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Correct answers located at the end of the chapter.

TRUE/FALSE - Write 'T' if the statement is true and 'F' if the statement is false.

1) People who cheat in school are more likely to cheat in the workplace.
   - ◎ true
   - ◎ false

2) In the post-trust era, the public has returned to having trust that a business is operating in the best interest of its customers.
   - ◎ true
   - ◎ false

3) Natalie, who wants to be a lawyer, has lined up a summer internship working for a local law firm. That kind of experience will help her develop competence.
   - ◎ true
   - ◎ false

4) Jessa pursues business opportunities aggressively because she believes that doing nothing can be very costly. Jessa demonstrates a focus on action.
   - ◎ true
   - ◎ false

5) A manager who acts out of self-interest is more likely to be viewed as credible than one who does not.
   - ◎ true
   - ◎ false

6) The COVID-19 pandemic gave even more prominence to the importance of caring leaders.
   - ◎ true
   - ◎ false

7) Bree wants to cultivate a sense of community. Her first step should be to explain her personal needs to the team.
   - ◎ true
   - ◎ false

8) Character-based traits are instrumental in establishing trust in the workplace.
   - ◎ true
   - ◎ false

9) Someone who has an enlarged vision of those affected by their business activities is demonstrating transparency.
   - ◎ true
   - ◎ false

10) In the phrase s *takeholder view*, the word *stakeholder* refers only to someone who owns a share of the business.
   - ◎ true
   - ◎ false

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11) A CEO often states in written and oral communications that they are answerable to the people who use the company's products. By repeating this message frequently, the CEO is likely to lose personal credibility and increase distrust against the company.
- ◎ true
- ◎ false

12) An example of a trust-building behavior is sharing information.
- ◎ true
- ◎ false

13) In recent years, transparency has become the dominant business ethic for communications.
- ◎ true
- ◎ false

14) Employees usually speak up when they observe potentially unethical behavior.
- ◎ true
- ◎ false

15) In recent years, employees have increasingly judged their organizations to be ethical.
- ◎ true
- ◎ false

16) A person of integrity will have one set of values for their personal life and another set of values for their work life.
- ◎ true
- ◎ false

17) Because business problems are expensive and time-consuming to solve, experts recommend avoiding open discussion of serious issues.
- ◎ true
- ◎ false

18) Today, workplace cultures are becoming more closed off and independent.
- ◎ true
- ◎ false

19) The FAIR test is a way for companies to predict how consumers will respond to a new product.
- ◎ true
- ◎ false

20) In all your communications, you should consider whether you are being fair to others.
- ◎ true
- ◎ false

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MULTIPLE CHOICE - Choose the one alternative that best completes the statement or answers the question.

21) The post-trust era is a period of time
- A) when the government no longer allows monopolies or trusts to form.
- B) characterized by the formation of trusts to manage the wealth of businesses.
- C) when people put more of their trust in big business than in big government.
- D) when the government allows financial trusts to try to make the economy safer.
- E) when people have lost the trust they once had in the business community.

22) The post-trust era means that managers and executives often have to focus on
- A) their personal needs rather than business needs.
- B) establishing their credibility.
- C) furthering their education.
- D) the practice of outsourcing jobs.
- E) more hands-on tasks.

23) What is the key characteristic of the post-trust era?
- A) The public believes businesses operate against the public's best interests.
- B) The majority of employees have faith in their leaders and colleagues at work.
- C) Transparency is no longer important in the workplace.
- D) Stakeholders do not require businesses to be accountable to them.
- E) Character-based traits play a very small role in establishing credibility.

24) In one study, nearly 80 percent of undergraduate students surveyed stated that_____ was not a serious offense.
- A) internet plagiarism
- B) stealing office supplies
- C) lying on social media
- D) cheating in a relationship
- E) padding a resume

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25) What is true about competence in the workplace?
   A) It has grown less important in the post-trust era.
   B) It is most often evaluated by one's track record of achievements.
   C) It is innate and cannot be gained through experience.
   D) It increases when individuals focus on connecting with others.
   E) It depends mainly on the ability to build a sense of community.

26) Bryan's boss told him that he needs to demonstrate more competence on the job. What action will help him do so?
   A) taking on fewer projects at one time
   B) asking co-workers what their needs are
   C) working independently and not consulting others
   D) hiding his mistakes from his team members
   E) setting specific work goals and achieving them

27) The *Morning Wire* just hired five young reporters. Which new employee seems to demonstrate the most competence for the job?
   A) the employee who made top grades in journalism at a prestigious university and then traveled for a year
   B) the employee who has a degree in English and wants to write for a literary magazine one day
   C) the employee who earned a journalism degree and interned at a local newspaper for two summers
   D) the employee who earned a degree in philosophy and spent a year writing for a school newspaper
   E) the employee who made top grades at a small college and graduated with a degree in English

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28) Lisa is the general manager of a global manufacturing company. She wants to give one of her managers an "Employee of the Year" award. Which manager should she choose if she is looking for the employee with the highest level of competence?
   A) the manager who is completely trustworthy with confidential information
   B) the manager who is the first one to explain what they need in any situation
   C) the manager who develops effective action plans to achieve team goals
   D) the manager who considers company interests above those of customers
   E) the manager who keeps a low profile and does not draw attention to themself

29) Which action will help a manager establish a sense of caring?
   A) holding regular meetings to ask about employee concerns
   B) setting clear and measurable goals for each employee
   C) taking a course in making teams function more efficiently
   D) assigning people to projects without their input
   E) encouraging people to use “I” and “me” language in communication

30) Which communication technique shows that someone has a team orientation?
   A) discussing only positives rather than focusing on negatives
   B) being open and transparent about the company's confidential matters
   C) using the FAIR test to evaluate what other people say
   D) using the pronouns "you" and "we" to discuss goals and needs
   E) keeping personal motivations hidden in the workplace

31) How does caring help establish credibility in the business world?
   A) It helps people understand serious business problems.
   B) It encourages people to work as individuals instead of as teams.
   C) It promotes closed communication structures.
   D) It helps people connect with others.
   E) It makes individuals less transparent.

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32) Roan and James are both on the staff of a home improvement store. Roan is always asking colleagues to cover his shifts, but he never returns the favor. James often covers shifts for colleagues even though he rarely takes time off himself. Which statement best describes the difference between Roan and James?
    A) James adheres to the company ethics policy, and Roan does not.
    B) James relies on personal values, and Roan relies on corporate values.
    C) James is an effective communicator, and Roan is not.
    D) James is a giver, and Roan is a taker.
    E) James trusts his colleagues, and Roan does not.

33) The Hillside Office Furniture Company has been around for almost a century and generally has a good reputation for accountability. Which action might *harm* its reputation for taking a stakeholder view?
    A) The company consistently pays its shareholders high dividends.
    B) The company offers its employees good benefits packages.
    C) The company develops products that meet customer needs.
    D) The company helps its employees develop professional skills.
    E) The company keeps profits high by eliminating pollution controls.

34) How can a middle manager at a software company build a sense of community among team members?
    A) assign all the team roles without explaining why decisions are made
    B) emphasize how the quality of the team's work affects their chance at promotion
    C) empower each team member to set personal career goals
    D) put more emphasis on immediate results than on developing skills
    E) encourage team members to compete to improve productivity

35) Gustaf is an editorial manager at a greeting card company. He wants to give one of his supervisors an "Employee of the Year" award. Which supervisor should he choose if he is looking for an employee with a strong sense of caring?
    A) the employee who sets short- and long-term deadlines for every project and meets them promptly
    B) the employee who always takes on extra work to help the department meet its deadlines
    C) the employee who is the best copy editor and proofreader in the department
    D) the employee who helps employees develop the skills that will allow them to advance
    E) the employee who communicates openly whenever they have doubts or questions

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36) Character refers to
A) the stated and lived values of a company.
B) the knowledge and skills needed to accomplish business tasks.
C) a reputation for adhering to high moral and ethical values.
D) a set of principles that govern behavior in the workplace.
E) the ability to cultivate a sense of community in the workplace.

37) Which statement is true of character?
A) It is central in establishing trust.
B) It is innate and cannot be cultivated.
C) Its importance has decreased in the post-trust era.
D) It is seldom important in long-term, collaborative relationships.
E) It increases when the level of transparency decreases.

38) Theo is the purchasing manager for a lawn equipment manufacturer. He knows he could save the company money by using cheaper steel when fabricating parts, but he says, "Our customers count on us to provide a durable product. I do not want to let them down." What quality does this demonstrate?
A) competence
B) character
C) experience
D) expertise
E) community

39) When business executives were asked what determines trust in individuals in the workplace, the number one answer was
A) positive attitude.
B) honesty.
C) intelligence.
D) motivation.
E) experience.

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40) The product development manager at a large technology firm demonstrates honesty and fairness at work and focuses on the success of the entire team, not just on personal success. However, the manager has chosen to ignore negative environmental effects related to the company's latest product introduction. What aspect does this manager need to improve on?
    A) kindness
    B) relatability
    C) character
    D) accountability
    E) competence

41) Performing at the highest standards, not just for oneself, but for the team, for the supervisor, for the consumer, and for the company's shareholders, indicates a sense of
    A) individuality.
    B) accountability.
    C) opportunity.
    D) future-orientation.
    E) endurance.

42) During performance evaluations, the department manager is consistently praised for having the ability to see how corporate decisions will affect stakeholders. What does this characteristic demonstrate?
    A) accountability
    B) competence
    C) expertise
    D) transparency
    E) honesty

43) Business ethics are defined as
    A) the skills needed to identify and overcome business problems.
    B) the practice of sharing all relevant information with stakeholders.
    C) a written code of conduct designed to guide the actions of a company.
    D) the commonly accepted beliefs and principles in the business community for acceptable behavior.
    E) a set of guidelines for evaluating how much honesty to use in a given situation.

44) Safeguarding proprietary information and avoiding misuse of company assets are two aspects of
    A) the post-trust era.
    B) transparency.
    C) the FAIR test.
    D) credibility.
    E) business ethics.

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45) Why has transparency become so important in the post-trust era?
A) It creates the feeling among employees that managers care about their interests and needs.
B) It helps reduce the fear that unethical or dishonest practices are being conducted in secret.
C) It reduces incompetence by stressing the acquisition of necessary skills and knowledge for the job.
D) It empowers each individual employee to think primarily about their career needs.
E) It focuses on action and results, so it helps businesses address their most pressing issues.

