

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

SECOND EDITION

The second edition of Business Communication is a comprehensive textbook specially designed to meet the needs of management students. The text material has been restructured to provide a more balanced and exhaustive coverage of the subject and give an in-depth coverage of the core components of business communication.

The book is now divided into four parts comprising 21 chapters. Beginning with an introduction to the principles of business communication in the first part, it goes on to discuss the written aspects in the second part. While the third part concentrates on developing oral skills for business, the fourth part analyses specific communication needs.

New to This Edition

- Two new chapters on cross-cultural communication and career building and résumé writing
- New sections on interpersonal communication, communication styles, fluency development strategies, types of interviews, video conferencing, teleconferencing, etc.
- New features such as business communication insights and business communication tools
- Sidebars for easy recapitulation
- New appendices on interview questions, impact words, transitions, British and American vocabulary, common usage errors, and commonly misspelt words

Praise for the First Edition

This handbook has been written particularly with students of management studies in mind.

—The Journal of Professional and Academic English, Winter 2009 – Spring 2010 Issue 35, January 2010

Business Communication is a very comprehensive title covering major aspects of the subject in depth.

—Prof. Dhruva Chak, BIMTECH, Greater Noida

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SECOND
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ONLINE RESOURCES
For Teachers and Students

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

SECOND EDITION

Meenakshi Raman
Prakash Singh

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

SECOND EDITION

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Preface to the Second Edition

Effective and efficient communication is central to doing successful business. The evolution of communication over the years has turned it to a much specialized domain worth studying. Be it our daily lives or business contexts, the need for effective communication is one aspect that can hardly be ignored. The importance of communication has only increased over the years and present day communication necessitates the knowledge of various aspects—both linguistic and technological.

The coming together of technology and communication has indeed helped communication transcend to new heights. Nowadays, one can communicate through various media and thus the channels of communication have grown manifold. The need of the hour is to understand the various characteristics of technology-enabled communication. Moreover, globalization has further added to the need to communicate effectively, especially in the organizational context. With multinational companies operating across continents, there has emerged a pressing need to comprehend not only linguistic differences but also cultural differences. The second edition of *Business Communication* focuses on these aspects of communication with special reference to cross-cultural communication. This edition includes new chapters, cases, and additional features that facilitate easy learning, quick comprehension, and long-term retention. The book is designed to cater to the syllabi requirements of management students and help professionals in communicating effectively—both verbally and non-verbally—at the workplace. The book also features a new chapter on résumé writing and career building—aspects that are of paramount importance to students readying for their careers in management.

The practical aspects of business communication are presented through lively and pedagogically effective examples interspersed throughout the text and end-of-chapter material. Students will be assisted in understanding business communication terminology through several sidebars. The practical examples and cases included in each chapter would facilitate the learners to assess their understanding and apply the concepts of business communication in real-time business contexts.

Key Features

- Contains cases and examples in the key areas of business communication
- Provides end-chapter exercises with concept review and critical thinking questions and interesting classroom activities and field projects

New to the Second Edition

- Two new chapters on cross-cultural communication and résumés
- New sections, such as interpersonal communication, communication styles, fluency development strategies, types of interviews, video conferencing, and teleconferencing
- New features, such as business communication insights and communication tools
- Appendices on transitional words and phrases, impact words, interview questions, common usage errors, commonly misspelt words, and British and American vocabulary
- New figures and photographs

Organization of Content

The content of the book has been organized into four parts and six appendices. Each part of the book presents both the theoretical and practical aspects of business communication.

Part I (Chapters 1 to 4) introduces those aspects of communication essential for getting insights into the foundations of communicating for business purposes. It includes an extensive chapter on cross-cultural aspects of globalized business environment and also on using appropriate technologies for business communication.

Part II (Chapters 5 to 9) deals with an important aspect of organizational communication, namely writing business messages and documents. Besides introducing the elements of effective business writing, this part of the book includes a chapter on instructions, which is very rare to find in any book of this kind. The newly included chapter on career building and résumé writing would not only catch the attention of the readers, but also prove to be immensely useful for them.

