

## **Chapter 1—Communicating in Today’s Workplace**

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### **MULTIPLE CHOICE**

1. Which of the following statements about writing skills is correct?
  - a. Writing skills are not as important in the workplace as they once were.
  - b. Writing skills are a necessity in today’s workplace.
  - c. Writing skills are required only for high-level positions.
  - d. Writing skills are not needed in today’s high-tech workplace.

ANS: B                      DIF: 3                      REF: p. 4                      OBJ: 1-1                      BLM: HO  
TOP: Building Your Career Success With Communication Skills  
NOT: Writing skills are a necessity in today’s workplace because technology enables us to transmit messages more rapidly, more often, and to greater numbers of people than ever before.

2. Which of the following statements is **MOST** accurate?
  - a. Employers find it easy to find job applicants who write well.
  - b. You are born with the ability to be a good writer.
  - c. Having good writing skills can improve your chances for promotion and pay increases on the job.
  - d. Today’s communication technologies have made writing obsolete.

ANS: C                      DIF: 3                      REF: pp. 3-4                      OBJ: 1-1                      BLM: HO  
TOP: Building Your Career Success With Communication Skills  
NOT: a. Employers often have difficulty finding applicants who can write well. b. You are not born with the abilities to read, listen, speak, and write effectively; these skills must be learned. c. The ability to write well on the job can have a positive impact on promotions and pay raises. d. Today’s communication technologies have made writing skills even more important.

3. What is the key ingredient in the creation of wealth in the North American economy?
  - a. knowledge
  - b. physical labour
  - c. a supply of raw materials
  - d. capital

ANS: A                      DIF: 1                      REF: p. 5                      OBJ: 1-1                      BLM: REM  
TOP: Thriving as a Knowledge Worker in the Information Age  
NOT: The North American economy is based on information and knowledge. Physical labour, raw materials, and capital are no longer the key ingredients in the creation of wealth.

4. In addition to being able to think critically and make decisions, what else must knowledge workers be able do?
  - a. design effective Web pages
  - b. communicate information to others
  - c. install software programs
  - d. lift heavy objects

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ANS: B            DIF: 3            REF: p. 5            OBJ: 1-1            BLM: HO  
TOP: Thriving as a Knowledge Worker in the Information Age  
NOT: Knowledge workers must be able to think critically, make decisions, and communicate those decisions to others.

5. What does it mean to think creatively and critically?
- agreeing with your supervisor at all times
  - going with your gut instinct
  - being able to make decisions quickly
  - having opinions that are backed by reason and evidence

ANS: D            DIF: 3            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-1            BLM: HO  
TOP: Thriving as a Knowledge Worker in the Information Age  
NOT: Thinking creatively and critically means having opinions that are backed by reason and evidence.

6. What should employees in today's workplace expect?
- to engage in constant training
  - to find an abundance of nine-to-five jobs available
  - regular pay increases and job security
  - a position with a clearly defined career path

ANS: A            DIF: 3            REF: p. 5            OBJ: 1-1            BLM: HO  
TOP: Thriving as a Knowledge Worker in the Information Age  
NOT: Employees in today's workplace should expect to engage in constant training to acquire new skills that will help them keep up with evolving technologies and procedures.

7. Noteworthy changes in today's dynamic workplace revolve around team-based projects, flattened management hierarchies, and what else?
- union participation and regulation
  - more homogeneous workforces
  - global competition
  - clothing and dress codes

ANS: C            DIF: 3            REF: p. 7            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: HO  
TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace  
NOT: Some of the most significant changes in today's workplace include global competition, flattened management hierarchies, and team-based projects.

8. What is one of the most significant difficulties in doing business globally?
- dealing with people who live in different time zones
  - dealing with people who may speak another language
  - dealing with people who differ from you in customs, lifestyles, and religion
  - dealing with people who use different equipment and technology in conducting business

ANS: C            DIF: 3            REF: p. 7            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: HO  
TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace  
NOT: Doing business beyond borders is especially difficult because you may deal with people whose customs, lifestyles, and religions are different from yours.

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9. Many businesses today are flattening their management hierarchies. What does this flattening mean?
- Information must flow through more layers of management.
  - It takes longer to make decisions.
  - Management hierarchies are more authoritarian than ever before.
  - Employees at all levels need excellent communication skills.

ANS: D            DIF: 3            REF: pp. 12-13            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: HO  
TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace  
NOT: In flat organizations, employees at all levels take part in decision making and must, therefore, be skilled communicators.

10. Which of the following statements about team-based management is **MOST** accurate?
- Companies use team-based management as a way to improve communication.
  - Because the concept is relatively new, very few companies have adopted team-based management yet.
  - People are willing to work in teams, so there is rarely any conflict or the need for communication coaches.
  - Companies that use team-based management are willing to train new employees to work effectively as part of a team.

ANS: A            DIF: 3            REF: p. 7            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: HO  
TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace  
NOT: a. Companies use team-based management to increase employee involvement in decision making and to improve communication. b. Nearly 80 percent of employers in all industries have adopted some form of self-directed teams or quality circles. c. Because working relationships can become strained when individuals don't share the same background, knowledge, or training, some companies hire communication coaches to help team members get along. d. Companies prefer to hire employees who already possess the skills necessary to work effectively as part of a team.

11. Jack has colleagues located throughout the world, and he would like to conduct a real-time meeting with them to discuss an important issue. Which of the following communication technologies should he choose?
- teleconferencing or videoconferencing
  - e-mail
  - a blog or a wiki
  - text messaging

ANS: A            DIF: 5            REF: p. 8            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: HO  
TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace  
NOT: Jack should choose teleconferencing or videoconferencing; both communication technologies enable businesspeople to conduct meetings with associates around the world.

12. Which of the following statements about new work environments is **MOST** accurate?
- Mobile technologies support flexible working arrangements that allow employees to work from home or on the road.
  - Few workers are part of virtual teams.
  - Individual offices and cubicles are used to promote an open environment.
  - Working from home or on the road makes communication skills less important.