46) Pashma saw her best friend, Liz, take office supplies from the workplace. Liz said it was no big deal, and Pashma didn't want to turn her in, but she knew it was ethically wrong and felt guilty that she was being disloyal to the company. Pashma discovered that making the right choice isn't always easy. This is an example of
A) viewing coworkers' motives with suspicion.
B) feeling resistant to new ways of doing things.
C) rationalizing keeping the secret.
D) keeping one's motives to oneself.
E) an ethical dilemma.

47) What should you do if you observe unethical behavior in the workplace?
A) Assume that the person knows what they are doing and ignore it.
B) Accuse the person of acting with bad motives or criminal intent.
C) Ask questions that challenge the rationalization of the behavior.
D) Report the behavior to the media or to law enforcement immediately.
E) Make a joke about the behavior to subtly convey your discomfort with it.

48) Which document do companies use to express their expected norms of conduct?
A) mission statement
B) bill of lading
C) vision statement
D) code of ethics
E) profit and loss statement

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49) The general manager of a recycling facility wants to give one of the team members an "Employee of the Year" award. Which individual should the manager choose in order to reward an employee with a strong sense of ethics?
A) the employee who shares all relevant information with stakeholders
B) the employee who went to night school to acquire more job-related skills
C) the employee who shares the company's trade secrets with its competitors
D) the employee who created a spreadsheet to help track production stages
E) the employee who conducts personal business on company time

50) What type of company is required by the Sarbanes-Oxley Act to have a code of ethics available to all employees?
A) all companies that employ more than 100 people
B) all companies that trade internationally
C) all companies that have more than a single owner
D) all companies that are publicly traded
E) all companies that make more than a million dollars

51) While the department manager is well-known for having the ability to bring in new business and maintain an efficient staff, there are rumors that their treatment of recent hires is demeaning and causing many of them to leave the company. In this situation, the manager's corporate values and personal values do not seem to align and demonstrate a lack of
A) transparency.
B) prosperity.
C) integrity.
D) viability.
E) personality.

52) What is the relationship between honesty and competition?
A) Too much honesty destroys competition.
B) Businesses must commit fraud to compete.
C) Truly honest businesses do not need to compete.
D) Honesty and competition have no relationship.
E) Honesty allows performance based on merit.

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53) Manuel is the chief financial officer of his company. At the annual meeting, he gives a presentation that contains only positive financial news even though the company had a layoff in the previous year. What impact is Manuel's presentation likely to have on the employees?
A) It will create hope that the coming year will be better than the previous year.
B) It will cause employees to forget about the previous year's problems.
C) It will create mistrust because the presentation did not offer the whole truth.
D) It will not have much effect because employees do not listen to such presentations.
E) It will impress the employees with Basir's team orientation and positive attitude.

54) Jessa works for a wealth management firm. She discloses a client's confidential information publicly. This action is an example of a
A) business ethics violation.
B) low-trust relationship.
C) conflict between personal and corporate values.
D) failure to be transparent.
E) rationalization of unprofessional practices.

55) What is the term for the stated and lived values of a company?
A) corporate values
B) corporate relationship
C) code of ethics
D) business ethics
E) professional practices

56) Dina is director of human resources, and as such she is tasked with creating a document that states the company's most important values and rules of conduct. This is called
A) a code of conduct.
B) an ethical standards statement.
C) a company rules bulletin.
D) a human resources manual.
E) organizational guidelines.

57) What does the "A" stand for in the FAIR test of ethical business communication?
A) Accommodate stakeholders
B) Access to information
C) Align interests
D) Appreciate end users
E) Accountable actions

58) What does the "I" stand for in the FAIR test of ethical business communication?
A) Intent of communicator
B) Interest of audience
C) Impacts on stakeholders
D) Insight into motives
E) Illustration of credibility

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59) What can the FAIR test help you avoid?
A) showing preference to one employee over another
B) revealing confidential or proprietary information
C) receiving low ratings from subordinates
D) rationalizing unethical behaviors
E) being disrespectful to other people

60) Jackson is a manager who is preparing to send a memo to members of his team. What will best help him evaluate the memo before sending it?
A) asking questions to challenge rationalizations
B) consulting the Ethics Resource Center
C) surveying team members
D) applying the FAIR test
E) reviewing the company's code of ethics

61) Parul is the general manager of an organic coffee company. She wants to give one of her employees an "Employee of the Year" award. Which individual should she choose if she is looking for an employee who communicates fairly in business?
A) the employee who always discloses their sources of information
B) the employee who often draws conclusions from assumptions
C) the employee who often says that customers never know what they want
D) the employee who builds team spirit by reminding people when birthdays are
E) the employee who seldom checks their programs for bugs

62) In the text's example of Amazon's response during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, the FAIR test was especially important since this involved
A) consumer goods.
B) high-stakes communication.
C) an online company.
D) no end-users.
E) a smaller segment of the population.

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63) Warren Buffet says that he looks for three characteristics when hiring people: intelligence, energy, and
A) commitment.
B) education.
C) resilience.
D) integrity.
E) sincerity.

64) When Celia read the news release from her company she was shocked to see that it talked about the 1,500 employees who were happy in their work but did not talk about the 300 employees who were on the picket line to gain attention about their excessive work hours on the factory floor. Which aspect of the FAIR test is Celia focusing on?
A) the representation of facts
B) access to motives and reasoning
C) the impact on stakeholders
D) return on investment
E) activity levels of employees

65) Using the FAIR test involves providing access to_____ and explaining how you made your decisions, particularly in complicated and emotionally charged situations.
A) your real motivations
B) research and data
C) employee records
D) in-house documents
E) all communications

66) Cynicism is
A) the belief that other people act primarily out of selfishness and greed.
B) an attitude of suspicion and doubt regarding new data or process innovations.
C) the disrespect of others through direct means, such as demeaning speech.
D) the disrespect of others through indirect means, such as not replying to emails.
E) an adherence to simplistic, overgeneralized beliefs about a group of people.

67) Which of the following actions can be used to overcome cynicism in the workplace?
A) Establish a nontransparent environment.
B) Create and distribute a non-cynicism policy.
C) Model trust by showing faith in people.
D) Stop listening to cynical people's concerns.
E) Use AI technology to challenge people's fears.

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68) Which statement about cynicism in the workplace is true?
A) Cynicism cycles rarely end if only one person has the courage to display trust.
B) Distrust often builds when people have spent years in transparent environments.
C) Cynicism often emerges when people are given opportunities to address concerns.
D) Building trust can be effected quickly by adopting a company policy against cynicism.
E) Distrust is often deeply entrenched, and people need time to shift cynical attitudes.

69) Vijay has been named the new manager in an office with a highly cynical work environment where distrust is deeply entrenched. Which of the following actions could he take to begin improving the level of trust in the office?
A) Institute a system that encourages people to report their coworkers' errors anonymously.
B) Reduce the amount and types of company information that are shared with employees.
C) Begin a series of work sessions dedicated to airing and addressing employee concerns.
D) Hold a meeting to announce that under his leadership cynicism will no longer be tolerated.
E) Start closely scrutinizing the performance and behavior of the most cynical employees.

70) Which of the following concerns is particularly relevant to the use of AI in business communications?
A) generating content
B) synthesizing ideas
C) adapting to message forms
D) maintaining authenticity
E) conveying information

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71) Which of the following statements about professionalism is true?
A) Notions of professionalism differ only slightly in various job functions, companies, industries, and locations.
B) Maintaining professionalism in many ways is about fitting in with the norms and behaviors for a given position.
C) Professionalism is measured by performance outcomes rather than attitude, commitment, or workplace etiquette.
D) Professionalism refers to adhering to the company's conduct policies and participating in professional societies.
E) Maintaining professionalism is accomplished by standing out through a unique style of interacting with others.

72) In the PRAISE model of professionalism, the *P* stands for
A) personality.
B) punctuality.
C) presentation.
D) preparation.
E) performance.

73) Which of the following actions shows unprofessionalism?
A) taking the team to a favorite restaurant to discuss a challenging project
B) seeking advice after making a mistake on an important assignment
C) using playful emojis that show you're happy to be part of a new team
D) messaging team members about routine matters over the weekend
E) placing a welcome Post-It note on a new team member's computer

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74) *Personality*refers to
A) how people display themselves at work through attire, accessories, grooming, cleanliness, and office décor.
B) the degree to which one meets the behavioral norms and expectations for professionals in their position or field.
C) the commitment an employee makes to do their job with excellence, including a high level of task engagement.
D) the norms and manners guiding workplace etiquette, including respect for boundaries and other people's time.
E) an individual's unique style of interacting with others, including communication patterns and creative expression.

75) Which statement about humor at work is true?
A) Humor is most effective and fun when it is neutral and conceals underlying feelings of warmth toward others.
B) Sarcasm can be used to build trust between members of a conversation who are unclear of each other's motives.
C) Managers should use self-deprecating humor to appear more competent and warmer when revealing deep flaws.
D) Professionals tend to use fun and humor more in written communication than in face-to-face conversations.
E) Professionals who use humor appropriately enjoy work more and are perceived as more confident and competent.

76) When communicating with others at work, you are more likely to be considered credible if you
A) share information that is very private.
B) display passion about your work.
C) remove references to your personal interests.
D) use AI to generate and revise your messages.
E) conceal your underlying motivations.

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ESSAY. Write your answer in the space provided or on a separate sheet of paper.

77) Why has establishing credibility become so important in the post-trust era?

78) List the three factors that help managers and executives establish credibility.

79) What role does understanding the interests of others play in establishing credibility? Give a specific example.

80) Why should a business take a stakeholder view of groups in society that are not part of the company and do not use the company's products or services?

81) Discuss the role of character in establishing credibility.

82) What are business ethics?

83) What are three ways to create a transparent workplace?

84) Why is it important that corporate values be aligned with personal values?

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85) Name at least two reasons business professionals give for remaining silent when they observe potentially unethical behavior in the workplace and explain how to challenge these rationalizations.

86) What are the elements of the FAIR test? Give one example of when the elements of this test would be useful.

87) Name and discuss the four methods that can be used to overcome cynicism in the workplace.