Part III (Chapters 10 to 16) elaborates on the various forms of oral communication that interest most readers and are also much in demand in the academic and professional world. Here again, the chapters on conversations and team briefing are seldom found in other books on business communication. The guidelines on presentations, public speaking, meetings, and interviews would prove to be valuable tools for the readers in enhancing their oral communication skills.

Part IV (Chapters 17 to 21), the last part of the book, focuses on specific communication needs of organizations. For instance, it explains the communication strategies for various functions, such as marketing, HR, and finance, at the workplace. Chapters on ethics and persuasive strategies enhance the appeal of the book by making it more comprehensive in almost all aspects of business communication.

A set of six new appendices have been added at the end of the book. Readers will find the interview questions included in Appendix A quite useful. Appendix B presents a list of words that can help create a positive impact on the interviewers during an interview. While Appendix C exhibits some transitional words and phrases, Appendix D shows the difference between British and American vocabulary. Appendices E and F present some common usage errors and commonly misspelt words, which will also help students as well as aspiring professionals.

**Meenakshi Raman
Prakash Singh**

Praise for the First Edition

The book deals with all aspects of the course contents.

—Dr Rajendra Prasad Sharma, IIFT, Kolkata Campus

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the administration of BITS Pilani and the Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow, under whose aegis we were provided an environment conducive to the completion of this edition. The editorial team at Oxford University Press deserves our special thanks for initiating and accomplishing the process of revision. We appreciate the constructive suggestions given by the reviewers to add new topics and update the first edition so as to suit the needs of a diverse population of students and professionals. Meenakshi Raman would like to acknowledge the help provided by Mr G. Gyanesh, her colleague at the Goa Campus, in preparing the new chapter on career building and résumé writing.

At the home front, we sincerely acknowledge the support and encouragement we got from our family members in successfully completing this revision.

We sincerely hope that this revised edition, with its updated, comprehensive coverage of all aspects and types of business communication, will prove to be highly useful to the readers in enhancing the effectiveness of their communication. Any suggestions for improvement are welcome.

**Meenakshi Raman
Prakash Singh**

Preface to the First Edition

The need to communicate is universal and transcends the notions of language, location, and lifestyle. People transmit and exchange their ideas, facts, feelings, or courses of action for personal or professional purposes. While the term 'personal communication' refers to *exchanging personal messages*, the term 'business communication' denotes the *process of sending and receiving business messages*.

An organization being a group of people working together to achieve a common goal, communication plays a significant role in the process of its formation and continuance. A group of people working together must interact in order to share their needs, thoughts, plans, expertise, opinions, and so on. Communication is the means by which information is shared, activities are coordinated, and decisions are implemented. Whether it is an academic institution or business organization, communicating formal and technical messages is vital for its progress, prosperity, and sustenance. The various oral and written forms of communication, such as presentations, briefings, meetings, interviews, conversations, seminars, conferences, discussions, instructions, reports, proposals, letters, advertisements, and so on, not only enable people to come together and share their ideas at various workplaces but also enable organizations to progress and prosper.

Good communication skills are basic to successful management. Today, the reputation of an organization, an industry, or a nation depends on the quality and quantity of information they transmit and exchange. Gone are the days when information dissemination used to be the function of a specific group in an organization. With the phenomenal advancement in technology, accessing and sharing of information has now become a common function and communication has assumed more importance than ever before. This makes it necessary for business organizations to reorient themselves towards a better understanding of the process of transmitting and receiving information effectively and efficiently through oral and written media.

The educational institutions offering management programmes play a significant part in inculcating the much-needed managerial skills in their students—the aspiring managers. There is no denying the fact that acquiring knowledge of the various managerial functions is important, but it is important to realize that developing business communication skills is central to carrying out all these functions effectively. Taking cognizance of this fact, all academic institutions offering undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in management have included business communication as a part of their curriculum.