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ANS: A            DIF: 3            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: HO

TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace

NOT: a. Because of advances in communication and mobile technologies, many employees are able to work from home or on the road. b. Because of collaboration tools, many employees now work on virtual teams. c. Instead of individual offices and cubicles, companies are encouraging open offices with flexible workstations and shared conferences. d. As more and more employees work separately, communication skills have become even more important.

13. Which of the following statements about workplace diversity is the **MOST** accurate?
- a. Customers prefer to purchase products and services from companies whose workforce and ads include people like themselves.
  - b. The number of older workers is decreasing.
  - c. The workforce of tomorrow will continue to be predominantly male and Anglo-oriented.
  - d. A diverse workgroup is less able to respond to changes in customer base in local and world markets.

ANS: A            DIF: 3            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: HO

TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace

NOT: a. Customers prefer to purchase products and services from companies whose workforce and ads include people like themselves. b. The number of older workers is increasing. c. The workplace will no longer be predominantly male or Anglo-oriented. d. A diverse workgroup is better able to respond to changes in customer base in local and world markets.

14. Which of the following is the **BEST** definition of communication?
- a. Communication is the transmission of information from one individual or group to another.
  - b. Communication is the transmission of data from one individual or group to another.
  - c. Communication is the transmission of information and meaning from one individual or group to another.
  - d. Communication is the transmission of ideas from one individual or group to another.

ANS: C            DIF: 1            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: REM

TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication

NOT: Communication is the transmission of information and meaning from one individual or group to another.

15. What factors must be in place for communication to be successful?
- a. The fastest communication channel must be selected.
  - b. The sender must pronounce all words perfectly.
  - c. Feedback must be given.
  - d. The receiver must understand the message as the sender intended it.

ANS: D            DIF: 1            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: REM

TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication

NOT: Communication is successful only when both the sender and the receiver agree on the meaning of what was transmitted.

16. At what point does the process of communication begin?
- a. when a message is put into words
  - b. when a message is sent over a communication channel to the receiver
  - c. when the sender has an idea

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d. when the receiver actually receives the message and decodes it

ANS: C            DIF: 1            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: REM  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: The first step in the communication process is idea formation.

17. When promoters of Kentucky Fried Chicken in China used their successful “finger-lickin’ good” slogan, they didn’t realize it would translate to “eat your fingers off.” When a sender initiates a communication transaction, for what does he or she have primary responsibility?
- selecting a proper communication channel
  - providing means to ensure reliable feedback
  - decoding the message properly to facilitate comprehension
  - choosing appropriate words or symbols as part of the encoding process

ANS: D            DIF: 5            REF: p. 13            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: When a sender initiates a communication transaction, he or she has primary responsibility for choosing appropriate words or symbols as part of the encoding process.

18. At what step were RONA representatives when they selected the words used in the company slogan, “Doing it right”?
- selecting the channel
  - encoding the message
  - decoding the message
  - evaluating the message

ANS: B            DIF: 3            REF: p. 13            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Encoding a message requires selecting words that convey a precise meaning.

19. Alexandra is giving a presentation to her company about possible global expansion. As she prepares her PowerPoint slides, she chooses a background showing a world map. In what part of the communication process is Alexandra involved?
- evaluating the message
  - decoding the message
  - encoding the message
  - selecting the channel

ANS: C            DIF: 3            REF: p. 13            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: When encoding a message, the sender chooses the appropriate symbols to word the message.

20. When North American advertisers converting the popular milk commercial “Got Milk?” into Spanish discovered the slogan meant “Are you lactating?” they encountered which communication problem?
- bypassing
  - frame of perspective
  - proper channel
  - lack of feedback

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ANS: A            DIF: 5            REF: p. 13            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Bypassing results when words convey different meanings to different people.

21. E-mail, cell phones, memorandums, letters, Web pages, and reports are all examples of what?
- a. messages
  - b. channels
  - c. encoding tools
  - d. software

ANS: B            DIF: 1            REF: p. 13            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: REM  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: E-mail, cell phones, memorandums, letters, Web pages, and reports are all examples of communication channels.

22. Tanika needs to deliver a sensitive message to a colleague and decides to deliver it face to face. What is Tanika in the process of doing?
- a. encoding the message
  - b. decoding the message
  - c. preparing for feedback
  - d. selecting the channel for the message

ANS: D            DIF: 3            REF: p. 13            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Selecting the channel for the message means deciding how the message will be sent to the receiver.

23. While Morgan is speaking to her friend on her cell phone, static interferes with the call. What is this interruption in the transmission of the message called?
- a. bypassing
  - b. vibration
  - c. noise
  - d. frame of reference

ANS: C            DIF: 3            REF: p. 13            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Noise is anything that interrupts the transmission of a message.

24. Steve must send an e-mail message to a client in Rome. He is carefully selecting his words to ensure that his Italian client, who speaks English as a second language, will understand them. In which part of the communication process is Steve involved?
- a. message encoding
  - b. idea formation
  - c. message transmission
  - d. message decoding

ANS: A            DIF: 3            REF: p. 13            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Encoding is the step in the communication process that involves converting the idea into words or gestures that will convey meaning.

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25. Lindsay has just received an e-mail message from a client and is reading it carefully to determine her client's needs. In which part of the communication process is Lindsay involved?
- encoding
  - channel selection
  - decoding
  - feedback

ANS: C            DIF: 3            REF: p. 13            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Translating a message from its symbol form into meaning involves decoding.

26. Which of the following is an example of an internal disruption in the decoding process?
- Loud construction sounds outside prevent Jack from hearing the message.
  - Susan finds her mind drifting during a lecture as she thinks about her upcoming trip to Hawaii.
  - Marcus is finding it hard to pay attention during the interview because the interviewee's phone keeps ringing.
  - Sarah finds it difficult to read her colleague's e-mail message because it's filled with grammatical errors and typos.

ANS: B            DIF: 3            REF: p. 13            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: a. A loud sound is an example of an external disruption in the decoding process. b. Daydreaming is an example of an internal disruption in the decoding process. c. A ringing phone is an example of an external disruption in the decoding process. d. Grammatical errors and typos are examples of semantic obstacles during the encoding process.

27. Julia is offended when she notices that only masculine pronouns are used in the company's human resources manual. What type of decoding problem does this cause?
- closed communication climate
  - bypassing
  - external disruption
  - semantic obstacle

ANS: D            DIF: 3            REF: p. 14            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Semantic obstacles, such as misunderstood words or emotional reactions to certain terms, can cause problems during the decoding process.