88) Identify the characteristics included in the PRAISE model of professionalism and give an example of an action that may show professionalism in each category.

89) Discuss how sense of humor and personal interests can lead to deeper relationships and provide ways to improve your credibility at work.

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Answer Key

Test name: Chapter 01

1) TRUE
2) FALSE
3) TRUE
4) TRUE
5) FALSE
6) TRUE
7) FALSE
8) TRUE
9) FALSE
10) FALSE
11) FALSE
12) TRUE
13) TRUE
14) FALSE
15) FALSE
16) FALSE
17) FALSE
18) FALSE
19) FALSE
20) TRUE
21) E
22) B
23) A
24) A
25) B
26) E
27) C
28) C
29) A
30) D
31) D
32) D
33) E
34) C
35) D
36) C
37) A
38) B
39) B
40) D
41) B
42) A
43) D
44) E
45) B
46) E
47) C
48) D
49) A
50) D
51) C
52) E
53) C
54) A
55) A
56) A
57) B
58) C
59) E
60) D
61) A
62) B
63) D
64) A
65) A
66) A
67) C
68) E
69) C
70) D
71) B
72) C
73) D
74) E
75) E
76) B
77) Essay

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78) Essay
79) Essay
80) Essay
81) Essay
82) Essay
83) Essay
84) Essay
85) Essay
86) Essay
87) Essay
88) Essay
89) Essay

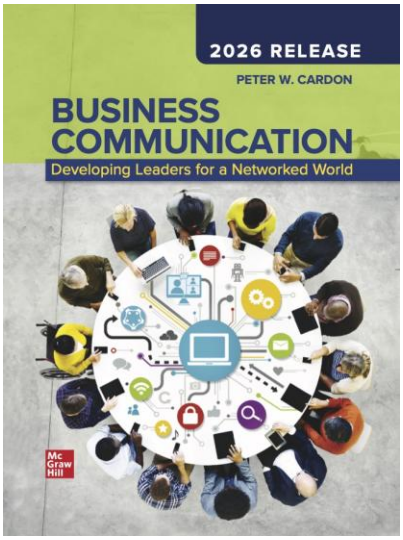
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Instructor's Manual to Accompany

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Developing Leaders for a Networked World (2026 Release)

By Peter W. Cardon



Chapter 1:

Establishing Credibility

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Teaching Note

Hello Fellow Instructor,

I believe we're fortunate to teach this course. It is undoubtedly one of the most important courses our students will take.

We help our students develop many skills in this course that will help them thrive in the workplace.

More fundamentally, we help our students see who they are as people, in a professional and an interpersonal sense. Better yet, we help them see the people who they aspire to be.

I encourage you to use this chapter about credibility to frame this course. I'm sure you have many tried-and-true methods of reaching your students. Try these approaches with your students in terms of credibility and let me know how it goes.

Please contact me any time—to share your experiences, your ideas, and your requests.

Best of wishes,



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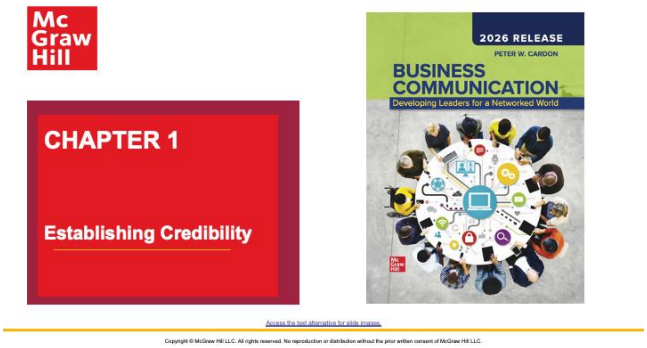
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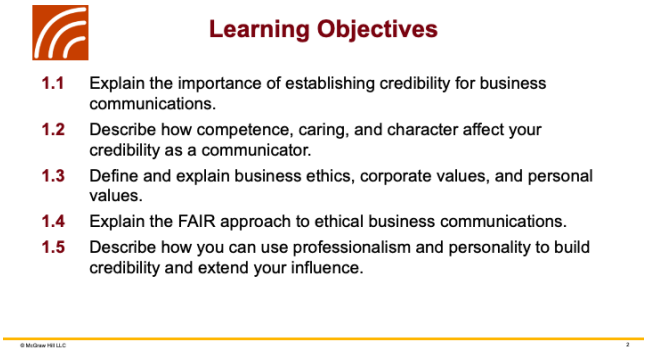
Chapter Summary

This chapter discusses the importance of credibility and how to establish it within business communications. To be a credible communicator, competence, caring, and character are needed. Following business ethics along with adhering to high corporate and personal values are especially important elements of character. You can evaluate your business communications using the FAIR (Facts, Access, Impacts, Respect) approach to ethical business communications. The rest of the chapters in this textbook will help improve business communication skills in a variety of settings.

PowerPoint Notes and Outline



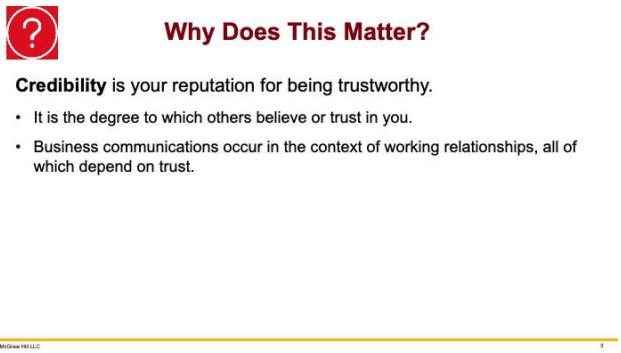
SLIDE 1-1



SLIDE 1-2

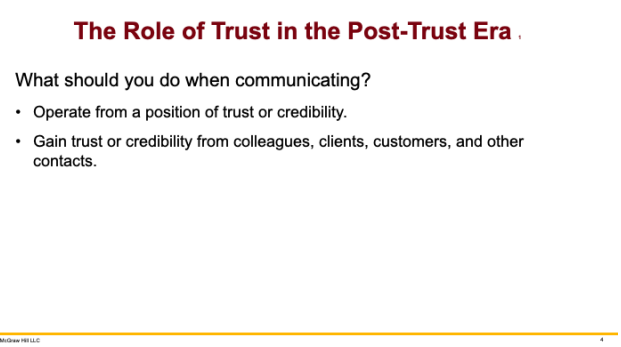
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SLIDE 1-3

Credibility is your reputation for being trustworthy—trustworthy to perform your work with excellence; to care about those you work with and for; to live by high ethical, corporate, and personal values; and to deliver on your promises. In short, your credibility is the degree to which others believe or trust in you.

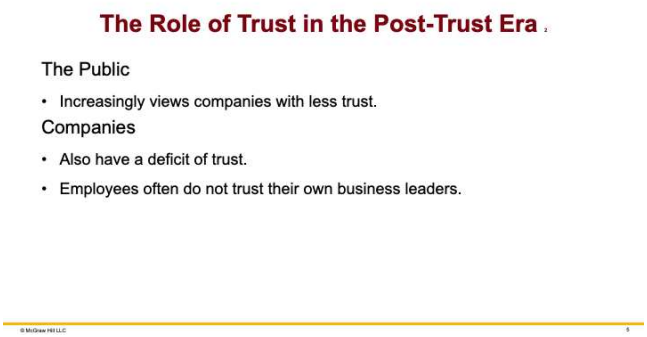


SLIDE 1-4

Do you operate from a position of trust or credibility? That is one of the first things you should consider as you communicate. In the business world, you often start from a deficit of trust. As a result, one of your first goals should be to gain trust or credibility from colleagues, clients, customers, and other contacts.

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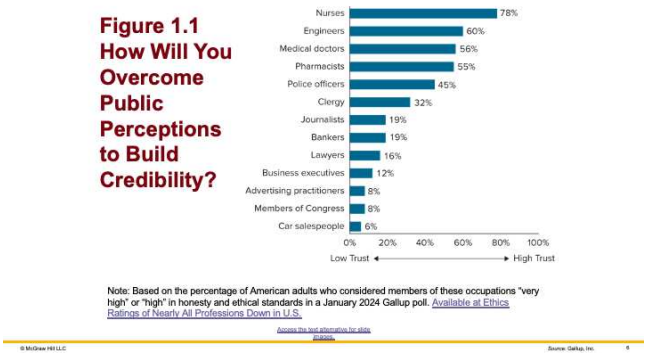
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SLIDE 1-5

The public also increasingly views companies and other institutions with less trust. One of the most well-known and publicized trust indexes is developed by Edelman, a prominent communications firm. Edelman experts measure trust in institutions, including business, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), government, and the media in 28 countries. Historically, the United States was labeled a "high-trust" country but is now labeled a "low-trust" country.

A deficit of trust also exists within companies. In a global study of nearly 10,000 full-time employees, just 49 percent said they trusted their bosses and those working with them. Furthermore, approximately 76 percent of employees have seen illegal or unethical conduct in the past 12 months at their jobs.



SLIDE 1-6

As depicted in Figure 1.1, the trust extended by the general public to business executives is far lower than the trust extended to members of other selected professions.

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The Role of Trust in the Post-Trust Era

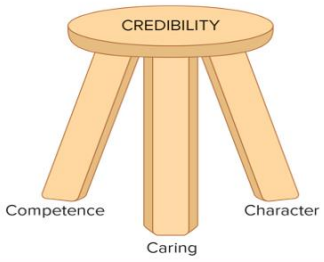
Post-Trust Era

- The public overwhelmingly views businesses as operating against the public's best interests.
- Most employees view their leaders and colleagues with skepticism.

SLIDE 1-7

In the **post-trust era,** the public overwhelmingly views businesses as operating against the public's best interests, and the majority of employees view their leaders and colleagues with skepticism. Regarding the post-trust era, Michael Maslansky, a leading corporate communications expert, said, "Just a few years ago, salespeople, corporate leaders, marketing departments, and communicators like me had it pretty easy. We looked at communication as a relatively linear process . . . But trust disappeared, things changed."

Figure 1.2 The Three Components of Credibility



SLIDE 1-8

As a future manager and executive, you can control your reputation as a credible communicator by focusing on three well-established factors: competence, caring, and character. Research has shown that these three factors almost entirely account for whether a person is considered credible in professional situations. As depicted in Figure 1.2, credibility is like a three-legged stool. Without any one element, it is compromised.

