Essentials of Business Communication (Canadian) 10th edition Guffey Solutions Manual

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Chapter 1
Communicating in Today's Workplace

Answers to Chapter Review Questions

1. Based on what you have learned in this chapter, describe the kind of work environment you can expect to enter when you graduate. (Obj. 1)

ANS: Expect a fast-moving, competitive, and information-driven environment. Communication technology provides unmatched mobility and connects individuals anytime and anywhere in the world. Increasing numbers of workers must be available practically around the clock and must respond quickly. Today's communicators interact using mobile devices and access information stored on remote servers in the cloud.

2. Why are writing skills more important in today's workplace than ever before? (Obj. 1)

ANS: People in today's workforce communicate more, not less, since information technology and the Internet have transformed the world of work. In a hyperconnected world, writing matters more than ever. Digital media require more written communication, and workers' skills are always on display. Employers seek employees who have a broad range of skills and high levels of knowledge in their field, and many job listings mention the need for excellent oral and written communication skills.

3. List six trends in the digital-age workplace that affect business communicators. Be prepared to discuss how they might affect you in your future career. (Obj. 1)

ANS: 1. Rapidly changing communication technologies

2. Mobile "anytime, anywhere" and nonterritorial offices

3. Increased emphasis on self-directed work groups and virtual teams

4. Flattened management hierarchies

5. Heightened global competition

6. Renewed emphasis on ethics

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4. List bad habits and distractions that can act as barriers to effective listening. (Obj. 2)

ANS: 1. Physical barriers

2. Psychological barriers

3. Language problems

4. Nonverbal distractions

5. Thought speed

6. Faking attention

7. Grandstanding

5. List 11 techniques for improving your listening skills. Be prepared to discuss each. (Obj. 2)

ANS: 1. Stop talking.

2. Control your surroundings.

3. Establish a receptive mindset.

4. Keep an open mind.

5. Listen for main points.

6. Capitalize on lag time.

7. Listen between the lines.

8. Judge ideas, not appearances.

9. Hold your fire.

10. Take selective notes.

11. Provide feedback.

6. What is nonverbal communication and are nonverbal cues easy to read? (Obj. 3)

ANS: Nonverbal communication includes all unwritten and unspoken messages, whether intended or not. These silent signals have a strong effect on receivers. However, understanding them is not simple. Messages are even harder to decipher when the verbal and nonverbal cues do not agree. The nonverbal messages in these situations speak more loudly than the words. Researchers believe that the bulk of messages we receive are nonverbal.

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7. How do we send messages to others without speaking? (Obj. 3)

ANS: Every behaviour sends a message even if we don't use words. Eye contact, facial expression, gestures, and posture convey meaning without a single syllable being spoken. In addition to nonverbal messages transmitted by the body, three external elements convey information in the communication process: time, space, and territory. Furthermore, our personal appearance and the eye appeal of business documents can have either a positive or a negative effect on the receiver.

8. What is culture, and what are five key dimensions that can be used to describe it? (Obj. 4)

ANS: Culture may be defined as the complex system of values, traits, morals, and customs shared by a society, region, or country. Culture is a powerful operating force that moulds the way we think, behave, and communicate. The five key dimensions that can be used to describe cultures are context, individualism, time orientation, power distance, and communication style.

9. List seven or more suggestions for enhancing comprehension when you are talking with non-native speakers of English. Be prepared to discuss each. (Obj. 5)

ANS: 1. Use simple English.

2. Speak slowly and enunciate clearly.

3. Encourage accurate feedback.

4. Check frequently for comprehension.

5. Observe eye messages.

6. Accept blame.

7. Listen without interrupting.

8. Smile when appropriate.

9. Follow up in writing.

Answers to Critical Thinking Questions

1. Do you consider your daily texting, Instagram updates, tweets, emails, and other informal writing to be “real writing”? How might such writing differ from the writing done in business? (Obj. 1)

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ANS: A person's daily texting, social media updates, emails, and other informal writing can be considered "real writing." These examples are channels of communication that are being integrated into the more formal world of business communication; however, when using such channels, recruiters and employers demand strong communications skills, and potential employees need to be aware of this fact. Employers demand skills of conciseness, efficiency, and professionalism. People in today's workforce are communicating more, and social media are playing an increasingly prominent role in business. Moreover, in a hyperconnected world, communication skills are always on display, and so it is vital that writers are cognizant of what and how they communicate with others, whether formally or informally. The key to success, therefore, is to transform informal (or social) writing into "real" (or formal business) writing, and those who are able to develop this skill will become more employable.

2. Why do executives and managers spend more time listening than do workers? (Obj. 2)

ANS: Ultimately, executives and managers are responsible for a successful work environment. These are the people who must make decisions, and thus listening to and concentrating on feedback and nonverbal communication from employees and colleagues is an important element of business communication. Listening to workers communicates the message that their opinions are valued and that managers show mutual respect. When managers listen, it also demonstrates that they are tuning in to employees, and managers can even become better listeners on a nonverbal level. This engagement helps to empower employees to become better people and employees. Finally, listening allows managers to understand people, the inner workings of the business, and how to handle difficult situations. Lee Iacocca, former CEO of Chrysler, said that listening could make "the difference between a mediocre company and a great company," and good listeners hold higher-level positions and are promoted more often. Therefore, listening, as an executive, is a vital component of his or her and, ultimately, the company's success.