Business communication is evolving at a rapid pace with the introduction of new network-based collaborative technologies. These technologies and tools are making real-time communication a reality, which can improve employee productivity and deliver tremendous returns for employers. As a result of global competition and restructuring, we are witnessing dramatic changes in work environments. Information is now exchanged via email and voicemail; meetings are conducted through teleconferencing and video conferencing; business presentations are made with the use of sophisticated presentation software; shopping is offered online; and customer information is collected and products are promoted using the Internet.

Because of the various phenomenal changes in the business environment, recruiters now look for students with good computer-cum-communication skills. To thrive in this new world of work, management students must be flexible and willing to continually learn new skills that supplement the basic skills they acquire as students. Probably, the most important basic skill for managers in the new environment is the ability to com-

municate effectively, which means being able to exchange information and ideas effectively in speech and writing. As they climb higher in their career, communication skills become even more important. In spite of the increasing importance of communication skills, many individuals struggle to communicate their thoughts and ideas effectively in both verbal and written format. This inability makes it nearly impossible for them to compete effectively in the workplace and stands in the way of their progress.

About the Book

The main objective of this book is to provide the reader with adequate exposure to the various forms and practices of business communication, primarily focusing on the communication needs of management students. At the same time, the book would also serve as a comprehensive guide for other students and business professionals who want to enhance their communication skills. The in-depth discussions on business conversations, instructions, team briefing, team presentation, business ethics, functional areas of communication, and core issues in corporate communication would not only help readers understand the nuances of business communication, but also enable them to enhance their communication skills at the workplace. Although a large number of books are available in the market to cater to the communication needs of students and professionals, this book is unique inasmuch as it discusses communication concepts and practices from the Indian business perspective. It includes caselets and excerpts pertaining to Indian businesses, such as Aditya Birla Group, Infosys, Wipro Industries, Merrill Lynch (India), and Reliance Industries. Each of the eighteen chapters contains either a case study or an excerpt relevant to the topic of discussion in that chapter, providing a practical approach to the ideas discussed. Moreover, numerous examples are given to illustrate the various forms of business communication and facilitate readers' understanding of the communication practices prevalent in contemporary business scenario.

Pedagogical Features

Each chapter of the book begins with learning objectives and concludes with a case, caselet, or excerpt relevant to the development of a specific skill in communicating for business purposes discussed in that chapter. The assignments given at the end of each chapter help to assess not only the reader's understanding of the concepts but also their ability to apply those concepts in appropriate business situations. For example, in Chapter 4, the speech by Mr Aditya Vikram Birla is included in the critical thinking exercises to expose the readers to the fine techniques of public speaking discussed in the chapter. The case on Reliance Industries' image in the chapter on corporate communication is a direct indication of how the authors have tried to use recent corporate issues as a tool to drive home the concepts discussed in the book. Chapter 16 presents the WIPRO identity case to enunciate the advertising strategies discussed in the first part of the chapter. Similarly, the Pentagon case in the chapter on ethical communication brings out the emotional aspect of media reporting and other related issues.

Besides the three types of exercises—concept review questions, critical thinking questions, and projects—the book is also accompanied by an Instructor's Manual that provides guidance to instructors as to using it effectively in the classroom. The Instructors' Manual, which is available on demand, also outlines solutions to all the exercises given at the end of each chapter.

Acknowledgements

Any project of this magnitude requires the goodwill, encouragement, guidance, and support of many people.

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Reviewers are an indispensable part of the making of a good textbook. Although we do not know them by name, we found ourselves in anonymous debate with several remarkable thinkers, especially about some of the important but not so common topics discussed in the book. Their keen eye and questioning attitude sharpened each chapter so as to benefit both the authors and the readers. In this regard, we appreciate the tremendous efforts of the editorial team of Oxford University Press, New Delhi, who were constantly communicating to us on all review matters.

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**Meenakshi Raman
Prakash Singh**

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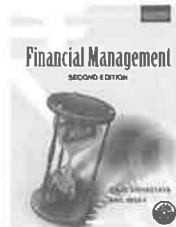
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