The Role of Competence in Establishing Credibility

Competence

The knowledge and skills needed to:

- Accomplish business tasks.
- Approach business problems.
- Get a job done.

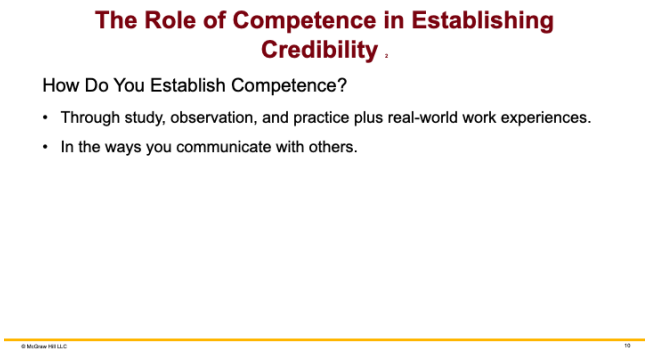
Most people will judge your competence based on your track record of success and achievement.

SLIDE 1-9

Competence refers to the knowledge and skills needed to accomplish business tasks, approach business problems, and get a job done. Most people will judge your competence based on your track record of success and achievement.

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SLIDE 1-10

People develop competence in many ways: through study, observation, and, most important, practice and real-world business experiences. Your entire business program is likely centered on developing competence in a certain business discipline or industry. You may already have significant business experience. If you're a novice, seeking internships and jobs related to your discipline will help you develop competence. How you communicate directly affects how others perceive your competence.

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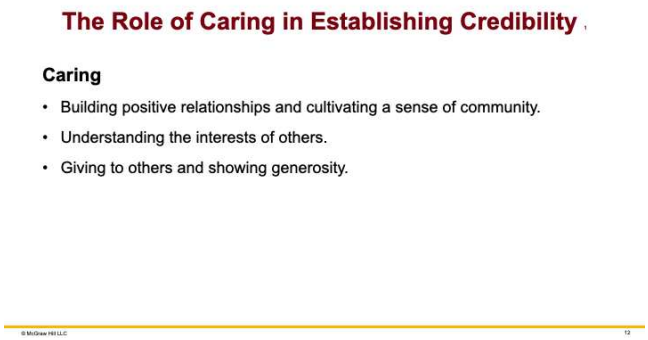
SLIDE 1-11

Throughout this book, you will find an emphasis on two traits associated with competence: a focus on action and an emphasis on results.

- A *focus on action* implies that you seize business opportunities. Meg Whitman emphasized this action-oriented approach to work: "The way I usually put it is, the price of inaction is far greater than the cost of making a mistake. You do not have to be perfect to be an effective leader, but you cannot be timid."
- She also described an *emphasis on results*: "I don't believe that all a company needs to do is declare that it has values and then say, 'Trust us, we know what's best.' To be a success, you must identify a goal with a measurable outcome, and you must hit that goal—every day, every month, every year."

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SLIDE 1-12

Your colleagues, clients, and even your customers will trust you far more if they know you care about them. When asked about what makes a great leader, Lt. Gen. Nadja Y. West, the former Army surgeon general, replied, "One characteristic that stands out in all the leaders I've seen is empathy. You don't have to be like everyone else, but you can try to connect with other people. People can tell if you care about them or not."

In the business world, **caring** implies building positive relationships and cultivating a sense of community, understanding the interests of others, and giving to others and showing generosity.

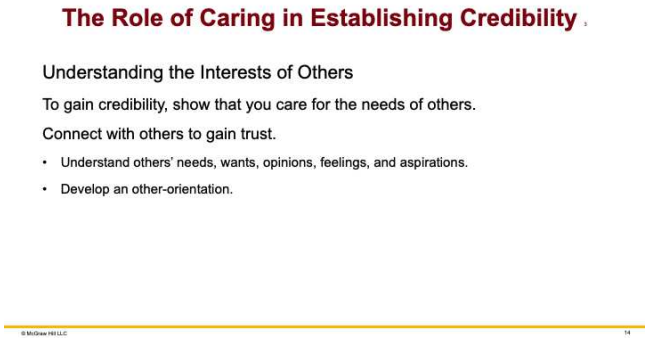


SLIDE 1-13

The most effective business leaders in today's corporate environment have generally risen to their positions because of their sense of community and teamwork. Throughout this textbook, you will see techniques for communicating your "we" and "you" orientation rather than a "me" orientation. Speaking about "our needs" or "your needs" as opposed to "my needs" engenders trust and helps you come up with solutions that achieve mutual benefit.

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SLIDE 1-14

Your ability to gain credibility strongly depends on your ability to show that you care for the needs of others. Furthermore, your ability to show you care puts you in a rare position as a business leader. After all, just 40 percent of employees believe that their managers care about them. Effective communicators gain trust by connecting with others—that is, seeking to understand others' needs, wants, opinions, feelings, and aspirations.

Virtually every aspect of communication you will focus on in this book relies on this other-orientation.

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The Role of Caring in Establishing Credibility

Giving to Others and Showing Generosity

- Companies with higher percentages of givers have higher profitability, higher productivity, higher customer satisfaction, and lower turnover.
- Being a giver opens up opportunities.

SLIDE 1-15

Recent research has shown that most professionals can broadly be characterized as *givers* and *takers*. Givers are those professionals who go out of their way to help colleagues, respond to their requests and needs, and generously support others in the workplace. Takers are those professionals who frequently ask for favors from colleagues yet infrequently volunteer to help their peers in return. Dozens of studies in recent years show that organizations with more generous and giving employees perform better. Such companies achieve higher profitability, higher productivity, and higher customer satisfaction. In addition, these companies experience lower employee turnover rates.

The Role of Character in Establishing Credibility

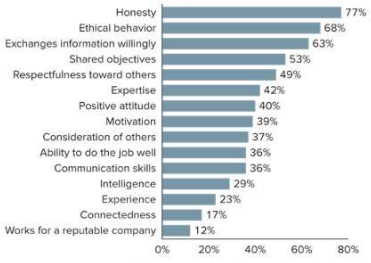
Character

- Staying true to commitments made to stakeholders.
- Adhering to high moral and ethical values.
- Central to creating trust.

SLIDE 1-16

Character refers to a reputation for staying true to commitments made to stakeholders and adhering to high moral and ethical values. Character has always been important in business relationships, especially long-term, collaborative relationships.

Figure 1.3 What Determines Trust in Individuals in the Workplace?

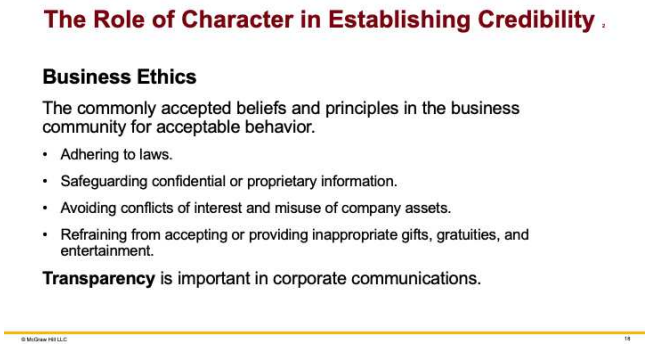


SLIDE 1-17

Character is central in creating trust. Consider the recent research, depicted in Figure 1.3. Business executives were asked what the most important determinants of trust in workplace projects were. Overwhelmingly, character-based traits—that is, honesty, ethical behavior, and willingness to exchange information—ranked at the top.

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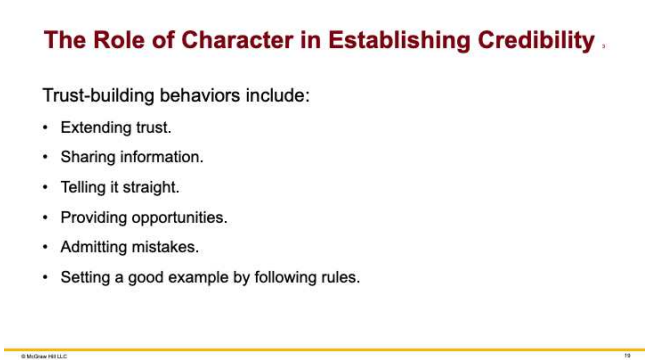
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SLIDE 1-18

Business ethics are the commonly accepted beliefs and principles in the business community for acceptable behavior. At a minimum, business ethics involve adhering to laws; safeguarding confidential or proprietary information; avoiding conflicts of interest and misuse of company assets; and refraining from accepting or providing inappropriate gifts, gratuities, and entertainment.

Transparency involves sharing all relevant information with stakeholders. You will soon be in leadership positions within your organization. You can create a transparent workplace by being accessible, acknowledging the concerns of others, and following through when you don't have immediate answers.

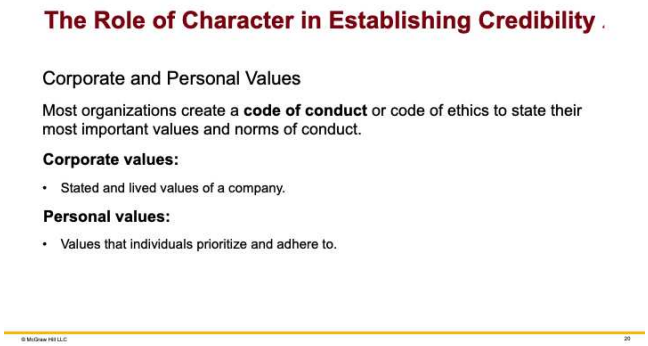


SLIDE 1-19

Trust-building behaviors include extending trust, sharing information, telling it straight, providing opportunities, admitting mistakes, and setting a good example by following rules.