3. What arguments could you give for or against the idea that body language is a science with principles that can be interpreted accurately by specialists? (Obj. 3)

ANS: Body language could be considered to be a science with principles that can be interpreted accurately by specialists. Linguistics, kinesics, and semiotics are among the disciplines that attempt to observe and describe gesture and other forms of nonverbal communication. Furthermore, bioenergetic therapists read posture, gestures, and expressions to diagnose clients and then treat them. For example,

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Dr. Paul Ekman has conducted research classifying facial expressions. He believes that some expressions, such as those indicating anger and happiness, are biologically universal to all humans. Yet Amrozi, the Indonesian terrorist who is known as the "Smiling Bomber," demonstrated that a smile can also signal confidence and defiance. Another example is that while babies are unable to communicate through words, they can cry or exhibit facial expressions to demonstrate their needs and wants, such as being hungry or being happy/content. Similarly, a lie detector test, which can be used as evidence in court, is based upon internal and external body cues such as breathing, sweating, facial expression, and eye contact. There are, however, also cultural differences in body language that can lead to misinterpretation. For example, sitting cross-legged is seen as disrespectful in Japan; too firm a handshake is viewed as aggressive in the Far East; and northern European cultures will stand quite close and even touch others when speaking. Other cultures may find these practices insulting, rude, or offensive. Some individuals can artificially control their body language because they do not want to show emotion, or conversely, they can manipulate their body language to provide a sought impression. Body language is subject to context, intent, and interpretation. It is influenced by culture and socialization, and it differs with each individual. Body language is, simply put, the subjective interpretation of the observer and is open to misinterpretation and misunderstanding.

4. Consider potential culture clashes in typical business situations. Imagine that businesspeople from a high-context culture, say, China, meet their counterparts from a low-context culture, Canada, for the first time to negotiate and sign a manufacturing contract. What could go wrong? How about conflicting perceptions of time? (Obj. 4)

ANS: Cultural differences exist and can cause significant misunderstandings. Businesspeople need to familiarize themselves with one another's culture, customs, and traditions to avoid unfortunate situations. Examples of things that could go wrong if Chinese and Canadian counterparts meet to negotiate and sign a manufacturing contract include the following:

- Casual touching during greetings is acceptable to Canadians, but Chinese people are conservative and any touching, other than handshakes, should be avoided, especially between men and women.
- Canadians maintain eye contact while speaking; the Chinese do not (again, especially between men and women).

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- Canadians like to be well informed and knowledgeable about prospects. Canadians appreciate thoroughness and directness, while evasiveness is frowned upon. The Chinese are tough negotiators, and directness is not considered to be a smart negotiation tactic among them. With the Chinese, *yes* may not always be affirmative, and *no* may not always be dissenting. The Chinese also take offence to set instructions, feeling micromanaged by this.
- Canadians believe in building relationships but tend to view personal lives as private; for the Chinese, often their business and personal relationships blend, and many business meetings take place outside the office, over dinner, at a nightclub or karaoke bar. Meals are often sophisticated and lengthy. In addition, gift-giving is considered by the Chinese as a method to start a friendship, but there are acceptable and inappropriate gifts that must be defined.
- Canadians believe strongly in the concept of individualism, admiring such qualities as uniqueness, self-expression, and independence. On the other hand, the Chinese have always been considered to be a collectivist society, where the needs of the group are considered more important than those of a select few. Decisions are typically made collectively, and it is frowned upon to be in the minority when decisions are being discussed.
- When it comes to the concept of time, Canadians do not like to be kept waiting for any more than 10 to 15 minutes. If someone is going to be late for a meeting or appointment, a phone call should be made to advise others. Chinese people are punctual and consider it an insult to arrive late to meetings. The Chinese are less concerned with time, however, when it comes to decision making. While Canadians may make immediate decisions, they must be patient, as Chinese businesspeople may take multiple days, numerous meetings, and even other events to determine whether a business deal or an agreement will be accepted.

5. A stereotype is an oversimplified perception of a behavioural pattern or characteristic applied to entire groups. For example, Germans are formal, reserved, and blunt; Americans are loud, friendly, and impatient; Asians are gracious, humble, and inscrutable. In what way are such stereotypes harmless or harmful? (Obj. 5)

ANS: To stereotype an individual or a group is to apply limited experience or knowledge of one individual, either positive or negative, to that person's entire cultural group. Stereotyping produces labels that can be hurtful, harmful, and emotionally damaging. Stereotyping presents an opportunity for an individual to project his or her discomfort, dislikes, and biases. We need to be aware of these biases

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so that they can be put aside. Stereotyping is often the worst form of patronizing behaviour. A lack of awareness and misinformation are the foundation of many cross-cultural conflicts. To assist people in better understanding someone from another cultural background, we often make generalizations and assumptions that classify people by putting them into groupings that are unfamiliar to us. And while generalizations can be helpful in the process of understanding other cultures, they become dangerous when they result in negative stereotyping, such as developing unrealistic and exaggerated characteristics of a group of people (i.e., all Muslims are terrorists; all Jews are rich; all Black people are excellent basketball players). Cultural awareness begins when we understands ourselves and then learn to understand others by practising open-mindedness and being exposed to other cultures, customs, and traditions.

Useful websites include the following:

www.joannamaxwell.com.au/the-dangers-of-stereotyping

www.brighthubeducation.com/middle-school-social-studies-lessons/1690-dangers-of-stereotyping

www.myplainview.com/opinion/editorials/article/The-dangers-of-stereotyping-8388435.php

Solutions to Activities and Cases

1.1 MAKING JOB DESCRIPTIONS MORE SPECIFIC AROUND COMMUNICATION (OBJ. 1)

You know from reading this chapter that solid communication skills are among the top two skills Canadian employers are looking for. However, job descriptions don't usually go into more detail than that—they assume everyone knows what "excellent communication" means.

Your Task. Working individually or in teams, compile a database of people you know who work in a supervisory/managerial role—it doesn't matter at what type of organization. Develop a brief questionnaire (perhaps using Surveymonkey) in which you ask these people to be more specific about what "excellent communication" means. For example, a question could be, "In your organization, what specific types of writing does an entry-level employee need to know how to do? What specific types of speaking? How do you know when an entry-level employee is not showing effective writing skills? Speaking skills?" After you receive your answers, analyze them and look for similarities and differences. Share your analysis with your instructor or your class in a brief report or presentation.

ANS: Answers will vary.

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1.2 INTRODUCE YOURSELF (OBJ. 1)

Your instructor wants to know more about you, your motivation for taking this course, your career goals, and your writing skills.

Your Task. Send a professional email of introduction to your instructor. See Chapter 5 for formats and tips on drafting emails. In your message include the following:

a. Your reasons for taking this class
b. Your career goals (both short term and long term)
c. A brief description of your employment and your favourite activities
d. An evaluation and discussion of your communication skills, including your strengths and weaknesses

For online classes, write a message of introduction about yourself with the preceding information. Post your message to your discussion board. Read and comment on the posts of other students. Think about how people in virtual teams must learn about each other through online messages.

