Courtesy to the company's customers
- Honesty in presenting your strengths, weaknesses, and accomplishments

2. To diffuse the gossip, students might discuss

- Moving employees to different desks or changing their schedules so that they have less chance to talk with each other
- Identifying the person who seems to be initiating the gossip and discussing the problem with that person privately
- Having a separate talk with each of the people who tend to gossip
- Calling a meeting of the entire department to discuss the problem (without naming names)
- Trying to create a more positive, cohesive group spirit to encourage the members of the typing pool to cooperate with one another and become better co-workers

ON THE JOB SCENARIOS

Performing Communication Tasks at Suncor Energy Inc.

1. To maintain Suncor's open communication climate, the information should be distributed to employees by a combination of the strategies outlined below:
 - a. Staff meetings are an open-communication-climate strategy, but there are no guarantees that every staff member would be present for the meeting.
 - b. Email can be an effective means of distributing internal information; however, corporate messages are often "back burnered" in favour of more pressing matters, and sometimes employees don't remember to get back to the message.
 - c. Posting the changes to the intranet site allows employees to access it at any time.
 - d. Outlining the changes in a benefits statement to each employee ensures that every employee receives a copy, thereby ensuring that no-one feels left out or deceived.
2. The most ethical and effective approaches would be (a)
 - a. Being "up front" with employees about the team's performance is an ethical approach because it recognizes that the employees are adults who are capable of acknowledging the current dilemma and of working to solve the issues behind it. Asking them for ideas to improve the situation will give them some ownership over the solution that emerges from the discussions.
 - b. Lying to one's employees and threatening them are not ethical choices.
 - c. Asking employees to spy on one another is not an ethical choice because it is deceptive.
 - d. If a reduction in wages is a real possibility, then the manager might consider sharing this information with the employees. However, the information is likely to be viewed as a threat, and few adults respond well to threats.
3. The first action to "dismantle" a rumour should be (b)
 - a. A notice on the company intranet denying the rumour might be an over-reaction.
 - b. Asking all managers to discuss the rumour with their employees is a personal way of discussing a rumour, that if true, would have highly personal repercussions. If the managers are trusted by their individual departments, the rumour is more likely to be "put to rest" by allowing the managers to deal with it.
 - c. It is impossible to ensure that every employee will be present for this meeting, and while the appearance of the CEO might lend credence to the denial for some of the people at the meeting, some will likely view it with suspicion. A large meeting will not likely allow every participant to voice his/her concerns, so some will walk away from the meeting unconvinced.
 - d. Some rumours need to be ignored. This probably isn't one of them. If the perceived threat of layoffs grows, performance could decrease; this is a chance that Suncor probably doesn't want to take.

END-OF-CHAPTER EXERCISES

Test Your Knowledge

1. Stakeholders: the groups that your company affects in some way and who themselves have some influence on your company (p. 2); stakeholders play a pivotal role in the success or failure of a company.
2. Increased globalization requires employers and their employees to understand the laws, customs, and business practices of the countries with which they do business. The companies that understand and celebrate the increasing international “flavour” of stakeholders are likely to have a competitive advantage in the marketplace. (p. 13)
3. Technology is of little use to a business if it is not understood; in fact, technology has as much potential to impede communication as it does to enhance it. Remembering that, regardless of the technological tool, effective communication is practical, factual, concise, clear, and persuasive will help employees to interact with customers and colleagues. (pp. 6,13)
4. Internal communication is any communication that happens within the business organization. External communication is the exchange of information or ideas outside of the organization. (p. 8)
5. Downward, Upward, and Horizontal (p. 9)
6. Grapevine: an informal internal communication network, casual conversations amongst employees (p. 10)
7. Encoding = step 2; Decoding = step 6
8. An audience wants to know “what’s in it for me”; therefore, keeping the audience’s needs in mind helps the communicator to structure the message so that it will be understood and complied with. (p. 17)
9. A corporate culture that values respect, courtesy, and common sense will facilitate internal and external communication that reflects these norms. (p20)
10. Ethics are the accepted principles of conduct that govern behaviour in society and in business. Business communicators have a responsibility to think through not only what they say or write, but what the consequences of that communication might be. (p. 24)

Apply Your Knowledge

1. Employees who feel respected and who likewise respect others in the company are more likely to have an attitude that promotes performance. Good communication helps employees feel that they are a part of the business process. They feel supported in their efforts and rewarded for their accomplishments. They believe their comments, suggestions, and problems will receive fair consideration, so any problems among co-workers are quickly and easily resolved. Knowing the company’s objectives and having clear instructions on how to accomplish their tasks makes employees confident in their work.