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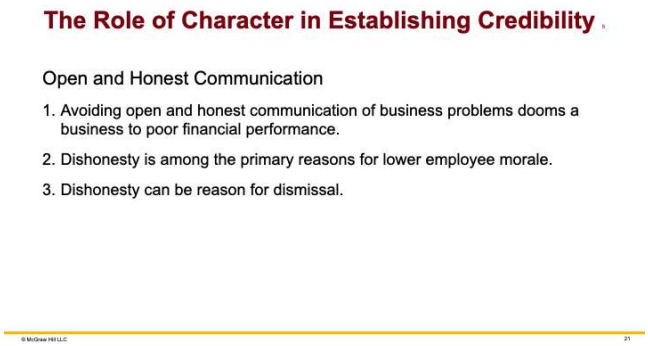
SLIDE 1-20

Corporate values are the stated and lived values of a company. Most organizations create a **code of conduct** or code of ethics to state their most important values and norms of conduct. Publicly traded companies are required by the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to have a code of ethics available to all employees and to ensure that it is enacted. Most organizations create a **code of conduct** or code of ethics to state their most important values and norms of conduct. Publicly traded companies are required by the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to have a code of ethics available to all employees and to ensure that it is enacted.

Personal values are those values that individuals prioritize and adhere to. Aligning personal values—those values that individuals prioritize and adhere to—with corporate values is an important element of character**.**

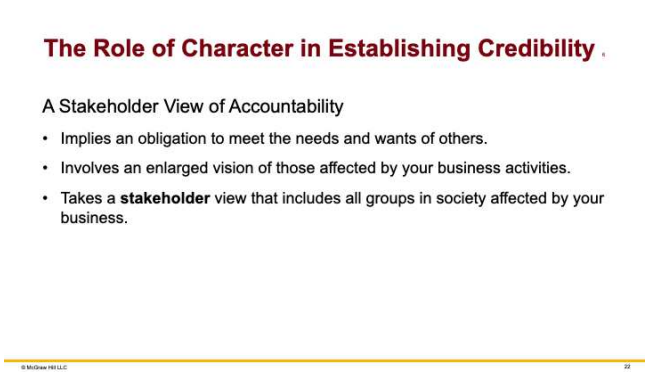
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SLIDE 1-21

By avoiding open and honest communication of business problems, employees doom a business to poor financial performance. Also, dishonesty is among the primary reasons for lower employee morale. Nearly six in ten employees say that they've left an organization because of lack of trust—the key reasons being a lack of communication and dishonesty. Finally, dishonesty can be a reason for dismissal. In some cases, dishonesty can destroy careers and even result in criminal charges.



SLIDE 1-22

A sense of accountability implies an obligation to meet the needs and wants of others. It also involves an enlarged vision of those affected by your business activities. It takes a **stakeholder** view that includes all groups in society affected by your business activities. Thus, a sense of accountability involves a feeling of responsibility to stakeholders and a duty to other employees and customers. By placing a rationale for accountability in your communications, you will generate substantial trust and goodwill from others.

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Fairness in Business Communications

Others' perceptions of your character are largely determined by your communications.

The FAIR test helps you examine how well you have:

- Provided the facts.
- Granted access to your motives, reasoning, and information.
- Examined impacts on stakeholders.
- Shown respect.

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SLIDE 1-23

The FAIR test helps you examine how well you have provided the facts; how well you have granted access to your motives, reasoning, and information; how well you have examined impacts on stakeholders; and how well you have shown respect.

Figure 1.4 The FAIR Test of Ethical Business Communication



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SLIDE 1-24

As you respond to questions such as those posed in Figure 1.4, you ensure that your communications are fair to yourself and others.

Overcoming Cynicism

Cynicism is "a belief that other people are selfish, greedy, and dishonest."

Some tips to help you interact with cynical, non-trusting colleagues:

- Model trust by showing faith in others.
- Practice full transparency.
- Listen to others and address their real concerns.
- Give people time to shift attitudes.

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SLIDE 1-25

Some organizations have a lot of employees with cynicism. Throughout your career, you may run into situations where you interact with highly cynical, non-trusting colleagues. Cynicism cycles often end when one person has the courage to display trust. By modeling trust, practicing full transparency, listening to your colleagues, and giving them time to change their attitudes, you may establish credibility with cynical colleagues.

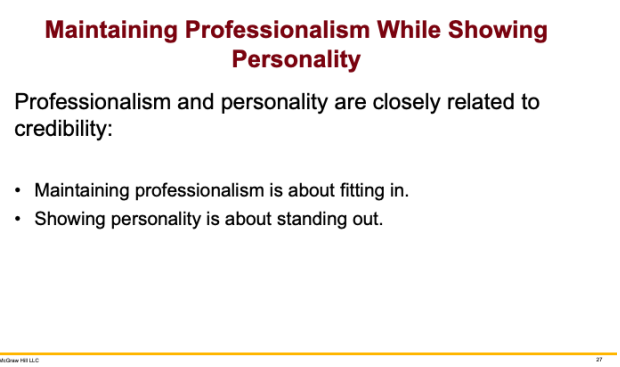
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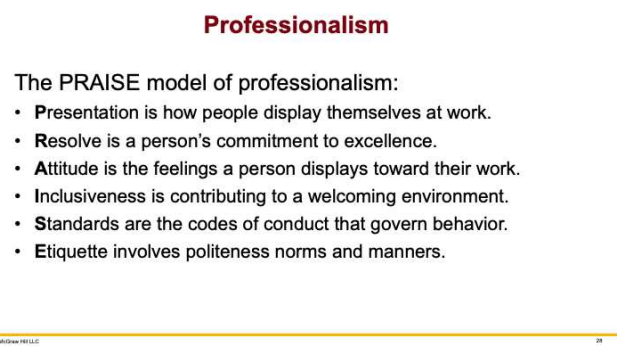
SLIDE 1-26

Remember that AI can only get you so far. When it comes time to present or speak up in a meeting to defend your ideas, you can't rely on AI to help you out. Research already suggests those who use AI to create their emails and other written messages tend to experience more imposter syndrome. Make sure your AI use doesn't stop you from developing your unique ideas and conveying them confidently.



SLIDE 1-27

While there is naturally some tension between fitting in and standing out, throughout the text we'll suggest that you can communicate more effectively by accomplishing both. We suggest you can find ways to pair the best parts of your personality with hallmarks of professionalism.



SLIDE 1-28

Professionalism involves the degree to which a person meets the basic norms and expectations of behavior for a professional in their position or field. You'll hear people often refer to behaviors that are *professional* or *unprofessional.* Generally, these behaviors fall within categories in the PRAISE model of professionalism: presentation, resolve, attitude, inclusiveness, standards, and etiquette.

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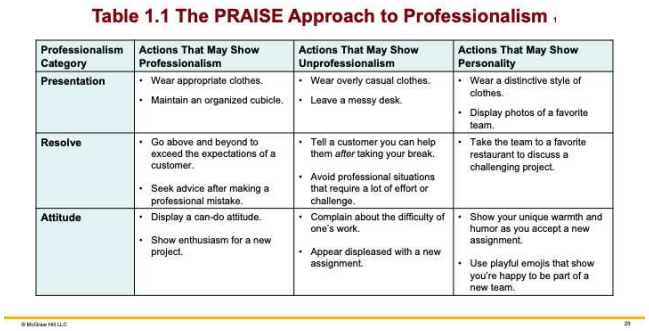


Table 1.1 The PRAISE Approach to Professionalism 1

Professionalism Category	Actions That May Show Professionalism	Actions That May Show Unprofessionalism	Actions That May Show Personality
Presentation	• Wear appropriate clothes. • Maintain an organized cubicle.	• Wear overly casual clothes. • Leave a messy desk.	• Wear a distinctive style of clothes. • Display photos of a favorite team.
Resolve	• Go above and beyond to exceed the expectations of a customer. • Seek advice after making a professional mistake.	• Tell a customer you can help them *after* taking your break. • Avoid professional situations that require a lot of effort or challenge.	• Take the team to a favorite restaurant to discuss a challenging project.
Attitude	• Display a can-do attitude. • Show enthusiasm for a new project.	• Complain about the difficulty of one's work. • Appear displeased with a new assignment.	• Show your unique warmth and humor as you accept a new assignment. • Use playful emojis that show you're happy to be part of a new team.

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SLIDE 1-29

Table 1.1 displays just a few actions that *may* demonstrate professionalism and unprofessionalism along with ways to show personality.

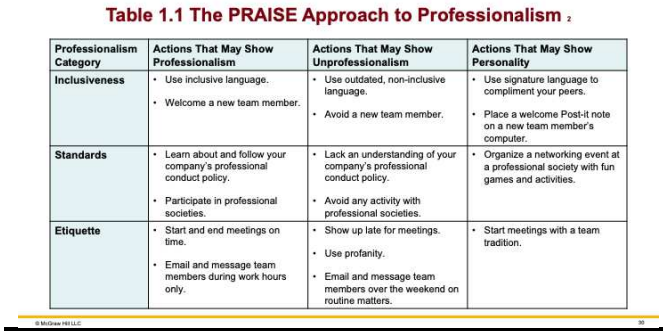


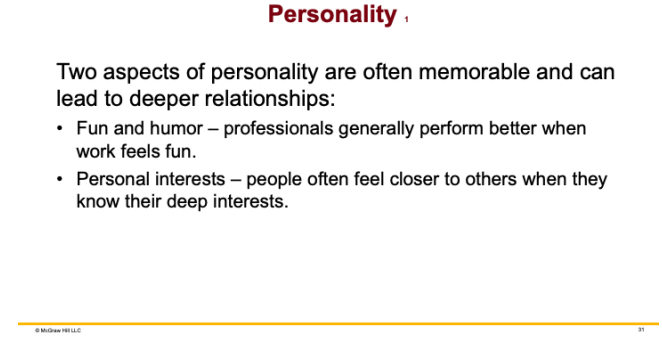
Table 1.1 The PRAISE Approach to Professionalism 2

Professionalism Category	Actions That May Show Professionalism	Actions That May Show Unprofessionalism	Actions That May Show Personality
Inclusiveness	• Use inclusive language. • Welcome a new team member.	• Use outdated, non-inclusive language. • Avoid a new team member.	• Use signature language to compliment your peers. • Place a welcome Post-it note on a new team member's computer.
Standards	• Learn about and follow your company's professional conduct policy. • Participate in professional societies.	• Lack an understanding of your company's professional conduct policy. • Avoid any activity with professional societies.	• Organize a networking event at a professional society with fun games and activities.
Etiquette	• Start and end meetings on time. • Email and message team members during work hours only.	• Show up late for meetings. • Use profanity. • Email and message team members over the weekend on routine matters.	• Start meetings with a team tradition.

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SLIDE 1-30

Table 1.1 displays just a few actions that *may* demonstrate professionalism and unprofessionalism along with ways to show personality.