Alternatively, your instructor may assign this task as a concise individual voice mail message to establish your telephone etiquette and speaking skills.

ANS: This email or memo is an excellent way to assess students' skills and, at the same time, get to know them. Don't grade this assignment, but be sure to write a friendly comment on all papers or send friendly email replies to demonstrate that you have an interest in them as students and as individuals.

1.3 SMALL-GROUP PRESENTATION: INTRODUCE EACH OTHER (OBJS. 1, 2)

Many organizations today use teams to accomplish their goals. To help you develop speaking, listening, and teamwork skills, your instructor may assign team projects. One of the first jobs in any team is selecting members and becoming acquainted.

Your Task. Your instructor will divide your class into small groups or teams. At your instructor's direction, either (a) interview another group member and introduce that person to the group or (b) introduce yourself to the group. Think of this as an informal interview for a team assignment or for a job. You will

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want to make notes from which to speak. Your introduction should include information such as the answers to following:

a. Where did you grow up?
b. What work and extracurricular activities have you engaged in?
c. What are your interests and talents? What are you good at doing?
d. What have you achieved?
e. How familiar are you with various computer technologies?
f. What are your professional and personal goals? Where do you expect to be five years from now?

To develop listening skills, practise the listening techniques discussed in this chapter and take notes when other students are presenting. In addition to mentioning details about each speaker, be prepared to discuss three important facts about each speaker.

ANS: Students are asked to (a) interview another group member and introduce that person to the group or (b) introduce himself or herself to the group. Class members should practise listening skills by taking notes. They should be prepared to discuss three important facts about each speaker, as well as some other details.

1.4 REMEMBERING A TIME WHEN SOMEONE DIDN'T LISTEN TO YOU (OBJ. 2)

Think of a time when you felt that someone didn't listen to you—for example, on the job, at home, at the doctor's office, or at a store where you shop. Your instructor will split the class into pairs of speakers and listeners. The speakers will share their stories. The listeners must try to recognize two things: (a) what the poor listener in the story did that demonstrated non-listening and (b) what impact this had on the speaker's feelings. The speakers and listeners then reverse roles. After this second round, the class compares notes to debrief. All ideas are collected to identify patterns of nonlistening behaviour and its negative impact on the speakers.

Your Task. In pairs or individually, identify behaviour that would reverse what happened in the stories told in class. Based on your insights, write an email or a short report that describes several principles of good listening illustrated with brief examples. You could end by concisely explaining an encounter that shows ideal active listening.

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ANS: Usually, people feel devalued, angry, upset, or hurt when they find that someone is not listening to them. The exercise can also be combined with a discussion of nonverbal messages. Much of the nonlistening behaviour is nonverbal; for example, poor listeners may play with a pen, doodle, yawn openly, glance at their smartphones, or let their eyes wander. Poor listening can lead to errors, sometimes even costly ones. For instance, in a restaurant the server may not listen well to the guest and bring the wrong order. In more extreme cases, poor listening in a hospital could be dangerous to patients' health. Miscommunication due to poor listening between pilots and air control personnel could cause an accident, and so forth. Ideally, students would identify reassuring, positive behaviours that signal attentiveness beyond the cues described in this chapter. The discussion could also focus on factors that disrupt or prevent active listening, such as fatigue and distress.

1.5 LISTENING: AN IN-PERSON OR VIRTUAL SOCIAL MEDIA INTERVIEW (OBJ. 2)

How much and to whom do businesspeople listen?

Your Task. Interview a businessperson about his or her workplace listening. Connect with a worker in your circle of friends, family, and acquaintances; in your campus network; at a prior or current job; or via LinkedIn or Facebook. Come up with questions to ask about listening, such as the following:

a. How much active listening do you practise daily?
b. To whom do you listen on the job?
c. How do you know that others are or are not listening to you?
d. Can you share anecdotes of poor listening that led to negative outcomes?
e. Do you have tips for better listening?

Summarize the findings from your interview in a professional email, brief report, or brief presentation.

ANS: The answers will vary. Students could brainstorm and discuss their interview questions in class or prepare questions at home. Then they could approach their interviewees in person, by phone, by email, or via LinkedIn or Facebook. A special word of caution when contacting professionals on LinkedIn: Warn students not to relentlessly pursue random strangers, but to work from within their own established LinkedIn circle of professional acquaintances or their acquaintances' contacts. This assignment could be done orally or in writing (email, memo) individually, in small groups, or in class. The task could be expanded to a group oral presentation or written report.

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1.6 LISTENING AND NONVERBAL CUES: SKILLS REQUIRED IN VARIOUS CAREERS (OBJS. 2, 3)

Do the listening skills and behaviours of individuals differ depending on their careers?

Your Task. Your instructor will divide you into teams and give each team a role to discuss, such as business executive, teacher, physician, police officer, lawyer, accountant, administrative assistant, customer service representative, or team leader. Create a list of verbal and nonverbal cues that a member of this profession would display to indicate that he or she is listening. Be prepared to act out these cues in front of your class to see if they can figure out what you're "saying."

ANS: Student teams should generate lists of listening and nonverbal cues that include some of the following: good eye contact, avoiding being distracted by others, not interrupting, taking notes, paraphrasing instructions, asking pertinent questions in a nonthreatening manner, leaning forward, and showing empathy and compassion. *Critical listening* involves judging and evaluating what you are hearing. *Discriminative listening* is necessary when you must identify main ideas and understand an argument. Teams should generate different cues and behaviours to reflect these forms of listening in relation to the professional roles they are analyzing.

1.7 BODY LANGUAGE (OBJ. 3)

Can body language be accurately interpreted?