28. When Dominique includes the sentence *Let me know whether I can answer any questions* at the end of his e-mail message, what is he trying to encourage?
- decoding
  - feedback
  - frame of reference
  - bypassing

ANS: B            DIF: 3            REF: p. 14            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Senders of messages can encourage feedback by including a sentence such as *Let me know whether I can answer any questions*.

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29. As her supervisor explains the new procedure, Gina nods her head. What is Gina's response an example of?
- verbal feedback
  - noise
  - evaluation
  - nonverbal feedback

ANS: D      DIF: 3      REF: p. 14      OBJ: 1-3      BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Nonverbal feedback uses body language to let the sender know whether the message has been received and understood.

30. Which of the following helps the sender know whether the message was received and understood?
- feedback
  - noise
  - bypassing
  - an evaluative response

ANS: A      DIF: 1      REF: p. 13      OBJ: 1-3      BLM: REM  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Feedback helps the sender know that the message was received and understood.

31. Which of the following is the **MOST** useful feedback?
- I can't imagine why you think diversity training would be helpful to new employees.*
  - If I understand you correctly, your recommendation is to offer diversity training to all new employees.*
  - That idea can't possibly work.*
  - All employees need diversity training.*

ANS: B      DIF: 5      REF: p. 14      OBJ: 1-3      BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Descriptive feedback such as *If I understand you correctly, your recommendation is to offer diversity training to all new employees* is more useful than evaluative feedback such as *That idea can't possibly work*.

32. Joseph says that he will answer his client's questions "soon." Joseph plans to answer the questions by early next week; his client expects the answers by the end of the day. What is the likely cause of this misunderstanding?
- bypassing
  - differing frames of reference
  - descriptive feedback
  - using the incorrect communication channel

ANS: A      DIF: 3      REF: p. 14      OBJ: 1-4      BLM: HO  
TOP: Overcoming Interpersonal Communication Barriers  
NOT: Bypassing occurs when two people attach different meanings to the words being used.

33. When are differences in frames of reference especially significant?
- when working on improving one's listening skills
  - when communicating with persons from a different culture



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- c. when overcoming physical barriers to communication
  - d. when confronted with conflicting emotions

ANS: B            DIF: 1            REF: p. 14            OBJ: 1-4            BLM: REM

TOP: Overcoming Interpersonal Communication Barriers

NOT: Differences in frames of reference are especially significant when communicating with persons from a different culture because a person's frame of reference is formed by a combination of experiences, education, and culture.

34. A sales team from a large North American company was sent to Saudi Arabia to try to sell its products. Not realizing that employees in Saudi Arabia prefer informal conversation before starting business negotiations, the North Americans were surprised to find that the Saudis seemed offended when they began their sales presentation immediately. What is one significant barrier to communication in this instance?
- a. bypassing
  - b. lack of listening skills
  - c. failure to recognize different frames of reference
  - d. emotional interference caused when senders or receivers are distracted by internal feelings

ANS: C            DIF: 3            REF: p. 14            OBJ: 1-4            BLM: HO

TOP: Overcoming Interpersonal Communication Barriers

NOT: A significant barrier to communication in this instance could be attributed to failure to recognize different frames of reference.

35. Kathleen sends her résumé out to several companies. Unfortunately, it is poorly formatted and contains several typographical errors. What type of communication barrier might this cause?
- a. bypassing
  - b. differing frames of reference
  - c. emotional distraction
  - d. physical distraction

ANS: D            DIF: 3            REF: p. 14            OBJ: 1-4            BLM: HO

TOP: Overcoming Interpersonal Communication Barriers

NOT: A poorly formatted résumé that contains typographical errors presents a physical distraction in the communication process.

36. While conducting an orientation session for new employees, Dylan noticed looks of confusion on the faces of some listeners. He then paused and asked his audience, *What questions do you have so far?* What method was Dylan striving to use to overcome communication barriers?
- a. questioning his assumptions, biases, and prejudices
  - b. improving his language and listening skills
  - c. creating an environment for useful feedback
  - d. reducing physical distractions

ANS: C            DIF: 3            REF: p. 14            OBJ: 1-4            BLM: HO

TOP: Overcoming Interpersonal Communication Barriers

NOT: By asking his audience for questions, Dylan was creating an environment for useful feedback. Creating an environment for feedback can help a communicator clear up many misunderstandings.

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37. Naoko has just moved to Canada and is taking a class to improve her English skills. What interpersonal communication barrier is she trying to overcome?
- lack of language skill
  - bypassing
  - differing frames of reference
  - semantic obstacles

ANS: A            DIF: 3            REF: p. 14            OBJ: 1-4            BLM: HO  
TOP: Overcoming Interpersonal Communication Barriers  
NOT: To overcome barriers caused by lack of language skill, each individual needs an adequate vocabulary, a command of basic punctuation and grammar, and skill in written and oral expression.

38. Which of the following is an example of external organizational communication?
- an employee performance appraisal
  - a sales letter sent to a prospective customer
  - a report recommending a change in company procedure
  - an e-mail message giving instructions for requesting a change in health benefits

ANS: B            DIF: 3            REF: p. 15            OBJ: 1-5            BLM: HO  
TOP: Communicating in Organizations  
NOT: a. An employee performance appraisal is an example of internal organizational communication. b. A sales letter is an example of external organizational communication. c. A report recommending a change in company procedure is an example of internal organizational communication. d. An e-mail message giving instructions for requesting changes in health benefits is an example of internal organizational communication.

39. Which of the following is an example of an internal organizational communication?
- a collection letter sent to a customer
  - a Web site advertising a company's products
  - a meeting of all department managers
  - an annual report sent to company stockholders

ANS: C            DIF: 3            REF: p. 15            OBJ: 1-5            BLM: HO  
TOP: Communicating in Organizations  
NOT: a. A collection letter sent to a customer is an example of external organizational communication. b. A Web site advertising a company's products is an example of external organizational communication. c. A meeting of all department managers is an example of internal organizational communication. d. An annual report sent to company stockholders is an example of internal organizational communication.