Personality 1

Two aspects of personality are often memorable and can lead to deeper relationships:

- Fun and humor – professionals generally perform better when work feels fun.
- Personal interests – people often feel closer to others when they know their deep interests.

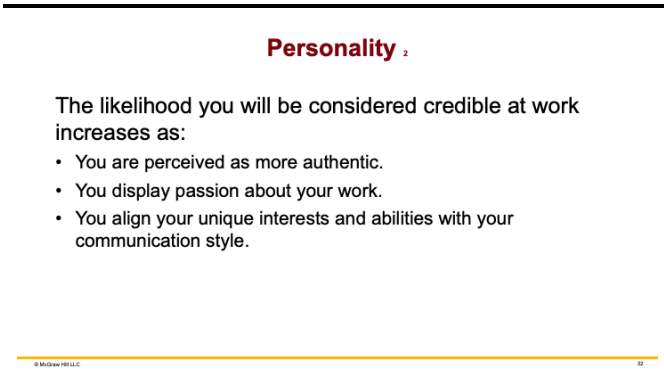
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SLIDE 1-31

Personality is the combination of ways you think and act that makes you unique. In the context of communication, *showing personality* involves distinctive elements of your communication style. Whereas professionalism is more about community and conformance, personality is more about individuality and creative expression.

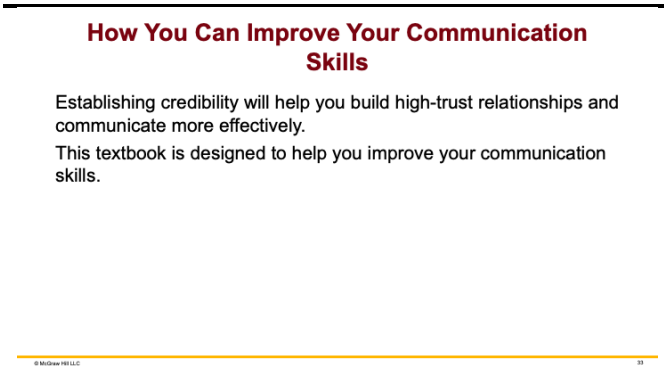
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SLIDE 1-32

One of your goals for this course should be to consider how to build personality—or flair—into your communication style. As you do this purposefully and genuinely, you'll find that you build better work relationships and influence others more effectively. Showing your personality as you communicate with others at work can enhance your credibility and likability.



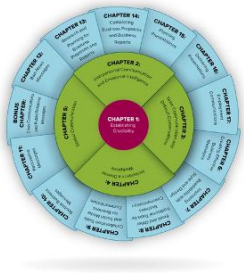
SLIDE 1-33

Establishing credibility allows you to communicate more easily and more influentially. In high-trust relationships, since individuals willingly and freely give the benefit of the doubt, communication is simpler, easier, quicker, and more effective.

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Figure 1.5 Overview of Book



SLIDE 1-34

This textbook is designed to help you improve your skills in a variety of professional settings so that you can become a credible and trusted communicator. Overall, you may feel that you excel at some communication skills but not others. Regardless of your present skill level, this textbook gives you opportunities to deliberately and consciously elevate your communication skill set. It also gives you tools to continue developing your communication abilities over the course of your career. Figure 1.5 provides an overview of the topics we will cover in this textbook.

As you read this book, you will be invited often to reflect about what you are reading. Try to apply what you read to your current challenges and your past experiences.

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Solutions to Discussion Exercises

In these suggested approaches and solutions, you'll find key points to look for in students' responses.

1.1 Chapter Review Questions (LO 1.1, LO 1.2, LO 1.3, LO 1.4)

Answer each of the following questions with one to three paragraphs:

A. *Explain the importance of establishing credibility in business communications.*

Important parts of this answer could include the following: (a) Other people judge your comments, presentations, emails, and other communications based on your personal credibility. When you are viewed as credible, your messages are viewed as more plausible. When you are not viewed as credible, others will doubt your messages. (b) As a business professional, you often operate from a position of distrust. By establishing personal credibility, you are more likely to gain trust in your messages and other communications.

B. *Explain the three components of credibility: competence, caring, and character. How do they interrelate?*

This answer should include short explanations about each aspect of credibility. Competence involves skills and knowledge to accomplish work tasks. Caring involves understanding and acting in the interests of others, both in the professional and personal needs of others. Character involves adhering to high ethics and values. The second part of this discussion item involves explaining how these aspects of credibility are interrelated. Students should be rewarded for mentioning how these aspects overlap in some situations, especially when they provide specific instances. For example, asking others to participate in a meeting may be viewed as competence and caring. It shows skill at running an effective meeting. It shows caring because of a sincere interest in the views of others.

C. *Define and explain business ethics, corporate values, and the relationship between them.*

Business ethics are the commonly accepted beliefs and principles in the business community for acceptable behavior. Corporate values are the stated and lived values of a company. The text explains that the Society for Human Resource Management has defined corporate values as the essence of business ethics. Students should be rewarded for providing nuanced answers about cases where corporate values may not align with commonly accepted beliefs and principles in the business community within an industry or even more broadly.

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D. *Explain the FAIR approach to evaluating ethical business communications.*

The FAIR approach helps professionals ask key questions to evaluate whether their communications are ethical. By asking questions related to facts, access, impacts, and respect, professionals can get a good sense of whether they are truly being fair to others. Students should be rewarded for providing examples from their school and work experiences.

E. *Describe how credibility impacts communication efficiency and effectiveness.*

Credibility makes communication more effective and efficient because each person in a high-trust relationship tends to put up less resistance to the ideas of others in the relationship. The persons in a high-trust relationship also tend to give each other the benefit of the doubt when misunderstandings arise.

F. *Explain how you can display professionalism and personality at the same time. Give three examples.*

Maintaining professionalism *in many ways is about fitting in*, whereas showing personality in many ways is about *standing out.* While there is naturally some tension between fitting in and standing out, businesspeople can communicate more effectively by accomplishing both. The text suggests pairing the best parts of your personality with hallmarks of professionalism. Examples for how to do this will vary.

1.2 Ideas in Action (LO 1.1, LO 1.2, LO 1.3, LO 1.4)

Read the Ideas in Action *with Mary Barra of GM, and write a one- or two-paragraph response to each of the following questions:*

A. *What points does Mary Barra make about the impact of competence in establishing credibility?*

Bara has a proven track record of results, so she urges GM employees to develop their skills and be forward-looking with their solutions.

B. *What points does she make about the impact of caring in establishing credibility?*

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Barra encourages professionals to focus on the needs of others and build long-term, meaningful relationships. She stresses the role relationships play in business.

C. *What points does she make about the impact of character in establishing credibility?*

She promotes honesty, transparency, and high values ("your North Star"). Leaders develop real integrity during rough times. Values must mean more than words on a page, you have to do what you say you are going to do.

D. *Which of her comments or experiences do you view as particularly insightful or helpful? Why that one?*

Answers will vary.

1.3 Character and Rules (LO 1.2)

As a former chair of the U.S. Federal Reserve once said, "Rules cannot take the place of character." In two to three paragraphs, explain what you think he meant by this statement.

Responses will vary. Key points/angles may include: (a) ethical behavior cannot be forced upon professionals; (b) professionals must have their own moral compasses; or (c) rules cannot account for all ethical dilemmas.

1.4 Transparency (LO 1.3)

As Dennis S. Reina and Michelle L. Reina explained in their book Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace, *"Some leaders assume that . . . they are obligated to tell employees only what they specifically need to do their job. This couldn't be further from the truth." In three to five paragraphs, explain the meaning of this statement. Why might leaders provide information about their activities and decision-making, even when employees may not be directly affected?*

Responses will vary. Key points/angles may include: (a) employees will follow leaders who they believe share information and decision-making openly with them; (b) an open and honest work environment leads to higher morale and productivity; or (c) employees who know more about their organizations and its leaders will be more engaged.

1.5 Gather Information from Websites About Ethics in Business (LO 1.3)

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Read at least three blogs or articles about trust and/or ethics from a reputable organization or other source. Choose an issue that interests you, and in four to five paragraphs, summarize key findings related to that issue. Consider the following options for gathering information:

- Ethics and Compliance Initiative (www.ethics.org)
- Institute of Business Ethics (www.ibe.org.uk)
- Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics (www.corporatecompliance.org)
- *Business Ethics* magazine (http://business-ethics.com)
- International Business Ethics Institute (www.business-ethics.org)
- *Edelman Trust Barometer* (www.edelman.com/trustbarometer)

Responses will vary widely. Students should be rewarded for choosing specific and challenging topics.

1.6 Watch Interviews with Business Executives about Corporate Values (LO 1.2, LO 1.3)

Watch at least three videos of interviews with executives talking about corporate values. In four to five paragraphs, summarize what you learned. Consider the following options for gathering information:

- Go to CNBC's website (www.cnbc.com) and search with terms such as ethics, integrity, character, credibility, values, and/or corporate values; next, apply the filter for video content and search for CEO interviews about corporate values or corporate culture.
- Go to YouTube and search with terms such as *business ethics, corporate values, core values,* and *corporate culture.* Select videos of business executives and managers speaking about corporate values. Choose videos that are five minutes or longer.

Responses will vary widely. You may need to help students find useful and current interviews with executives. See the textbook website (connect.mheducation.com) and Facebook page (facebook.com/cardonbcomm) for options.

1.7 Learn About Corporate Citizenship (LO 1.3)

In recent years, companies have increasingly focused on their social responsibility. Many companies refer to the actions they take to help or give back to society as corporate citizenship*. Learn about corporate citizenship from at least three reliable organizations or sources. In four to five paragraphs, summarize what you've learned. Consider the following options for gathering information:*

- Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship (https://ccc.bc.edu/)
- *Forbes* Special Section on America's best corporate citizens (www.forbes.com/just-companies/)
- Santa Clara University Markkula Center for Applied Ethics (www.scu.edu/ethics/)

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Responses will vary widely. Students should be rewarded for choosing specific and challenging topics.