Your Task. What attitudes do the following body movements suggest to you? Do these movements always mean the same thing? What part does context play in your interpretations? Be prepared to act out one or more of these movements in front of your class. Does the class get the same meanings as you did just from reading the behaviour?

a. Whistling, wringing hands
b. Bowed posture, twiddling thumbs
c. Steepled hands, sprawling sitting position
d. Rubbing hand through hair
e. Open hands, unbuttoned coat
f. Wringing hands, tugging ears

ANS:

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a. Whistling, wringing hands

ANS: Nervousness or fear

b. Bowed posture, twiddling thumbs

ANS: Boredom

c. Steepled hands, sprawling sitting position

ANS: Contemplation or relaxation

d. Rubbing hand through hair

ANS: Frustration or nervousness

e. Open hands, unbuttoned coat

ANS: Relaxation, confidence

f. Wringing hands, tugging ears

ANS: Distress or nervousness

1.8 NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION: UNIVERSAL SIGN FOR "I GOOFED" (OBJ. 3)

To promote safe highway driving and reduce road rage, motorists submitted the following suggestions. The suggestions were sent to a newspaper writer who asked for a universal nonverbal signal admitting that a driver had goofed.

Your Task. In small groups consider the pros and cons of each of the following gestures intended as an apology when a driver makes a mistake. Why would some fail?

a. Lower your head slightly and bonk yourself on the forehead with the side of your closed fist. The message is clear: *I'm stupid. I shouldn't have done that.*
b. Make a temple with your hands, as if you were praying.
c. Move the index finger of your right hand back and forth across your neck—as if you were cutting your throat.
d. Flash the well-known peace sign. Hold up the index and middle fingers of one hand, making a V, as in *victory.*
e. Place the flat of your hands against your cheeks, as children do when they have made a mistake.

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f. Clasp your hand over your mouth, raise your brows, and shrug your shoulders.
g. Use your knuckles to knock on the side of your head. Translation: *Oops! Engage brain.*
h. Place your right hand high on your chest and pat a few times, like a basketball player who drops a pass or a football player who makes a bad throw. This says, *I'll take the blame.*
i. Place your right fist over the middle of your chest and move it in a circular motion. This is universal sign language for *I'm sorry.*
j. Open your window and tap the top of your car roof with your hand.
k. Smile and raise both arms, palms outward, which is a universal gesture for surrender or forgiveness.
l. Use the military salute, which is simple and shows respect.
m. Flash your biggest smile, point at yourself with your right thumb, and move your head from left to right, as if to say, *I can't believe I did that.*

ANS: This is a good exercise for teams. Suggest that team members take turns demonstrating each of the nonverbal messages described here. They should then discuss how effective each would be. Of course, some would be quite dangerous if they require taking your hands off the steering wheel. Be sure to discuss with students the difficulty of cultural implications. Although a gesture works in one country, it might not work in another.

1.9 NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION: SIGNALS SENT BY CASUAL ATTIRE (OBJ. 3)

Although many employers allow casual attire, not all employers and customers are happy with the results. To learn more about the implementation, acceptance, and effects of casual-dress programs, select one of the following activities, all of which involve some form of interviewing.

Your Task.

a. In teams, gather information from human resources employees to determine which companies allow casual or dress-down days, how often, and under what specific conditions. The information may be collected by personal interviews, email, telephone, instant messaging, or on the Web.
b. In teams, conduct interviews in your communities. Ask individuals in the community how they react to casual dress in the workplace. Develop a set of standard interview questions.

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c. In teams, visit local businesses on both casual days and traditional business-dress days. Compare and contrast the effects of business-dress standards on such factors as the projected image of the company, the nature of the interactions with customers and with coworkers, employee morale, and employee productivity. What generalizations can you draw from your findings?
d. Using library databases, learn about dress code rules and laws and policies in your province or territory and municipality.

ANS: This activity can be expanded into a research paper topic. A variation on this activity relies on student experiences. Instead of conducting interviews in the community, they can conduct a forum among students who work, asking them to comment on casual-dress policies in the jobs they have had.

1.10 NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION AROUND THE WORLD (OBJS. 3, 4)

Gestures play an important role when people communicate. Because culture shapes the meaning of gestures, miscommunication and misunderstanding can easily result in international situations.

Your Task. Use the Internet to research the meanings of selected gestures. Make a list of ten gestures (other than those discussed in the text) that have different meanings in different countries. Consider the fingertip kiss, nose thumb, eyelid pull, nose tap, head shake, and other gestures. How are the meanings different in other countries?

ANS: Students should be able to find a number of gestures and their meanings discussed at various websites. Here is one example: "The fingertip kiss, in which the tips of the thumb and fingers are kissed and quickly moved forward away from the face, is a sign of affection and may be used as a greeting in Sicily and Portugal. The fingertip kiss is not used often in Italy and the British Isles, but it is common in France, Germany, Greece, and Spain to signify praise." [See Martin, J., & Chaney, L. 2006. Global business etiquette. Westport, CT: Praeger, p. 53.]

1.11 MAKING SENSE OF IDIOMS (OBJ. 4)

Many languages have idiomatic expressions that do not always make sense to outsiders.

Your Task. Explain in simple English what the following idiomatic expressions mean. Assume that you are explaining them to non-native speakers of English.

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a. Have an axe to grind
b. Under wraps
c. Come out of left field
d. Hell on wheels
e. Drop the ball
f. Get your act together
g. Stay the course
h. In the limelight

ANS:

a.	have an axe to grind	have a dispute with someone
b.	under wraps	concealed or suppressed
c.	come out of left field	to be completely unexpected, a total surprise
d.	hell on wheels	an extremely difficult person
e.	drop the ball	handle things badly, make a mistake
f.	get your act together	get more organized
g.	stay the course	pursue a goal regardless of obstacles
h.	in the limelight	at the centre of attention

1.12 EXAMINING CULTURAL STEREOTYPES (OBJS. 4, 5)

Generalizations are necessary as we acquire and categorize new knowledge. Almost all of us are at some point in our lives subject to stereotyping by others, whether we are immigrants, minorities, women, members of certain professions, or Canadians working abroad. Generally speaking, negative stereotypes sting. However, even positive stereotypes can offend or embarrass because they fail to acknowledge the differences among individuals.