2. Limiting feedback makes sense when time is short, when the audience is large and diverse, and when maintaining control is important. Say that you're a professor trying to cover 500 years of history in one semester. As you plan your lectures, you have to make a trade-off between covering basic information and responding to students' comments and questions. The more time that you allow for student participation and feedback, the less time you have to cover the major points. If you have a small class—say 20 students—you can probably permit a discussion-oriented atmosphere that opens up opportunities for feedback. But if you have 150 students, all of whom want to participate, feedback becomes more of a problem, especially since some students are sure to raise points that are of no interest to the rest of the class.
3. Written messages are more susceptible to noise than spoken messages because the sender has little control over the environment in which the receiver gets the message. The writer is rarely present when the reader picks up the document and begins to read. A speaker, on the other hand, is present when communication occurs; he or she has a chance to notice the interference and remove the source of the noise.
4. Of course you can always tell employees that it's important to include all information in messages, even when it's negative. But your actions actually speak louder than your words. Employees will pick up on the way you yourself receive and handle the negative information they convey—whether or not it's "safe" to relate negative information, whether their jobs might be in jeopardy, or whether they might be subjected to an angry tirade. In addition, they will learn from the way you handle your own need to communicate negative information. Do you beat around the bush, use vague insinuations, cloak bad news in false positivism—or do you communicate negative information clearly, constructively, and unemotionally?
5. Remember that writing documents for superiors is usually a part of your job. Business documents often bear the signature of someone who did not actually write them. Yet one person repeatedly taking credit for another's work may also come to be seen as unethical behaviour. So the question becomes, when should action be taken? Of course, once the decision to take action has been made, you don't want to embarrass your boss or risk your relationship with a direct confrontation. The best tactic may be to keep quiet for now and find ways to clarify your role through informal lines of communication whenever you're working on a report for your boss. Word-of-mouth generally spreads far and fast up the organizational ladder in situations like this.

Running Cases

Student responses will vary. The following are examples of possible acceptable answers.

Case 1

- a) Any method of communication can be accepted here, provided that a sufficient explanation accompanies the response.
- b) This is an example of horizontal information flow. This is an example of formal communication because it was a direct request from management.
- c) The expectations of her employer must be considered before she begins her task. These include: the logical organization of ideas and information, coherent and persuasive expression of ideas and information, effective

listening, effective communication with people of diverse backgrounds and experiences, effective and efficient use of communication technology, the use of accepted standards of spelling and grammar along with other standards of professional communication, adhering to contemporary expectations of business etiquette, and maintaining ethical standards when choices are not are not crystal clear.

- d) In order to ensure efficient and clear communication, the characteristics of effective communication must be considered. These include: providing only practical information, the use of facts as opposed to impressions, clarifying and condensing information, stating precise responsibilities, being persuasive and making recommendations.
- e) Possible barriers to effective communication include: distractions, information overload, perceptual differences, language differences restrictive environments and deceptive tactics. Strategies to overcome these barriers include: minimizing distractions, adopting an audience centered approach, self improvement of your own communication skills, making feedback constructive and being sensitive to business etiquette.