1.8 Identify Specific Approaches to Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Responsibility (LO 1.3)

Choose a company and analyze its corporate citizenship measures. In four to five paragraphs, explain the company's major corporate citizenship initiatives and how they reflect its core values. Generally, you can find a corporate citizenship page at a company's website by navigating sections with titles such as "About Us," "Company Overview," "Public Relations," "Media," "ESG," and so on. If you aren't sure which company you would like to learn about, consider the following:

- Microsoft (https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/corporate-responsibility)
- Citigroup (https://www.citigroup.com/citi/about/citizenship/citizenship-approach.html)
- Accenture (www.accenture.com/us-en/about/corporate-citizenship)
- IBM (www.ibm.com/ibm/responsibility/initiatives.html)

Responses will vary widely. You might direct students to particular companies. Most public companies create annual corporate social responsibility (CSR) reports, which are nearly always housed on their websites. You might also direct students to corporate Facebook pages, YouTube channels, or other outlets where CSR initiatives are often publicized.

1.9 Business Ethics and Changing Values (LO 1.3)

David Pottruck, former president and co-CEO of the Charles Schwab Corporation, explained the following regarding ethics and law:

> *At Schwab, we are constantly looking for new ways to express our values without compromising them. For example, we built the company on the principle of "no conflict of interest." For many years, we defined that principle as "we will not give investment advice," because we equated advice with the old-line practice of selling hot stocks to maximize brokerage commissions. When we found that our customers were demanding advice from us, we realized that our business model, one that did not compensate brokers for sales, made it possible for us to give advice and continue to avoid conflict. We changed our practice to give the customers what they wanted, expert advice that is "objective, uncomplicated and not driven by commission," and at the same time we strengthened our commitment to our values. We feel that was a highly responsible change.*

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In three to five paragraphs, discuss whether you think corporate and personal values can and/or should change over time. Specifically discuss Pottruck's statements.

Responses will vary widely here. Consider rewarding students for providing a nuanced view of this issue, such as giving examples where expressions of values vary over time *and* examples where expression of values do not change over time. For example, students might argue that values such as ensuring the safety of employees by having no workplace accidents is a constant expression of a value. On the other hand, they might argue that values such as providing fair compensation to employees remain constant but that what constitutes *fair compensation* will naturally evolve over time.

1.10 Watch Ted Talks about Credibility and Trust (LO 1.1, LO 1.2, LO 1.3)

Watch a TED Talk about credibility and trust. You might consider one of the following:

- "How to Build and Rebuild Trust" by Frances Frei (www.ted.com/talks/frances_frei_how_to_build_and_rebuild_trust)
- "We've Stopped Trusting Institutions and Started Trusting Strangers" by Rachel Botsman (https://www.ted.com/talks/rachel_botsman_we_ve_stopped_trusting_institutions_and_started_trusting_strangers?language=en)
- "What We Don't Understand about Trust" by Onora O'Neill (https://www.ted.com/talks/onora_o_neill_what_we_don_t_understand_about_trust)
- "What Really Motivates People to Be Honest in Business" by Alexander Wagner (www.ted.com/talks/alexander_wagner_what_really_motivates_people_to_be_honest_in_business)
- "How to Spot a Liar" by Pamela Meyer (www.ted.com/talks/pamela_meyer_how_to_spot_a_liar)

Write three to five paragraphs about the following:

1. *A brief summary (four to five sentences) of the talk.*
2. *Two or three insights about credibility.*
3. *Two or three related recommendations for how professionals can act with higher credibility.*

Answers will vary.

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Solutions to Evaluation Exercises

In these suggested approaches and solutions, you'll find key points to look for in students' responses.

1.11 Compare Two Individuals' Credibility (LO 1.1, LO 1.2)

Think about two people—one whom you trust implicitly and another whom you do not trust. Ideally, these should be two people you currently work with or have worked with in the past. Compare them in the following ways: (a) competence, (b) caring, (c) character, (d) openness of communication, and (e) ease of communication. Write four to five paragraphs. Conclude with several general statements about the impact of credibility on communication efficiency and effectiveness.

Responses will vary widely. You might prompt students to do the following for this exercise: (a) make sure they are constructive with their comments; (b) choose individuals from the workplace or school if possible; and/or (c) use pseudonyms to protect the identity of others if they feel the information is sensitive.

1.12 Assess Credibility (LO 1.1, LO 1.2)

Think about four people: (a) a person who lacks complete credibility because they lack competence, (b) a person who lacks credibility because they lack caring, (c) a person who lacks credibility because they lack character, and (d) a person with complete credibility. Compare and contrast these four individuals in terms of communication effectiveness in the workplace.

Responses will vary widely. You might prompt students to do the following for this exercise: (a) make sure they are constructive with their comments; (b) choose individuals from the workplace or school if possible; and/or (c) use pseudonyms to protect the identity of others if they feel the information is sensitive.

1.13 Evaluate a Communication Event (LO 1.1, LO 1.2)

Choose two communication events (conversations, email exchanges, and so on) that you were involved in—one in which you had credibility from the perspective of others and one in which you did not. If possible, choose communication events that occurred in the workplace or at your university. Respond to the following items about these two events:

A. *Provide an overview of each communication event.*

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B. *Explain the results of each event in terms of ease of communication and accomplishment of workplace objectives.*
C. *Explain why in one situation others granted you credibility but not in the other.*
D. *For the situation in which you had less perceived credibility, think about how you might have better established trust. Write down three ways you could have done so before the communication event occurred.*

Responses will vary widely. You might prompt students to do the following for this exercise: (a) make sure they are constructive with their comments; (b) choose individuals from the workplace or school if possible; and/or (c) use pseudonyms to protect the identity of others if they feel the information is sensitive.

1.14 Examine Personal Credibility (LO 1.2)

Think about a specific professional context, and respond to each of the following questions. For the context, you can use a current or previous job. Or you could use a professional or student activity in which you participated. Ideally, you will select a context with challenging cooperation issues.

A. *How much do/did others trust you in this situation?*
B. *How credible are/were you in terms of competency, caring, and character (from the perceptions of others)?*
C. *Do you think you are/were being perceived inaccurately in any ways? Why?*
D. *Have you done/did you do anything that may have broken trust in any way?*
E. *Have you kept/did you keep all your agreements? Explain.*
F. *List three things you need to do or should have done to better establish credibility.*

Responses will vary widely. I've found that some students are hesitant to share personal information if they think it might be shared with other classmates. You might consider telling the students that you will be the only person who sees this assignment and that you won't share it with anyone.

Alternatively, if you intend to have peers share the information with one another, you might consider telling them to write only about information they are comfortable sharing with classmates.

1.15 Apply the FAIR Test (LO 1.4)

Choose a recent communication event (conversation, email exchange, and so on) that you were involved in, observed, or heard about. If possible, choose a communication event that occurred in the workplace and that involved a challenging ethical problem. Analyze the communication event with the FAIR test of ethical business communication. Devote at least one paragraph to each aspect of the test:

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(a) ***facts*** *(how* factual *was the communication?)*
(b) ***access*** *(how* accessible *or* transparent *were the motives, reasoning, and information?)*
(c) ***impacts*** *(how did the communication* impact *stakeholders?)*
(d) ***respect*** *(how* respectful *was the communication?).*

See Figure 1.4 for more information about the FAIR test.
Responses will vary widely. You might prompt students to do the following for this exercise: (a) make sure they are constructive with their comments; (b) choose individuals from the workplace or school if possible; and/or (c) use pseudonyms to protect the identity of others if they feel the information is sensitive.

1.16 Apply the FAIR Test to the Message to Employees (LO 1.4)

Using the FAIR test, evaluate Jeff Bezos's open letter to employees at the beginning of the pandemic (published as "A Message from our CEO and Founder" on March 21, 2021, on the Amazon website: (https://www.aboutamazon.com/news/company-news/a-message-from-our-ceo-and-founder). Address each aspect of the FAIR test:
(a) ***facts*** *(how* factual *was the communication?)*
(b) ***access*** *(how* accessible *or* transparent *were the motives, reasoning, and information?)*
(c) ***impacts*** *(how did the communication* impact *stakeholders?)*
(d) ***respect*** *(how* respectful *was the communication?).*
See Figure 1.4 for more information about the FAIR test.

Responses will vary widely. Student answers must cover all aspects of the FAIR test: facts, access, impacts, and respect. Students should be rewarded for specificity in their evaluation.

Use other online materials as needed to help you evaluate the fairness of this meeting.

1.17 Apply the Fair Test to a Leaked Memo (LO 1.4)

Some Amazon employees organized protests over working conditions. Amnesty International sided with the workers and insisted that Jeff Bezos make a statement about employee's concerns, stating, "It is repugnant that the company's workforce feel their safety is not being taken seriously. Jeff Bezos needs to step up and address the legitimate and vital concerns raised by Amazon staff—profits should never be put above people." One of the most well-known protestors was Chris Smalls. (Eventually, he was fired and has become an active advocate for unionization for Amazon employees.) Leaked notes from an Amazon meeting

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attended by Jeff Bezos revealed some aspects of Amazon's public relations (PR) strategy. Amazon general counsel David Zapolsky referred to Mr. Smalls as "not smart" and not "articulate." Amazon executives even discussed how to discredit the workers who were trying to unionize. Read more about this situation in this VICE News *article: https://www.vice.com/en/article/5dm8bx/leaked-amazon-memo-details-plan-to-smear-fired-warehouse-organizer-hes-not-smart-or-articulate. How would you characterize this meeting based on the FAIR test?*

Address each aspect of the FAIR test: (a) ***facts*** *(how* factual *was the communication?); (b)* ***access*** *(how* accessible *or* transparent *were the motives, reasoning, and information?); (c)* ***impacts*** *(how did the communication* impact *stakeholders?); (d)* ***respect*** *(how* respectful *was the communication?). See Figure 1.4 for more information about the FAIR test. Use other online materials as needed to help you evaluate the fairness of this meeting.*

Responses will vary widely. Student answers must cover all aspects of the FAIR test: facts, access, impacts, and respect. Students should be rewarded for specificity in their evaluation.

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Solutions to Application Exercises

In these suggested approaches and solutions, you'll find key points to look for in students' responses.