Your Task. Think about a nation or culture about which you have only a hazy idea. Jot down a few key traits that come to mind. For example, you may not know much about the Netherlands and the Dutch. You may think of gouda cheese, wooden clogs, Heineken beer, tulips, and windmills. Anything else? Then consider a culture with which you are very familiar, whether it's yours or that of a country you have visited or studied. For each culture, in one column, write down a few stereotypical perceptions that are positive. Then, in another column, record negative stereotypes you associate with that culture. Share your notes

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with your team or the whole class, as your instructor directs. How do you respond to others' descriptions of your culture? Which stereotypes irk you and why? For a quick fact check and overview at the end of this exercise, google the *CIA World Factbook* or *BBC News Country Profiles.*

ANS: This activity drives home the limiting nature of stereotypes, even the positive ones. Very few of us are comfortable representing our entire culture, although others may perceive and designate us as "ambassadors" of our countries of origin. Students may find some stereotypes flattering, but most will recognize that they are ambivalent at best. Few Jewish students, for example, would enjoy being called "good with money" because it's an old anti-Semitic prejudice couched in positive language. Likewise, being seen as a "Latin lover" is a mixed blessing, and not all Asian students are studious and nerdy. Students should also recognize that we may be amused by positive and even negative stereotypes levelled at others, but we may react with less humour once the barbs of prejudice are pointed at us.

1.13 EXAMINING DIVERSITY IN JOB INTERVIEWS (OBJS. 4, 5)

Today's workforce benefits from diversity, and most businesses have embraced explicit non-discrimination policies. Governments have passed legislation that makes it illegal to discriminate based on race, colour, creed, ethnicity, national origin, disability, sex, age, and other factors such as sexual orientation and gender identity.

Your Task. Consider how such differences could affect the communication, for instance, between an interviewer and a job candidate. If negatively, how could the differences and barriers be overcome? Role-play or discuss a potential job interview conversation between the following individuals. After a while summarize your findings, either orally or in writing:

a. A female executive is interviewing a prospective assistant, who is male.
b. A candidate with a strong but not disruptive foreign accent is being interviewed by a native-born human resources manager.
c. A manager who doesn't wear a head a covering is interviewing a person wearing a turban.
d. A person over 50 is being interviewed by a hiring manager in his early 30s.
e. A recruiter who doesn't use a wheelchair is interviewing a job seeker who uses a wheelchair.

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ANS:

a. **ANS:** Role-playing relies on a solid knowledge of the workplace and interviewing techniques. If role-playing is too advanced for students, a discussion of differences between the interviewer and interviewee and how they could be bridged might be productive. In the first example, students should recognize the preconceived notions that come with gender expectations. A female boss interviewing a male assistant is still in a minority. Students should recognize that explicit references to gender roles would be inappropriate and that the sex of the applicant has no bearing on job qualifications.
b. **ANS:** Any questions about the candidate's national origin should be avoided unless the interviewee volunteers such information. If the accent does not hinder communication, only the skills, experience, and ability of the candidate should be considered.
c. **ANS:** In the last decade, turbans and other religious symbols have been perceived negatively because some people associate them with radical Muslims and even terrorists. Yet in a job interview, turbans and other forms of religious garb should not be addressed, nor should they be considered relevant to the hiring decision.
d. **ANS:** d. Age discrimination against people over 40 is outlawed in Canada. Any question making age a factor in the hiring process would be illegal and should be avoided. Questions should be relevant, referring solely to the requirements of the job.
e. **ANS:** Disability cannot and should not be used against the candidate applying for the job. The interviewer could put the candidate at ease by extending common courtesy to him or her and striving to speak with the person at eye level. Patronizing behaviour should be avoided.

Solutions to Grammar & Mechanics Challenge

NOUNS

Review Sections 1.02–1.06 in the Grammar/Mechanics Handbook. Then study each of the following statements. Underline any inappropriate form. In the space provided, write the correct form (or *C* if correct) and the number of the G/M principle illustrated. When you finish, compare your responses with those provided near the end of the book. If your responses differ, study carefully the principles in parentheses.

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sexes (1.05b) **Example** The tennis match turned out to be a battle of the sex's.

_____ 1. Canadian marketing efforts are increasing in all Pacific Rim countrys.

_____ 2. None of the CEO's used their smartphones during the meeting.

_____ 3. We were surprised that the companies' two highly respected employee's disagreed on the best strategy.

_____ 4. That restaurant is open on Sunday's but not on Monday's.

_____ 5. Many turkies had to be destroyed after the virus outbreak.

_____ 6. Only the Samsons and the Alvarez's brought their entire families.

_____ 7. Parliament established the Nunavut territory in the 1990's.

_____ 8. My grandfather had four brother-in-laws serving in World War 2.

_____ 9. I have never seen so many klutz's on one dance floor.

_____ 10. The OSFI conducted several inquirys regarding new banking fees.

_____ 11. The instructor was surprised to have three Anthonies in one class.

_____ 12. All the mountains and valleys were visible on Google Earth.

_____ 13. CRA required copies of all documents showing the company's assets and liabilitys.

_____ 14. My tablet monitor makes it difficult to distinguish between i's and l's.

_____ 15. McClung was one of the best-known woman to fight for human rights.

ANS:

1. countries (1.05e)
2. CEOs (1.05g)
3. employees (1.05d)
4. sundays, mondays (1.05a)
5. turkeys (1.05d)
6. alvarezes (1.05b)
7. 1990s (1.05g)
8. brothers-in-law (1.05f)
9. klutzes (1.05b)
10. inquiries (1.05e)
11. Anthonys (1.05a)
12. Sentence is written correctly.
13. liabilities (1.05e)

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14. Sentence is written correctly.
15. women (1.05c)

Solutions to Editing Challenge

To fine-tune your grammar and mechanics skills, in every chapter you will be editing a message. These are the skills that employers frequently find lacking in employees. It's during the revising process that you will put these skills to work. That's why we provide a complete message with errors in proofreading, grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, word use, and number form. Your job is to find and correct all errors. This first Editing Challenge focuses on nouns, but other writing faults also need revision.

Your Task. Edit the following message by correcting its errors (a) in your textbook or (b) on a photocopy using standard proofreading marks from Appendix B.