40. What are the three basic functions of business communication?
- inform, entertain, and explain
  - inform, persuade, and promote goodwill
  - inform, persuade, and explain
  - inform, instruct, and entertain

ANS: B            DIF: 1            REF: p. 17            OBJ: 1-5            BLM: REM  
TOP: Communicating in Organizations  
NOT: The three basic functions of business communication are to inform, persuade, and

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promote goodwill.

41. Kenrick is communicating with a colleague in real time over the Internet using a private chat room. What communication technology is Kenrick using?
- instant messaging (IM)
  - blogging
  - e-mailing
  - videoconferencing

ANS: A            DIF: 1            REF: p. 17            OBJ: 1-5            BLM: REM  
TOP: Communicating in Organizations  
NOT: Instant messaging allows users to create a private chat room to communicate in real time over the Internet.

42. Which of the following statements comparing oral and written communication is **MOST** accurate?
- Written communication is preferred when a permanent record is needed.
  - Oral messages are generally more organized and well considered than written messages.
  - One advantage of written communication such as a report is that it allows for immediate feedback.
  - Oral communication is preferred when presenting formal or complex ideas.

ANS: A            DIF: 3            REF: pp. 17-18            OBJ: 1-5            BLM: HO  
TOP: Communicating in Organizations  
NOT: a. One advantage of written communication is that it leaves a permanent record. b. Writing out an idea instead of delivering it orally enables communicators to develop a more organized, well-considered message. c. Oral communication, not written communication, allows for immediate feedback. d. Written communication is better when presenting formal or complex ideas.

43. Which of the following is an example of downward communication?
- Three supervisors meet to discuss a new training program for their employees.
  - A supervisor submits a progress report on his department's current project.
  - An employee suggests a way to improve customer service.
  - A supervisor sends an e-mail message to all division employees detailing the newest procedure for submitting expense account reports.

ANS: D            DIF: 3            REF: p. 19            OBJ: 1-6            BLM: HO  
TOP: Improving the Flow of Information in Organizations  
NOT: a. An example of horizontal communication in an organization involves three supervisors meeting to discuss a new training program for their employees. b. An example of upward communication involves a supervisor submitting a progress report on his department's current project. c. An example of upward communication involves an employee suggesting a way to improve customer service. d. An example of downward communication involves a supervisor sending an e-mail message to all division employees detailing the newest procedure for submitting expense account reports.

44. Which of the following is an example of an informal organizational communication channel?
- A supervisor gives a performance appraisal to her subordinate.
  - An employee suggests to his supervisor a way to increase productivity in his department.
  - Sales team members hold a virtual meeting to discuss potential customers.

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d. An employee starts a blog on which she shares her personal work experiences, opinions, and observations.

ANS: D            DIF: 3            REF: p. 31            OBJ: 1-6            BLM: HO

TOP: Improving the Flow of Communication in Organizations

NOT: a. A performance appraisal is an example of downward flow, which is a formal communication channel. b. An employee suggestion is an example of upward flow, which is a formal communication channel. c. A virtual meeting of sales team members is an example of horizontal flow, which is a formal communication channel. d. A blog is an example of an informal communication channel.

45. Which of the following statements about formal and informal communication channels is **MOST** accurate?
- a. All relevant organizational information should flow through formal communication channels.
  - b. Ideally, the heaviest flow of information within an organization should be downward, from decision makers to workers.
  - c. The grapevine can be a fairly accurate and speedy source of organization information.
  - d. Most traditional organizations have established regular channels for the horizontal exchange of information.

ANS: C            DIF: 3            REF: pp. 18-21            OBJ: 1-6            BLM: HO

TOP: Improving the Flow of Communication in Organizations

NOT: a. Relevant organizational information flows through both formal and informal communication channels. b. Ideally, the heaviest flow of information should be upward with information being fed steadily to decision makers. c. The informal grapevine is a powerful communication channel that can be fairly accurate and speedy. d. Most traditional organizations have few established regular channels for the horizontal exchange of information.

46. Companies are increasingly incorporating ethics into their organizations because they want to be socially responsible as well as endure what?
- a. more litigation, more resentment, more government regulation
  - b. less litigation, more resentment, more government regulation
  - c. less litigation, more resentment, less government regulation
  - d. less litigation, less resentment, less government regulation

ANS: D            DIF: 3            REF: p. 23            OBJ: 1-7            BLM: HO

TOP: Examining Business Communication Ethics

NOT: More and more companies include ethics programs because they know they will endure less litigation, resentment, and government regulation. It's not just about being socially responsible.

47. Covering up incidents, abusing sick days, lying to a supervisor, and taking credit for a colleague's ideas are examples of what?
- a. breaking the law
  - b. actions necessary to get ahead today
  - c. unethical actions
  - d. workplace distrust

ANS: C            DIF: 3            REF: p. 22            OBJ: 1-7            BLM: HO

TOP: Examining Business Communication Ethics

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NOT: a. These incidents are not violations of law; they are unethical actions. b. These incidents are not actions necessary to get ahead; they are unethical actions. c. These actions are examples of unethical actions. d. These incidents are not examples of distrust; they are unethical actions.

48. Which of the following statements about laws is **MOST** accurate?
- a. In Canada, each provincial Parliament has different legislative authority over copyright.
  - b. Anything published on the Internet is in the public domain and can be used freely.
  - c. The Competition Bureau and the Canadian Standards Association provide guidelines to Canadian companies for marketing environmental messages.
  - d. The principal exception to the exclusive rights of copyright holders is called "fair use."

ANS: C                      DIF: 3                      REF: p. 23                      OBJ: 1-7                      BLM: HO

TOP: Examining Business Communication Ethics

NOT: a. In Canada, the federal Parliament has exclusive legislative authority over copyright. b. Internet items are covered by copyright laws and cannot be used freely unless they are in the public domain. c. The Competition Bureau and the Canadian Standards Association provide guidelines to Canadian companies for marketing environmental messages. d. Fair dealing creates a limited number of exceptions, including private study, research, criticism, review, and news reporting.