Case 2

- a) Along with researching the company he is applying to work for and the responsibilities of the position, Kwong should research which communication skills the company values most.
- b) Any of the following skills can be accepted provided an explanation accompanies the response: the ability to logically organize ideas and information, the ability to coherently and persuasively express ideas and information, effective listening skills, the ability to effectively communicate with people of diverse backgrounds and experiences, effective and efficient use of communication technology, understanding and being able to implement accepted standards of spelling and grammar along with other standards of professional communication, being able to follow contemporary expectations of business etiquette, and the ability to maintain high ethical standards when choices or instructions are not crystal clear.
- c) Kwong's best strategy for emphasizing his strengths and de-emphasizing his weaknesses is to be honest about what his skills are. If he twists the truth and his employer realizes this after he has been hired, he could lose his job. If he is honest during the interview, he is showcasing his strong ethical foundation, and demonstrating that he can be trusted by his new employer.
- d) Kwong may have to choose if he should be honest about his long term goals of opening his own firm. A company may not want to invest time and money in training an individual who is intending on using that knowledge to start his own competing firm.
- e) Any of the following can be accepted provided a sufficient explanation accompanies the response: distractions, information overload, perceptual differences, language differences restrictive environments and deceptive tactics.

Practise Your Knowledge

Among the barriers to communication contained in the memo are the following:

1. An opening that immediately arouses negative emotions (accusing employees of lying)
2. A hasty conclusion based on hearsay about people's time card habits
3. Another hasty conclusion
4. A hostile attitude
5. Defensiveness (the author had "no choice" but to institute the time clock)
6. A dogmatic and authoritarian tone
7. An assumption of bad intentions
8. Vague, confusing language (More than three times during what period? Will have to answer to the author for what specific penalties?)
9. Prejudice or bias (slurs against female employees)
10. Defamatory language (even though not directed to any one person)
11. Polarization (incites punctual employees to be angry with those employees that they think may be "cheating")

Student responses will vary. Here is a sample:

To ensure the accuracy of your time cards and improve site security, on Monday, April 9, *company name* will begin using a time clock system. For your convenience, the time-clock has been installed at the entrance to the building. All employees are required to punch out whenever they leave the work area and to punch in on their return. If you have any questions about the process, please talk to your manager or visit our intranet site where a special section, called Time Clock Questions & Answers has been posted.

Exercises

- 1-1. The tasks described have the following communication directions:
 - a. Downward, upward, and horizontal—since the entire company is involved. A memo is the best choice (either printed or electronic).
 - b. Upward. Probably a formal proposal or memo.
 - c. Horizontal. Memo (either printed or electronic).
 - d. Downward. One memo might help, but a newsletter would offer a continuing opportunity to keep employees informed. A workshop would also be a good idea.
- 1-2. As students weigh the ethical options, they may realize that the college friend ignored ethical practices when relating the information in the first place. Now the employee has to (a) decide whether to protect that friend by keeping silent, (b) decide whether to protect the company by communicating the information to someone in authority, and (c) determine to whom the information should be related. There may be no "right" answer here, but it should help students recognize that business communication often carries serious consequences.
- 1-3. The ethics of each situation may be decided as follows:
 - a. Keeping quiet about the possible environmental hazard would be an ethical lapse that could possibly affect lives if not wildlife.
 - b. Stretching the truth, even "a bit," is never ethical.

- c. Helping a friend would be ethical, unless “privileged” information were being conveyed without permission.
- d. Using allocated funding for bogus purchases is unethical. It would be better to justify the need for next year’s budget than to preserve it by cheating.

1-4. Regarding the issue of employee blogs and information that is critical of an employer, a much stronger case can be made for placing such restrictions than for not doing so. Publicly aired criticism of internal company matters is likely to cause harm to the company (by scaring away potential customers, employees, or investors, for instance) while probably doing little or nothing to resolve whatever situations a blogger might be upset about. In fact, an argument can be made that criticizing one’s own employer in public is unethical, since employees are paid to further the company’s interests, not their own. If they are unhappy in their jobs, they have a responsibility to either work to improve the situation through appropriate channels or to find other employment.

- i. In answering this question, students should consider the fundamental issue of what a blogger hopes to accomplish by airing complaints in public. If the blogger truly wants to solve a problem, he or she can surely find more appropriate and more productive internal channels through which to pursue such a solution. Simply “protecting the employees freedom of speech” or some other general goal is insufficient justification for rejecting restrictions because it doesn’t consider the many possible ramifications of critical blog postings.
- ii. Note that if a true whistle-blower situation exists, in which an employee believes that an employer is breaking the law, this situation should be handled through private channels to the proper authorities.