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To: Amanda Stapleton <a.stapleton@dobbsmfg.com> From: Kevin Williams <k.williams@dobbsmfg.com>
Subject: Tip for Working From Home

Cc: Bcc:

Hi Amanda,

Because you will be working from home during the next 6 months, we have some tips on how to do it efficiently while stay in touch with the office

- **Set boundarys for your work.** Establish a starting and ending time, and when its quitting time, wrap every thing up and shut down.
- **Check your email regularly.** Such as 3 times a day. Answer all message promply, and send copys of relevant messages to the appropriate office staff.
- **Transmit all work order to Andrea.** She will analyze each weeks activitys and update all sales assignments and inventorys.
- **Provide a end of week report.** Send a summary of your weeks work to me indicating the major accounts you serviced.

If your not a big email user get acquainted with it right away and don't be afraid to use it. Please shoot emails to any staff member. When you need clarification on a project or if you just want to keep us updated.

We will continue to hold once a week staff meeting on Friday's at 10 a.m. in the morning. Do you think it would be possible for you to attend 1 or 2 of these meeting. The next one is Friday, May 5th.

I know you will enjoy working at home Amanda. Following these basic guideline should help you complete your work, and provide the office with adequate contact with you.

Kevin Williams

[Full contact Information]

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ANS:

To: Amanda Stapleton <a.stapleton@dobbsmfg.com>
From: Kevin Williams <k.williams@dobbsmfg.com>
Subject: Tips for Working From Home
Cc:
Bcc:

Hi, Amanda,

Because you will be working from home during the next six months, we have some tips on how to do it efficiently while staying in touch with the office

• **Set boundaries for your work.** Establish a starting and ending time, and when it's quitting time, wrap everything up and shut down.

• **Check your email regularly** such as three times a day. Answer all messages promptly, and send copies of relevant messages to the appropriate office staff.

• **Transmit all work orders to Andrea.** She will analyze each week's activities and update all sales assignments and inventories.

• **Provide an end-of-week report.** Send a summary of your week's work to me, indicating the major accounts you serviced.

If you're not a big email user, get acquainted with it right away and don't be afraid to use it. Please shoot emails to any staff members when you need clarification on a project or if you just want to keep us updated.

We will continue to hold once-a-week staff meetings on Fridays at 10 a.m. ~~in the morning.~~ Do you think it would be possible for you to attend one or two of these meetings? The next one is Friday, May 5~~th~~.

I know you will enjoy working at home, Amanda. Following these basic guidelines should help you complete your work~~,~~ and provide the office with adequate contact with you.

Kevin Williams
[Full contact information]

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CHAPTER 1 TEACHING SUGGESTIONS AND RESOURCES

Communicating in Today's Workplace

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Today's workplace is undergoing significant changes, including global competition, flattened management hierarchies, heightened ethical expectations, and the increased use of teams to accomplish organizational goals. In addition, new electronic technologies, flexible work environments, and a diverse workforce are creating dramatic changes in how and where we work. Job candidates and employees with excellent communication skills have the best chance of being hired and advancing in their career.

People in today's workforce communicate more, not less since information technology and the Internet have transformed the world of work. Today's graduates must be prepared to use a wide variety of media that are rapidly changing and affecting the way we work. And in a hyperconnected world, writing matters more than ever. In addition, employers expect staff members to show professionalism and possess soft skills along with technical knowledge. Today's workforce has also become more globally diverse, and both employers and employees must commit to using successful strategies for communication in an environment that is increasingly connected.

In this chapter, students will learn how solid communications skills are essential for workplace success. Various methods of communication within today's digital-age workplace are examined. Students will learn about nonverbal communication. This chapter concludes with an overview of how culture impacts communication and with guidelines for building intercultural workplace skills.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Describe how solid communication skills will improve your career prospects.

2. Confront barriers to effective listening.

3. Explain the importance of nonverbal communication.

4. Understand five common dimensions of culture and how they affect communication.

5. Use intercultural communication strategies to prevent miscommunication.

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WHAT'S NEW IN THIS CHAPTER

- Reflects the pervasive influence of new communication technology on business writing to prepare students for the digital-age workplace
- Presents state-of-the-art research arguing the prominence of writing and other communication skills in the thoroughly networked, hyperconnected workplace
- Devotes much attention to social media such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter to impress upon students that writing is more important than ever in the digital world because of the global reach and repeatability of digital messages
- Includes discussion of the "anytime, anywhere," coworking, and nonterritorial offices that have rapidly led to flexible working arrangements
- Demonstrates how the explosive growth of social media networks, particularly Twitter, is changing the global political landscape and shaping today's communication in the digital-era workplace
- Draws on the latest statistics and examples to provide students with current practices in business and to offer advice on adapting their skill sets in a globally connected and diverse workforce
- Adds coverage of nonverbal communication skills and provides strategies for building strong nonverbal skills
- Introduces the concept of how culture affects communication while including methods to build upon intercultural workplace skills
- Includes helpful graphics illustrating key concepts for visual learners
- Offers new activities for the end-of-chapter items, including fresh, contemporary scenarios that foster student learning
- Provides several end-of-chapter activities addressing the use of social media and reflecting the pre-eminence of writing in the digital workplace by prompting students to inventory their social media use, examine their listening skills and nonverbal communication methods, and employ communication technology to introduce themselves in a culturally diverse workplace
- Also includes grammar/mechanics and editing challenge to enhance and strengthen writing skills
- Updated Figure 1.3: The Education Bonus: Higher Income, Lower Unemployment
- New Workplace in Focus regarding the open office trend
- New Figure 1.7: Positive Relationship Between Diversity and Innovation

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STUDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Making It Relevant

In the first few weeks of classes, some students may be resistant to attending a Communications course. As instructors, we know that writing, reading, and speaking skills are essential to students' success in the workplace, and the best way to reduce resistance is by making the course content relevant to all learners.

According to Employment and Social Development Canada (2020), "through extensive research, the Government of Canada, along with other national and international agencies, has identified and validated Key Literacy and Essential Skills. These skills are used in nearly every job and throughout daily life in different ways and at varying levels of complexity."