49. In addition to telling the truth, labelling opinions so that they are not confused with facts, being objective, and writing clearly, what else should ethical business communicators strive to do?
- a. Ensure that communication flows upward, downward, and horizontally.
  - b. Give credit when using the ideas of others.
  - c. Encourage feedback.
  - d. Choose appropriate channels of communication.

ANS: B                      DIF: 3                      REF: pp. 23-24                      OBJ: 1-7                      BLM: HO

TOP: Examining Business Communication Ethics

NOT: Ethical business communicators strive to give credit when using the ideas of others. Ethical communication has little to do with the directional flow of communication, feedback, or choosing appropriate channels.

50. Because your department has not reached its sales quota, your boss has asked you to change figures to show that sales were higher than they actually were. Which of the following questions is **NOT** important as you decide what to do?
- a. Is the action you are considering legal?
  - b. Are there other alternatives?
  - c. Can you discuss the problem with someone whose advice you trust?
  - d. What is the best channel of communication to use in responding to your boss?

ANS: D                      DIF: 5                      REF: p. 25                      OBJ: 1-7                      BLM: HO

TOP: Examining Business Communication Ethics

NOT: When faced with difficult ethical decisions, all of the questions shown are helpful except the question regarding deciding on a channel of communication.

**TRUE/FALSE**

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1. Employers consistently say that communication skills are critical to effective job placement, performance, career advancement, and organizational success.  
  
ANS: T            DIF: 1            REF: p. 3            OBJ: 1-1            BLM: REM  
TOP: Building Your Career Success With Communication Skills  
NOT: Communication skills are consistently viewed by employees as being critical to effective job placement, performance, career advancement, and organizational success.
  2. Because of new communication technologies, writing skills are no longer important for most of today's workers.  
  
ANS: F            DIF: 1            REF: p. 4            OBJ: 1-1            BLM: REM  
TOP: Building Your Career Success With Communication Skills  
NOT: Writing skills are even more important today because technology enables us to transmit messages more rapidly, more often, and to greater numbers of people than ever before.
  3. The abilities to read, listen, speak, and write effectively are inborn.  
  
ANS: F            DIF: 1            REF: p. 4            OBJ: 1-1            BLM: REM  
TOP: Building Your Career Success With Communication Skills  
NOT: Communication skills are not inborn; they are learned.
  4. The key ingredients in today's North American economy are physical labour, raw materials, and capital.  
  
ANS: F            DIF: 1            REF: p. 5            OBJ: 1-1            BLM: REM  
TOP: Thriving as a Knowledge Worker in the Information Age  
NOT: The key ingredients in today's North American economy are information and knowledge.
  5. Knowledge workers are paid for their ability to learn and to think creatively and critically.  
  
ANS: T            DIF: 1            REF: p. 5            OBJ: 1-1            BLM: REM  
TOP: Thriving as a Knowledge Worker in the Information Age  
NOT: Knowledge workers engage in mind work and are paid for their ability to learn and to think creatively and critically.
  6. The "new economy" comprises Internet-based companies and e-commerce.  
  
ANS: T            DIF: 1            REF: p. 5            OBJ: 1-1            BLM: REM  
TOP: Thriving as a Knowledge Worker in the Information Age  
NOT: The new economy comprises e-commerce and Internet-based companies, and the old economy comprises bricks-and-mortar companies.
  7. The most successful employees in today's workplace will be those who are willing to become lifelong learners.  
  
ANS: T            DIF: 1            REF: p. 5            OBJ: 1-1            BLM: REM  
TOP: Thriving as a Knowledge Worker in the Information Age

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NOT: The most successful businesspeople will be those willing to learn constantly in order to acquire new skills to help them keep up with evolving technologies and procedures.

8. Small, medium, and large companies increasingly find themselves competing in global rather than local markets.

ANS: T            DIF: 1            REF: p. 7            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: REM

TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace

NOT: Because of improved systems of telecommunication, advanced forms of transportation, and saturated local markets, many companies of all sizes are moving beyond familiar territories to emerging markets around the world.

9. Flattened management hierarchies allow companies to react more quickly to market changes.

ANS: T            DIF: 1            REF: p. 7            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: REM

TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace

NOT: In flat organizations, where the lines of communication are shorter, decision makers can react more quickly to market changes.

10. Cross-functional teams are usually made up of people with similar backgrounds, knowledge, and training.

ANS: F            DIF: 1            REF: p. 8            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: REM

TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace

NOT: When companies form cross-functional teams, individual team members often don't share the same background, knowledge, or training.

11. Communication technologies such as e-mail, instant messaging, blogs, wikis, and wireless networking allow employees to collaborate and complete their work from anywhere in the world.

ANS: T            DIF: 3            REF: p. 8            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: HO

TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace

NOT: Tools such as e-mail, instant messaging, blogs, wikis, and wireless networking allow employees and virtual teams to collaborate and complete their work from anywhere geographically.

12. The Canadian workforce is expected to increase in age over the next several years.

ANS: T            DIF: 3            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: HO

TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace

NOT: The Canadian workforce will see a big jump in older workers in the future. By 2015, 48 percent of Canada's working population will be between the ages of 46 and 64.

13. Diverse workforces are not able to respond as effectively as homogeneous workforces to changes in local markets.

ANS: F            DIF: 3            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-2            BLM: HO

TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace

NOT: A diverse staff is better able to read trends and respond to the increasingly diverse

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customer base in local and world markets.

14. As long as the message is properly transmitted from the sender to the receiver, successful communication has taken place.

ANS: F            DIF: 3            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Communication has as its central objective the transmission of meaning. The process of communication is successful only when the receiver understands an idea as the sender intended it.

15. Encoding is the process of converting an idea into words or gestures that will convey meaning.

ANS: T            DIF: 1            REF: p. 13            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: REM  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Encoding is the process of converting an idea into words or gestures that will convey meaning.

16. The process of communication begins when the receiver has an idea.

ANS: F            DIF: 1            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: REM  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: The process of communication begins when the person with whom the message originates—the sender—has an idea.

17. The receiver of a message has primary responsibility for the communication transaction's success or failure.

ANS: F            DIF: 3            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Because the sender initiates a communication transaction, he or she has primary responsibility for its success or failure.

18. Derek responds with positive words about his colleague's idea, but his tone is sarcastic. Tone sends a nonverbal message during the communication process.