1.5. Response depends on the site(s) selected by students.

1.6. All three items are important, and here’s why:

- a. Knowing how many top managers will attend allows the speaker to gear the message toward the audience’s point of view.
- b. Knowing the audience’s preference for management style helps the speaker determine the sort of communication climate that exists: open or closed, formal or informal, and so on.
- c. If the rigidity of managers is possible to determine, such knowledge would help the speaker decide whether the audience would be receptive or resistant to the message.

1.7. Students explanations might consider the “informal” communication the supervisor is trying to cultivate here. If they view this approach as the supervisor’s way of improving communication, they might not feel so uncomfortable about the arrangement. On the other hand, if they feel that the supervisor is relinquishing responsibility for carrying out that communication personally, they might question that supervisor’s ability to manage. From yet another perspective, students might view the situation as an opportunity for practicing their own communication skills, which could enhance their career.

- 1.8. Responses will vary. Students should focus on how enhancing employee communication skills at every level in the company will enhance internal and external communication. In addition, employees who have an opportunity to learn and practise basic etiquette will be able to move into positions of increased authority and exposure to the public with less training.
- 1.9. Before writing the report, the author will want to know
- The audience's culture (so that cultural biases can be avoided)
 - The audience's level of knowledge about the subject (so that the report's style, content, organization, and tone will address that level)
 - The environment in which the report will be received (to compensate for any noise interference)
 - Whether the report will be read directly by the intended audience or will first pass through several layers of gatekeepers (so that anticipated distortions can be minimized before the report is read and summarized by gatekeepers)
 - The audience's gender and family status (because child care may be viewed from a different perspective by men, women, parents, and nonparents)
- 1.10. Responses will vary with student scenarios. This exercise challenges students to apply their understanding of the communication process. Ask them to be specific about how they chose the medium and how they encoded and transmitted the idea they wanted to share; also ask them to explain exactly how they knew whether the message had been accurately decoded. Students might identify such barriers as a difference in perception due to differences in age, background, culture, or language; a lack of credibility, precision, congeniality, or control; a lack of information about the audience; a misunderstanding caused by unfocused, incoherent, or sloppy communication; a miscommunication resulting from one party being sidetracked or constantly bringing up unnecessary information; an inability to relate new information to existing ideas; or the noise from environmental distractions, from the emotional states of the people involved, or from a person's poor listening ability.
- 1.11. This exercise asks students to weigh the ethical aspects of a decision, in addition to using what they've learned so far about communication principles. Students should recognize the potential for an ethical lapse, presenting inadequate, incomplete, or untruthful information for the sake of winning an issue.
- Students might consider two more ethical choices: First, they might go ahead and make the presentation but cite a range of cost figures that would span plus or minus 10 percent and that would be refined within the next day or two. Second, they might request a postponement because new information has just come to light.
- Students might note that whichever alternative is chosen, it must be phrased in positive terms to soften the bad news and to enhance credibility (explaining that the reason for the postponement is a desire to be thorough and complete). Regardless of the alternative that students choose, they might mention going back over the issue and thoroughly studying the budget dilemma in order to arrive at a wholehearted, above-board estimate of the

project cost.

- 1-12. Students will learn more about group dynamics in Chapter 2, but common sense and thoughtful analysis should yield a number of insightful ideas. The only possible advantages of going along with the flow would be not making any enemies and not damaging one's own career prospects—both of which could be compromising for the employee. The disadvantages include contributing to the perpetuation of a dysfunctional team environment, potentially limiting opportunities for you to make real contributions to the organization, risking the likelihood that your eventual contributions will sooner or later be co-opted by someone else who doesn't deserve the credit, and compromising your own ethics and standards in an effort to fit in.



MyCanadianBusCommLab offers a variety of resources to complement and expand the material in the text. See pp. v–xvii of this manual for ideas on how to incorporate this material into your course.