Furthermore, a 2018 article from the Royal Bank of Canada, entitled *Humans Wanted: How Canadian Youth Can Thrive in the Age of Disruption*, states that "communication, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, analysis: young Canadians will need these skills in an age of rapid change. They will need to work well with an increasingly diverse range of other people—business partners from around the world, plus co-workers of all ages, genders, languages and cultures—and to complement technology, which will become ever more pervasive."

Communication skills make up the majority of the literacy and essential skills that employers demand on the job: reading, writing, document use, numeracy, computer use, thinking skills, communication, working with others, and continuous learning (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2020). Students can feel confident that this textbook will develop their literacy and essential skills for success in the workplace.

Literacy and Essential Skills
https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/essential-skills.html

You can introduce literacy and essentials skills to your students by showing them a short video from the Employment and Social Development Canada website. *Essential Skills Videos*:
https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/essential-skills/video.html

Interactive Lectures: Let's Discuss

The following questions are designed to promote critical thinking and encourage lively discussions in the classroom. Student responses will vary; some suggested answers are provided.

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1. **Why do you think writing has become so important to today's employees and employers?**

   Businesspeople today are doing more writing than ever before. Email, virtual teams, telecommuting, and participatory (collaborative) management all mean that more messages are being written.

2. **Creating a diverse work environment makes good business sense. Why is it important to have diversity among senior levels of management**?

   Hiring managers recognize the importance of diversity among higher ranks of the organization. A management team made up of a diverse staff—including women and members of minority groups—helps companies attract and retain a diverse work force. Plus, it's important for members of minority groups and female employees to have role models to whom they can go for advice, counsel, and mentoring.

3. **When is it better to communicate by speaking versus writing?**

   It is better to communicate by speaking, in-person or over the phone, when you need to clarify information or make a decision. This type of communication allows for a two-way conversation. It is better to communicate in writing (a memo or an email) when you need a written record or when the information is extensive (a report). It is also better to communicate in writing if you want to give someone time to think about an idea or request (a proposal).

4. **What is your biggest communication challenge? Writing? Public speaking? Listening? Think of three to five strategies you can use to improve this area.**

   Suggested strategies:

   Writing
   - Find a tutor or editor.
   - Use online writing lab and grammar exercises.
   - Leave lots of time for writing assignments.
   - Complete several drafts.

   Public speaking
   - Prepare and practise.
   - Use calming techniques (meditating, running, listening to music, etc.).
   - Speak to a counsellor about ways to minimize anxiety.
   - Find resources (articles and videos) to increase confidence, such as Amy Cuddy's TED Talk about power posing.

   Listening

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- Minimize distractions.
- Use note-taking strategies.
- Practise body language that demonstrates active listening.
- Recall the content soon afterward to remember key ideas; write them down if necessary.

5. What can organizations do to promote communication skills in the workplace?

The following excerpt from a *Communication World* article shows what FedEx Canada does to promote communication skills.

Putting words into action: Valuing communication at FedEx Canada

Some practices adopted by FedEx Canada to demonstrate that the company values good communication are as follows:

- **Management communication training** involving practical workshops, including role-playing, to assist managers in tackling challenging workplace communication situations
- **Media training** for employees at all levels of the company, including couriers, subject matter experts, and senior executives
- **Public speaking coaching** for employees who are on the speaking circuit
- **Annual Mercury Award** (named after the Roman messenger god) for excellent manager communicators. Frontline employees nominate their managers for this prestigious award
- **Direct, regular access** to the president by the head of communication
- **Communication** as a component of annual managers' performance appraisal (50 percent performance against business objectives and 50 percent leadership skills, including communication)
- **Annual communication** survey for employees to rate communication tools and leaders' communication practices
- **"Survey-Feedback-Action,"** an annual employee survey done with FedEx worldwide, seeking opinions on everything from perceptions of immediate leaders (including their communication capabilities), to pay and benefits, to work environment, to senior leadership (including their communication capabilities). Managers get a report based on their work group feedback and are required to have a discussion about areas of weakness and develop an action plan to resolve them, which has to be signed off on by their own manager.

Spring, N. (2006). Delivering the message one person at a time. *Communication World*, *23*(5), 20–23. Retrieved from http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct =true&db=bth&AN =22178177&site=ehost-live

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Classroom Activities

Topic Emphasis

Since this chapter is a building block for the rest of the course, stress students' comprehension of the learning objectives listed on page 5 of the text. Students should be able to (1) discuss the communication process, the barriers to interpersonal communication, and the means for overcoming them; (2) compare and contrast such concepts as internal and external functions of organizations, formal and informal communication channels, and oral and written communication; and (3) discuss the goals of ethical business communication and the tools for doing the right thing. Whenever possible, have students use examples from their personal experiences. When they demonstrate mastery of these tasks, they are ready to progress to Chapter 2.

Chapter Presentation Suggestions

At times, very simple exercises and discussion topics can drive home significant points. The following activities can be completed quickly, and they may even add a bit of humour!

1. *Importance of Communication Skills.* Bring to class a stack of classified ads from your local newspaper and/or printouts of job listings from employment websites such as Monster.ca. Divide the class into small teams and give each team several pages of ads. Have each team find as many references to communication-related and essential skills as possible in the ads. When they are finished searching, have each team share its findings with the rest of the class. This is an excellent way for students to learn firsthand the importance of having good communication skills in the workplace.

2. *Understanding Barriers to Communication.* Allow students some time to reflect and then have them do the following:

   Describe an instance of a major miscommunication between you and another person in a workplace or in school that resulted in anger, embarrassment, frustration, or pain for one or both of you.

   After each student describes what happened, have the class analyze the event in terms of obstacles that create misunderstanding—bypassing, frame of reference, lack of language skills, and distractions. What could the student have done to overcome the obstacles to clear communication in this instance? Help the class to see the event as an example of what happens to communication when one or more obstacles prevent mutual understanding and to see the relevance of these obstacles to their personal lives.

3. *"Faked" Listening.* Have students share examples of times when they "faked" listening and how their lack of attention affected the situation. These instances may involve

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situations when students did not give their parents, teachers, or employers their full attention.