ANS: T            DIF: 5            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Messages carry both verbal and nonverbal messages. Derek's sarcastic tone carries a nonverbal message.

19. The best feedback to a message is descriptive rather than evaluative.

ANS: T            DIF: 3            REF: p. 14            OBJ: 1-3            BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: The best feedback to a message is descriptive rather than evaluative.

20. You and your boss come from very different educational and professional backgrounds. You are most likely to experience communication barriers due to differing frames of reference.

ANS: T            DIF: 3            REF: p. 14            OBJ: 1-4            BLM: HO



**NOT:** A common barrier to clear communication is your frame of reference, which is formed by a combination of your experiences, education, culture, expectations, personality, and many other elements. Because your frame of reference is different from everyone else's, you will never see things exactly as others do.

- NOT: Planning for feedback is an effective way to overcome communication barriers. Asking questions such as *Are there any other points you would like me to cover?* is a good way to encourage feedback.

- NOT: Internal communication includes sharing ideas and messages with superiors, coworkers, and subordinates.

- NOT: Communication with customers, suppliers, the public, and the government are examples of external communication.

- NOT: Business communication functions fall into three primary categories: (1) to inform, (2) to persuade, and (3) to promote goodwill.

- NOT: Today's organizations prefer interactive, fast-results communication, such as e-mail, instant messaging, and cell phones.

- ANS: T      DIF: 3      REF: p. 17      OBJ: 1-5      BLM:HO

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TOP: Communicating in Organizations

NOT: Oral communication minimizes misunderstandings because communicators can immediately ask questions to clarify uncertainties.

27. Because of the latest technology, fewer than half of all business transactions may involve written messages, making writing skills less important than in the past.

ANS: F            DIF: 3            REF: p. 18            OBJ: 1-5            BLM: HO

TOP: Communicating in Organizations

NOT: As much as 90 percent of all business transactions may involve written messages, making writing skills even more important than in the past.

28. Information flows through formal communication channels in three directions: downward, upward, and spiral.

ANS: F            DIF: 1            REF: p. 19            OBJ: 1-6            BLM: REM

TOP: Improving the Flow of Communication in Organizations

NOT: Information among workers flows through formal channels in three directions: downward, upward, and horizontally.

29. Leanne, a company supervisor, frequently communicates via e-mail with other supervisors within the company. This is an example of a horizontal flow of communication.

ANS: T            DIF: 3            REF: p. 20            OBJ: 1-6            BLM: HO

TOP: Improving the Flow of Communication in Organizations

NOT: Lateral channels transmit information horizontally among workers at the same level, such as between supervisors.

30. Many of today's companies have decreased the number of operating units and managers, thereby shortening lines of communication.

ANS: T            DIF: 1            REF: p. 20            OBJ: 1-6            BLM: REM

TOP: Improving the Flow of Communication in Organizations

NOT: By decreasing the number of operating units and managers, many companies have been able to shorten the lines of communication.

31. Mohammed, a payroll clerk, came up with an idea for processing payroll more efficiently and presented it to the Human Resources Department manager. This is an example of a downward flow of communication.

ANS: F            DIF: 3            REF: pp. 18-19            OBJ: 1-6            BLM: HO

TOP: Improving the Flow of Communication in Organizations

NOT: Information flowing upward allows employees to suggest methods to management for improving efficiency.

32. Managers can influence the grapevine by acting promptly to correct misinformation.

ANS: T            DIF: 1            REF: p. 21            OBJ: 1-6            BLM: REM

TOP: Improving the Flow of Communication in Organizations

NOT: One way a manager can influence the grapevine is by acting promptly to correct

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misinformation.

33. Downsizing, cost-cutting measures, and the tremendous influx of temporary workers in the current workplace all contribute to the reduced feelings of trust employees feel toward their employers.

ANS: T            DIF: 3            REF: p. 21            OBJ: 1-6            BLM: HO  
TOP: Improving the Flow of Communication in Organizations  
NOT: Downsizing, cost-cutting measures, and the tremendous influx of temporary workers in the current workplace can all contribute to reduced feelings of trust employees may feel toward their employers. These factors hinder effective upward communication.

34. A company's management team has come up with a strategic plan and will share it with all employees. This is an example of downward communication.

ANS: T            DIF: 3            REF: p. 19            OBJ: 1-6            BLM: HO  
TOP: Improving the Flow of Communication in Organizations  
NOT: Information flowing downward moves from decision makers, such as a management team, down to workers.

35. When management does not provide sufficient information to employees through the formal channels of the organization, employees may obtain most of their company news from the grapevine.

ANS: T            DIF: 1            REF: p. 21            OBJ: 1-6            BLM: REM  
TOP: Improving the Flow of Communication in Organizations  
NOT: Management should try to provide sufficient information to employees through the formal channels of the organization so that employees don't need to rely on the grapevine for information.

36. Ethics can be defined as doing the right thing, given the circumstances.

ANS: T            DIF: 1            REF: p. 23            OBJ: 1-7            BLM: REM  
TOP: Examining Business Communication Ethics  
NOT: Ethics is often defined as doing the right thing in a given situation.

37. Most people find it easy to be ethical because solid rules of ethical behaviour exist to guide us.

ANS: F            DIF: 1            REF: p. 23            OBJ: 1-7            BLM: REM  
TOP: Examining Business Communication Ethics  
NOT: Being ethical is not always an easy task because no solid rules of ethical behaviour exist to guide us.

38. Facts and opinions are often the same.

ANS: F            DIF: 1            REF: p. 23            OBJ: 1-7            BLM: REM  
TOP: Examining Business Communication Ethics  
NOT: Facts are verifiable; however, opinions are beliefs that cannot be substantiated.

39. Some organizations have passed "Plain English" guidelines that require employees to write policies, warranties, and contracts in language comprehensible to average readers.

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ANS: T            DIF: 1            REF: p. 24            OBJ: 1-7            BLM: REM

TOP: Examining Business Communication Ethics

NOT: Some organizations have passed “Plain English” guidelines that require employees to write policies, warranties, and contracts in language comprehensible to average readers. Plain English means short sentences, simple words, and clear organization.