1.18 Personal Mission Statement and Code of Conduct (LO 1.3)

Write your own mission statement, including a code of conduct. Consider the following steps as you create the statement:

- *Find several companies you admire. Use their code of conduct statements to help you craft your personal statement. Make sure you've personalized the statement to capture your deepest values and goals.*
- *Go to a career development website. These websites often contain articles and blogs about creating personal statements. For example, see the following:*
  - "How to Write a Personal Mission Statement (with examples)" by Jennifer Harrity (https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/personal-mission-statement-examples)
  - "How to Write a Personal Mission Statement" by Ken Coleman (https://www.ramseysolutions.com/personal-growth/mission-statement-101)
- *Go to a consultant website specializing in mission statements. Usually, these websites provide free resources for developing your own statement. In some cases, you will be required to create a username and password, but the online assistance is free. For example, see Franklin Covey's step-by-step guide (www.franklincovey.com/msb/).*

Responses will vary widely. You might ask students to work in teams initially and brainstorm about what they'd like to include in their personal statements. You might also consider asking students to share their personal statements with small groups or with the entire class. Finally, you might consider asking students to modify their personal statements at the end of the semester after they've spent several months developing their communication skills and career aspirations.

1.19 Statement of Career Aspirations (LO 1.3)

When asked "What's your career advice for young people?" Vineet Nayar, former CEO of HCL Technologies, a $5 billion IT services company centered in India, said the following:

> *When you come out of college, you're raw. You have energy. You want to experiment. You want to learn. You have hopes. You have aspirations. You want to be Oprah Winfrey. You want to be Steve Jobs. You want to be Bill Gates. You want to be all that. Slowly, over time, you lose it. And by looking in the mirror every day as you get older, you fool yourself that you're OK. There has to be another way of looking in the mirror and*

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revisiting what you really want to do. So I would say, maybe at the end of college, write it down honestly, in 100 words or whatever it is, and put it in a box. I call it the magic box. Revisit it once a year or once every two years and say, how honest are you to that? Don't let anybody run your life. That, in my mind, is very, very important. You should be in control of your life.

Think about what Nayar's comments mean for you. In approximately 100 to 200 words, describe your deepest career aspirations. Include several statements about your guiding philosophy and the core personal values that drive your ambitions. Explain who you want to be in the future. Write the statement assuming that you will return to it in 5, 10, or more years to see what progress you have made with your self-determined career aims.

This is not an easy assignment for many students. Many of them have not thought deeply about these issues. Tell the students that being certain is not essential. Rather, by committing their thoughts about their goals—however undeveloped they may be—to a document, they are pushing themselves to become strategic and purposeful about their career directions. Over time, these ideas will evolve. You might even consider asking them to return to this exercise at the end of the semester.

1.20 Professionalism and Personality Statement (LO1.5)

Describe what you believe is unique about your personality for workplace settings. Provide three ways in which you can set yourself apart at work with your personality while also being professional. Be specific and creative.

Responses will vary widely.

Solutions to Language Mechanics Check

1.21 Review the comma rules C1 through C4 in Appendix A. Then, rewrite each sentence to add commas where needed.

A. Financial advisors who have CFA certification can provide better advice. (C1)
B. Janice and Jim Atkinson, who are certified financial advisors, pay attention to your unique investment situation. (C1)
C. Janice received her CFA certification at the same time that I did. (C1)
D. Janice Atkinson, president of Atkinson Financial, will speak at the next Chamber of Commerce event. (C2)

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E. Level 1 of the CFA exam focuses on ethical standards, and Level 2 focuses on security valuation and portfolio management. (C4)
F. Janice spent almost three months preparing on her own for the CFA exam but still didn't pass it on her first try. (C4)
G. As a result, she took a workshop in portfolio management from one of the top local experts. (C3)
H. Janice received her CFA certification last year, the same time that I did. (C1)
I. Janice specializes in retirement planning and Jim specializes in tax preparation. (C4)
J. Jim, not Janice, prepares all their slide decks. (C2)

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Connect Exercises

Evaluating Professional Credibility

Activity Summary: This activity helps students understand the three key elements of professional credibility: competence, caring, and character. Understanding each of these elements will help students identify ways that they can become more credible to others.
Type: Case Analysis
Learning Objectives:
Learning Objective: 01-02 Describe how competence, caring, and character affect your credibility as a communicator.
Difficulty Level: 1 Easy
Blooms: Understand
Business Competency: Communication
Follow-Up Activity: Create a list of various kinds of jobs. Break students into small groups and assign each group one job. Ask them to make a brief list of ways a person in this job might demonstrate competence, caring, and character to establish credibility with coworkers and customers. Have them share their results with the class.

Credibility as a Communicator

Activity Summary: This activity helps students identify actions that demonstrate the three different elements of credibility: competence, caring, and character. In the exercise, students click and drag the behaviors that demonstrate each element into the correct column.
Type: Grouping
Learning Objectives:
Learning Objective: 01-02 Describe how competence, caring, and character affect your credibility as a communicator.
Learning Objective: 01-03 Define and explain business ethics, corporate values, and personal values.
Learning Objective: 01-04 Explain the FAIR approach to ethical business communications.
Difficulty Level: 2 Medium
Blooms: Analyze
Business Competency: Communication; Ethics
Follow-Up Activity: Instructors could ask for volunteers to provide specific examples of each of these behaviors. Students should be encouraged to think of examples that occur within business settings.

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Reviewing Communications with the FAIR Test

Activity Summary: This activity teaches students about the FAIR test for evaluating if communications are fair and ethical. FAIR stands for facts, access, impacts, and respect. In the exercise, students move the behaviors that demonstrate these four categories into their correct columns.
Type: Grouping
Learning Objectives:
Learning Objective: 01-03 Define and explain business ethics, corporate values, and personal values.
Learning Objective: 01-04 Explain the FAIR approach to ethical business communications.
Difficulty Level: 3 Hard
Blooms: Evaluate
Business Competency: Communication; Ethics
Follow-Up Activity: Instructors could present examples of communications that do not pass the FAIR test and call on students to identify which categories of the test the communications fail to meet.

Manager's Hot Seat: Credibility for a Young Manager

Activity Summary: In this activity, students view a ten-minute video and then answer a series of multiple-choice questions about the case. The video features a young project manager having a meeting with three demoralized employees. The questions focus on the ways that the manager demonstrates, or fails to demonstrate, the three aspects of credibility: competence, caring, and character.
Type: Video Case
Learning Objectives:
Learning Objective: 01-02 Describe how competence, caring, and character affect your credibility as a communicator.
Learning Objective: 01-03 Define and explain business ethics, corporate values, and personal values.
Learning Objective: 01-04 Explain the FAIR approach to ethical business communications.
Difficulty Level: 3 Hard
Blooms: Evaluate
Business Competency: Communication; Ethics
Follow-Up Activity: Instructors could lead a further discussion of what the manager did well when it comes to establishing her credibility and what the manager could have done better. Students should be encouraged to consider all three aspects of credibility.

Credibility for an Entry-Level Professional

Activity Summary: This activity teaches students about the real-world implications of credibility for young professionals. They must analyze the credibility of three audit assistants described in a case study and then answer multiple-choice questions about the assistants. Each of the assistants demonstrates

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strength in one of the three aspects of credibility—competence, caring, and character—but shows weakness in another aspect.
Type: Case Analysis
Learning Objectives:
Learning Objective: 01-02 Describe how competence, caring, and character affect your credibility as a communicator.
Learning Objective: 01-03 Define and explain business ethics, corporate values, and personal values.
Learning Objective: 01-04 Explain the FAIR approach to ethical business communications.
Difficulty Level: 2 Medium
Blooms: Analyze
Business Competency: Communication; Ethics
Follow-Up Activity: Students could be encouraged to further explore the impact of credibility through a role-play exercise. Assign them into groups of three and have them play the parts of the three audit assistants. The three characters should have a conversation about the ways in which each assistant's lack of credibility affects the work of the other two.

Manager's Hot Seat: Speaking Up When Faced with an Ethical Dilemma

Activity Summary: Marcus, an early-career accountant, comes to see Natalie, a more senior manager. During the meeting to discuss the purchase of Sybil Systems, a struggling computer chip manufacturer, one of Sybil's accountants discovers a significant expenditure that his boss is looking to push into the next year, which would potentially eliminate it from consideration in the negotiations with the purchasing company. This expenditure could significantly bring down the value of the organization, and pushing off its disclosure to the following year could have drastic effects for different stakeholders.

The goal of this exercise is to demonstrate your understanding of character and the FAIR test of ethical communication.

Type: Video Case
Learning Objectives:
Learning Objective: 01-03 Define and explain business ethics, corporate values, and personal values.
Learning Objective: 01-04 Explain the FAIR approach to ethical business communications.
Difficulty Level: 2 Medium
Blooms: Apply
Business Competency: Communication; Ethics
Follow-Up Activity: Students should think of a situation in their own life involving an ethical decision. Have them describe how they handled it and whether it met the FAIR test criteria of ethical communication.

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Building Credibility Through Professionalism

Activity Summary: This activity teaches students about the ways young professionals can gain credibility through professionalism. Students can demonstrate professionalism by understanding its key components: presentation, resolve, attitude, inclusiveness, standards, and etiquette. They must examine Julie's behavior described in a case study and then answer multiple-choice questions about Julie's conduct using the PRAISE model of professionalism. The goal of this exercise is to demonstrate your understanding of PRAISE model of professionalism.
Type: Case Analysis
Learning Objectives:
Learning Objective: 01-05 Describe how you can use professionalism and personality to build credibility and extend your influence.
Difficulty Level: 2 Medium
Blooms: Apply
Business Competency: Communication
Follow-Up Activity: Students should be encouraged to consider the components of the PRAISE model of professionalism. Instructors could ask for volunteers to provide specific examples of behaviors in each category that demonstrate professionalism or unprofessionalism.

Applying the FAIR Test to AI Use

Activity Summary: This activity teaches students about the ethical implications of AI use, by applying the FAIR test to examples of AI use behavior. FAIR stands for facts, access, impacts, and respect. In the exercise, students move the behaviors that demonstrate these four categories into their correct columns. The goal of this exercise is to demonstrate understanding of how the FAIR test can be applied to AI use.
Type: Grouping
Learning Objectives:
Learning Objective: 01-01 Explain the importance of establishing credibility for business communications.
Learning Objective: 01-04 Explain the FAIR approach to ethical business communications.
Difficulty Level: 2 Medium
Blooms: Apply
Business Competency: Ethics
Follow-Up Activity: Instructors could prompt students to discuss their own AI usage and to identify which categories of the FAIR test those AI uses might fail to meet.

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