Remind students that in their business lives, selective listening may result in serious consequences. When receiving directions for work assignments, they should take great care to listen actively, and they should paraphrase the instructions given to them by their supervisor back to the supervisor. If the supervisor accepts the paraphrase as accurate, the students may assume that they completely understand their work assignments.

4. *Emotional Interference.* Discuss with students how emotional interference can cloud their judgment. What would be the consequences of sending a coworker a negative email message in the heat of anger, but then after cooling down, wanting to stop the individual from receiving the message? Discuss the lasting consequences of an angry text or email message sent to a coworker or an angry voice mail message left for a coworker.

5. *Noise as a Barrier to Communication.* Physical distractions can take place during both written and oral communication (for example, *oral communication noise*—speaker's mannerisms, poor lighting, uncomfortable chairs, uncomfortable room temperature, or construction noise; *written communication noise*—poor letter format, inappropriate stationery, punctuation errors, misspelled words, and grammar errors). Have students discuss examples of these types of noise from their experiences or bring to class and discuss samples of written correspondence containing "noise."

6. *Teamwork*. What are the advantages and disadvantages of working in a team? What are solutions to the challenges of working in a team? Recall a positive and negative team experience. What could have been done differently?

7. *Lego Challenge*. Divide students into pairs (small groups if it's a larger class). Give each pair two matching sets of Lego pieces. The students will build a structure and write a set of instructions for it. They will then use the second set of pieces to build a replica and hide it. They must write clear steps and they may use illustrations, but not an illustration of the completed structure. Then they will trade their instructions and the Lego pieces with another team, which will attempt to build the structure and then provide feedback to improve the steps. Once the second team is done, they can look at the original structure (the one that was hidden) to see if the two structures match. The team will use the feedback to revise their steps and illustrations.

   NOTE: You could use this as an instructional memo assignment to teach business writing (clear and concise sentences, strong verbs), business formatting (headings, point form, bold), and memo format.

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8. *Chapter Review, Critical Thinking, and Activities and Cases.* At the end of the chapter, several hands-on activities are available for students.

Online Class Activity

1. An online discussion forum activity is a great way for students to get to know one another in the first week of classes. Early interaction is essential for building a warm and welcoming online learning environment. The following activity allows students to get to know one another in a fun and interesting way.

Truths and Lies

Task:	Introductory exercise for the beginning of a course
Objective:	To introduce a student's interests and background to classmates in a fun and challenging way
Author:	Darek Jarmola, PhD, Oklahoma Wesleyan University, djarmola@okwu.edu
Method:	Asynchronous or synchronous

Instructions

Enter two truthful statements and one falsehood about yourself onto the discussion board (or into the chat room). Each member of the group should then try to distinguish the truths from the lie. What makes this activity fun is to be as outrageous as possible while sharing a bit of who you really are with your fellow participants. After all responses have been received, post your truths, and explain why you chose them to share.

Conrad, R. M. (2004). *Engaging the online learner: Activities and resources for creative instruction.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

2. Recall a workplace where you were employed that used an effective management structure. What worked and why? Recall a workplace that did not have effective management. What didn't work and why? Post your response. Reply to at least two other posts. NOTE: If you don't have workplace experience, you can instead create a list of positive characteristics for management (e.g., understanding) and negative characteristics (e.g., controlling).

The Technology Link

With the current emphasis on technology in the work world, it is essential for business communicators to be able to use technology effectively to communicate. The exercises in this section will help students develop the technical skills they'll need to succeed.

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1. *Importance of Communication Skills.* Divide the class into small teams of three or four students. Each team will search the job ads at employment websites for any references to communication-related skills. You can provide students with the URLs or have each team use a search tool such as Google to find relevant sites. Suggestions for possible sites to use are listed below. When the students are finished searching, have each team share its findings with the rest of the class. This is an excellent way for students to learn firsthand the importance of having good communication skills in the workplace.

Possible Employment Sites:	*Possible Search Tools:*
https://www.Monster.ca	https://www.google.ca
https://www.careerbuilder.ca	https://ca.yahoo.com
https://www.workopolis.com	https://www.ask.com

2. *Digital Network/Class Mailing List.* Set up a digital network (like Facebook or Twitter) or a mailing list for the class to use throughout the semester. These tools can be used by students to ask questions, share resources, clarify assignments, set up study groups, or engage in any other communication outside of the classroom. To get students to use the digital networks or mailing lists right away, have them send/post an introduction of themselves. A good free tool for setting up mailing lists is Google Groups (http://groups.google.com).

   NOTE: You should set up the digital network or mailing list yourself before the semester begins. You can then collect student email addresses and add students to the list yourself, or you can have students add themselves. Just follow all instructions on the Google Groups, Facebook, and Twitter sites.

3. *Class Discussion Board.* Set up an online discussion board for the class to use throughout the semester. You can set up topic areas on the board for students to ask questions, share Web resources, discuss relevant topics, and so on. If your college or university has a licence for a course management program such as WebCT or Blackboard, you can use this tool's discussion-board feature. If you don't have access to such a software package, you can access free discussion-board services online. A good place to start is https://www.eduscapes.com/sessions/leaders/. Here you will find information about how to use technological communication tools in your class.

4. *Employability Skills*. Explore the employability skills that the Conference Board of Canada identifies as being essential for the workplace: https://www.conferenceboard.ca/edu/employability-skills.aspx. Have students summarize the eight to ten most important for their industry.

   NOTE: Students could use these skills during the job search unit to provide specific examples in their cover letter, résumé, and job interview.

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5. *Information Interview*. Ask students to interview a professional, preferably someone they admire or within a field in which they want to work. In-person interviews are preferred. They should ask the interviewee what types of communication skills are required for their job and within their field. Students should also ask for examples of dos and don'ts regarding emails, presentations, dress, meetings, phone calls, and technology use at work. Students could report their findings in a presentation, journal entry, or short report.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

How to Give Interactive Lectures
Carlton University, Ottawa, Ontario
http://serc.carleton.edu/introgeo/interactive/howto.html

This resource provides teaching strategies for engaging students through interactive lectures.

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