40. When you believe your company is doing something wrong, you should immediately blow the whistle to make sure that the wrongdoing doesn’t continue.

ANS: F            DIF: 5            REF: p. 25            OBJ: 1-7            BLM: HO

TOP: Examining Business Communication Ethics

NOT: Before blowing the whistle, make sure your facts are straight and then try to correct the matter inside the company.

## COMPLETION

1.            The transmission of information and meaning from one individual to another is called \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: communication    DIF: 1            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-3

BLM: REM    TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication

NOT: Communication is the transmission of information and meaning from one individual to another.

2.            The person with whom the message originates is known as the \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: sender            DIF: 1            REF: p. 9            OBJ: 1-3    BLM:

REM            TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication

NOT: Communication has as its central objective the transmission of meaning.

3.            The process of converting an idea into words or gestures that will convey meaning is called \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: encoding        DIF: 1            REF: p. 17            OBJ: 1-3    BLM:

REM            TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication

NOT: Encoding is the process of converting an idea into words or gestures that will convey meaning.

4.            The medium over which a message is physically transmitted, such as e-mail, cell phone, or spoken word, is called the \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: channel        DIF: 1            REF: p. 13            OBJ: 1-3    BLM:

REM            TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication

NOT: The medium over which the message is physically transmitted is the channel.

5.            Anything that interrupts the transmission of a message in the communication process is called \_\_\_\_\_.

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ANS: noise      DIF: 1      REF: p. 13      OBJ: 1-3      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Anything that interrupts the transmission of a message in the communication process is called noise.

6.            The individual in the communication process for whom the message is intended is the \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: receiver      DIF: 1      REF: p. 13      OBJ: 1-3      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: The receiver is the individual for whom the message is intended.

7.            Translating a message from its symbol form into meaning involves \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: decoding      DIF: 1      REF: p. 13      OBJ: 1-3      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Decoding is the process of translating a message from its symbol form into meaning.

8.            The verbal and nonverbal responses of the receiver help the sender know that the message was received and understood. These responses are known as \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: feedback      DIF: 1      REF: p. 13      OBJ: 1-3      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication  
NOT: Feedback, which can be both verbal and nonverbal, helps the sender know that the message was received and understood.

9.            When people interpret the meanings of words differently, it is called \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: bypassing      DIF: 1      REF: p. 14      OBJ: 1-4      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Overcoming Interpersonal Communication Barriers  
NOT: Bypassing happens when people apply different meanings to words.

10.          A combination of experiences, education, culture, expectations, personality, and many other elements form an individual's frame of \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: reference      DIF: 1      REF: p. 14      OBJ: 1-4      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Overcoming Interpersonal Communication Barriers  
NOT: An individual's unique frame of reference is formed by a combination of his or her experiences, education, culture, expectations, personality, and many other elements.

11.          The three primary functions of business communication are to inform, to persuade, and to promote \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: goodwill      DIF: 1      REF: p. 17      OBJ: 1-5      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Communicating in Organizations  
NOT: The three primary functions of business communication are to inform, to persuade, and to promote goodwill.

12.          An internal company version of the Internet is called a(n) \_\_\_\_\_.

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ANS: intranet      DIF: 1      REF: p. 17      OBJ: 1-5      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Communicating in Organizations  
NOT: Intranets are internal company versions of the Internet.

13.      Official information among workers typically flows through formal channels in three directions: downward, upward, and \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: horizontally      DIF: 1      REF: p. 21      OBJ: 1-6      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Improving the Flow of Information in Organizations  
NOT: Official information among workers typically flows through formal channels in three directions: downward, upward, and horizontally.

14.      Communication from managers to employees such as job plans, policies, instructions, feedback, and procedures flow \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: downward      DIF: 1      REF: p. 19      OBJ: 1-6      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Improving the Flow of Information in Organizations  
NOT: Job plans, policies, instructions, feedback, and procedures flow downward from managers to employees.

15.      In most organizations feedback from employees to management flows \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: upward      DIF: 1      REF: p. 20      OBJ: 1-6      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Improving the Flow of Information in Organizations  
NOT: Feedback from employees to management forms the upward flow of communication in most organizations.

16.      Workers at the same level coordinate tasks, share information, solve problems, and resolve conflicts through \_\_\_\_\_ communication.

ANS: horizontal      DIF: 1      REF: p. 21      OBJ: 1-6      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Improving the Flow of Information in Organizations  
NOT: Workers at the same level coordinate tasks, share information, solve problems, and resolve conflicts through horizontal communication.

17.      Often information in an organization travels along informal channels structured around social rather than formal relationships. These channels are also called the \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: grapevine      DIF: 1      REF: p. 21      OBJ: 1-6      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Improving the Flow of Information in Organizations  
NOT: The grapevine is an informal channel of communication that carries organizationally relevant gossip and is structured around social relationships.

18.      Doing the right thing given the circumstances is behaving \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: ethically      DIF: 1      REF: p. 23      OBJ: 1-7      BLM:  
REM      TOP: Examining Business Communications Ethics  
NOT: Ethics can be defined as that behaviour which is the right thing to do, given the

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circumstances.

19. Facts are verifiable and often are quantifiable; beliefs held with confidence but without substantiation are \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: opinions DIF: 1 REF: p. 23 OBJ: 1-7 BLM:

REM TOP: Examining Business Communications Ethics

NOT: Facts are verifiable and often are quantifiable; opinions are beliefs held with confidence but without substantiation.

20. When employees or ex-employees report wrongdoing such as fraud, malpractice, mismanagement, breach of health and safety law, or any other illegal or unethical act, either on the part of management or by fellow employees, they are engaging in \_\_\_\_\_.

ANS: whistleblowing DIF: 1 REF: p. 25 OBJ: 1-7  
BLM: REM TOP: Examining Business Communications Ethics

NOT: Whistleblowing is the reporting, by employees or ex-employees, of wrongdoing such as fraud, malpractice, mismanagement, breach of health and safety law, or any other illegal or unethical act, either on the part of management or by fellow employees.

## ESSAY

1. Describe five changes occurring in the North American workplace and discuss how communication skills are related to those changes.

ANS: Students will select five of the following and answers will vary.

- a. Global competition: Successful communication in global markets requires developing new skills and attitudes. These include cultural knowledge and sensitivity, flexibility, and patience.
- b. Flattened management hierarchies: Today's flatter organizations require that employees at all levels possess strong written and oral communication skills because their input and commitment are necessary for their organizations to be successful.
- c. Team-based management: When companies form cross-functional teams, individuals must work together and share information. These employees must develop strong interpersonal, negotiation, and collaboration techniques.
- d. Innovative communication technologies: To use new communication technologies, including e-mail, instant messaging, text messaging, PDAs, fax, voice mail, wireless networking, cell phones, powerful laptop computers, satellite communications, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, weblogs, wikis, and peer-to-peer tools, effectively, business communicators must know how to select the best communication channel, how to use each channel and medium most effectively, and how to use online search tools efficiently.
- e. New work environments: Working in open offices, having flexible working arrangements, telecommuting, and being a member of virtual teams all require the need for even stronger communication skills. Staying connected involves sending messages, most of which are written, meaning that one's writing skills are constantly on display.
- f. Diverse workforce: Business communicators must be able to interact with many coworkers who differ from them in race, ethnicity, gender, age, and many other ways.
- g. Emergence of a knowledge-based economy: Knowledge workers must be able to think critically and to generate, process, and exchange information.

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DIF: 5      REF: pp. 7-9      OBJ: 1-1      BLM: HO  
TOP: Factors Affecting You in Today's Workplace

2. Describe the communication process and how noise affects it.

ANS: Student answers will vary. The communication process has the following steps:

- a. The sender has an idea, which can be influenced by such things as mood, frame of reference, background, culture, physical makeup, and the context of the situation.
- b. The sender encodes the message, which means converting the idea into words or gestures that will convey meaning. Bypassing occurs when misunderstandings result from missed meanings.
- c. The message travels over a communication channel. Examples include computers, telephones, cell phones, letters, memorandums, reports, announcements, pictures, spoken words, faxes, and Web pages. Anything that interrupts the transmission of a message in the communication process is called noise. Channel noise ranges from static that disrupts a telephone conversation to typographical and spelling errors in a letter or e-mail message. Channel noise might even include the annoyance a receiver feels when the sender chooses an improper medium for sending a message.
- d. The receiver decodes the message. Only when the receiver understands the meaning intended by the sender does communication take place. Decoding can be disrupted internally by the receiver's lack of attention to or bias against the sender. It can be disrupted externally by loud sounds or illegible words. Decoding can also be sidetracked by semantic obstacles, such as misunderstood words or emotional reactions to certain terms.
- e. Feedback travels to the sender. Feedback helps the sender know that the message was received and understood.

DIF: 5      REF: pp. 9-14      OBJ: 1-3      BLM: HO  
TOP: Understanding the Process of Communication

3. Describe the four significant interpersonal barriers to communication. Explain how these barriers to communication can be overcome.

ANS: Student answers will vary.

The four interpersonal barriers to communication are as follows:

- a. Bypassing: Bypassing occurs when people miss each other with their meanings. This happens because people sometimes attach different meanings to words. Bypassing can lead to major miscommunication because people assume that meanings are contained in words. Actually, meanings are in people.
- b. Differing frames of reference: Everyone has a unique frame of reference that is formed by his or her experiences, education, culture, expectations, personality, and many other elements. As a result, everyone brings his or her own biases and expectations to any communication situation.
- c. Lack of language skill: Each individual needs an adequate vocabulary, a command of basic punctuation and grammar, and skill in written and oral expression. Moreover, poor listening skills can prevent us from hearing oral messages clearly and thus responding properly.
- d. Distractions: Emotional interference and physical distractions can be barriers to communication. To reduce the influence of emotions on communication, both senders and receivers should focus on the content of the message and try to remain objective. Physical distractions such as faulty acoustics, noisy surroundings, or a poor cell phone connection can disrupt oral communication. Similarly, sloppy appearance, poor printing, careless formatting, and typographical or spelling errors can disrupt written messages.

These barriers can be overcome in the following ways:

- a. Recognize that the entire communication process is susceptible to breakdown. Anticipate problems in encoding, transmitting, and decoding a message.



- b. Focus on the receiver's environment and frame of reference.
- c. Arrange ideas logically and use words precisely.
- d. Question your own preconceptions; continually examine your personal assumptions, biases, and prejudices.
- e. Create an environment for useful feedback.

DIF: 5      REF: pp. 14-15      OBJ: 1-4      BLM: HO  
TOP: Overcoming Interpersonal Communication Barriers

4. Compare and contrast the internal and external functions of communication within organizations.

ANS: Student answers will vary.

**Internal communication** includes sharing ideas and messages with superiors, coworkers, and subordinates. Some of the functions of internal communication are to issue and clarify procedures and policies, inform management of progress, develop new products and services, persuade employees or management to make changes or improvements, coordinate activities, and evaluate and reward employees.

**External communication** takes place with customers, suppliers, government, and the public. Examples of external functions are to answer inquiries about products or services, persuade customers to buy products or services, clarify supplier specifications, issue credit, collect bills, respond to government agencies, and promote a positive image of the organization.

DIF: 3      REF: p. 15      OBJ: 1-5      BLM: HO  
TOP: Communicating in Organizations

5. Compare and contrast formal and informal channels of organizational communication.

ANS: Student answers will vary.

Information flows **formally** in organizations in three ways:

- a. Downward flow: Information flowing downward generally moves from decision makers, including the CEO and managers, through the chain of command to workers. This information includes job plans, policies, procedures, and feedback about employee performance.
- b. Upward flow: Information flowing upward provides feedback from nonmanagement employees to management. This information includes things such as progress reports and suggestions.
- c. Horizontal flow: Lateral channels transmit information horizontally among workers at the same level. These channels enable individuals to coordinate tasks, share information, solve problems, and resolve conflicts.

Information also flows **informally** in organizations, most commonly through the grapevine, an informal channel of communication that functions through social relationships and carries organizationally relevant gossip. The grapevine can also be used by managers as an excellent source of information about employee morale and problems.

DIF: 3      REF: pp. 18-21      OBJ: 1-6      BLM: HO  
TOP: Improving the Flow of Information in Organizations