

**Introducing a Book:**

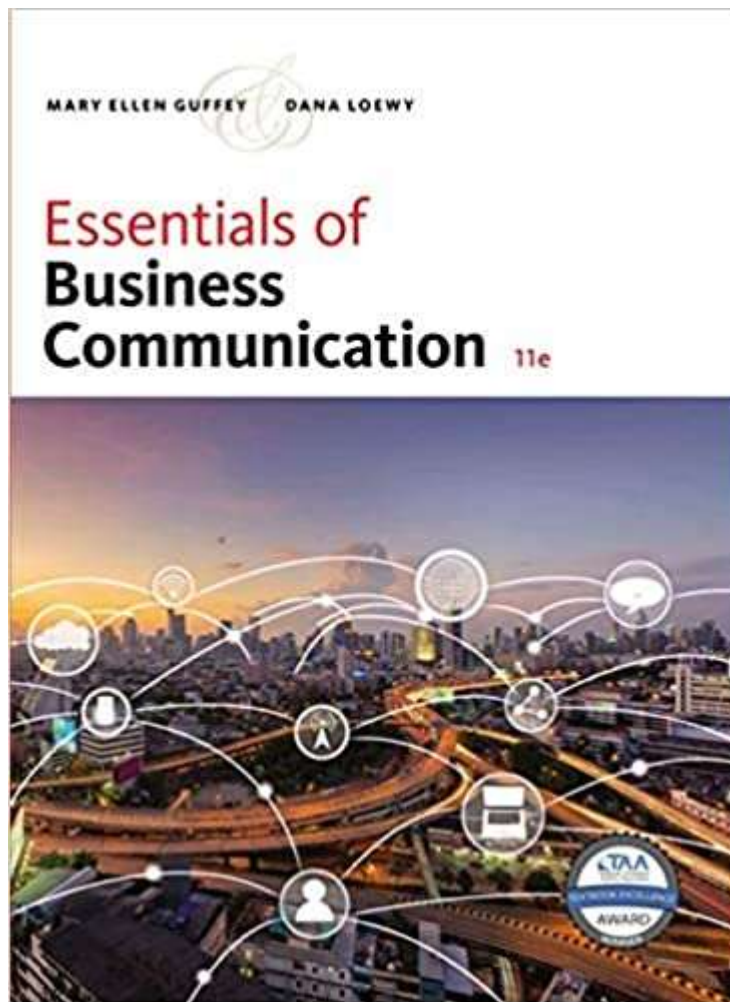
***Essentials of Business Communication***

**By Mary Ellen Guffey and Dana Loewy**

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This valuable textbook is divided into 6 Units.

## **Unit 1 Business Communication in the Digital Age**

## **Unit 2 The Writing Process in the Information Age**

## **Unit 3 Workplace Communication**

## **Unit 4 Business Reports – Best Practices**

## **Unit 5 Professionalism, Teamwork, Meetings, and Speaking Skills**

## **Unit 6 Employment Communication**

This book also has over 500 pages. The book is written in easy to follow English and style. Examples are given; graphs and other visuals are presented. Meeting photos relevant to the chapter are included. Summary of Learning Outcomes in the form of short questions and answer points help us to remember what we have read and done in the particular chapter.

Unit 1 has one chapter. **Chapter 1** is given the title **Succeeding in the Social and Mobile Workplace**. Among other things, this chapter focuses on the tools that we need to master to gain success in the Modern Business World. It also discusses the need to develop and master Listening Skills. Traditionally in Indian business activities and in overall living, listening skill is highly emphasized. For example, Tirukural, a Tamil didactic classic written many centuries ago, emphasize listening with humility as an important style that we all need to acquire. In this book we see several useful and important suggestions and techniques on developing listening skills. The chapter focuses also on learning nonverbal communication skills in addition to discussing how culture influences communication processes. The chapter emphasizes on the need for business administrators to become interculturally proficient. Each major point is given truly relevant examples, and this, indeed, is very useful to both teachers and students. We need to add relevant examples from the Indian/South Asian contexts to make our study more relevant and useful to our own contexts.

**Unit 2 The Writing Process in the Information Age** has three chapters: **2. Planning Business Messages**, **3. Organizing and Drafting Business Messages**, and **4. Revising Business Messages**. The chapter on Planning Business Messages presents, among other things, analysis of the purpose of the messages, adapting to the audience, improving the tone and clarity of a message. The chapter on organizing and drafting business messages focuses several aspects including workplace messages, organizing information, skillful writing techniques, and powerful sentences. Chapter 4 emphasizes revising messages, enhancing message clarity, proofreading to eliminate errors and to use most appropriate words, phrases, sentences, etc., apart from ways to improve the effectiveness of the messages.

**Unit 3 Workplace Communication** offers four very important chapters. **Chapter 5** deals with mastering digital media and effective use of short messages in workplace. The focus in this chapter is on e-mail messages and memos, workplace messaging and texting, podcasts and wikis, blogs, and social networking. Mastery of these techniques will help our students shine well in their interviews and in their workplaces. We need to remember that workplace communication in modern times and in all types of economies around the world seem to focus on better writing skills

in English. Word and sentence ambiguity must be avoided. Simple and plain English with short sentences should help a lot to improve our own thinking process as well.

**Chapter 6** discusses aspects of positive and neutral messages. Routine messages using letters, memos and e-mails are described and discussed. Adjustment messages, Goodwill messages, claims and complaints, etc. are described with truly relevant examples.

**Chapter 7** focuses on negative messages. Negative messages are an integral part of business administration. Focus on communicating negative messages in an effective and non-offensive manner is an important skill. We all need to learn how to compose negative messages in an effective manner. Power of the person who is asked or entitled to communicate the negative messages should not be a strong point here. How to deal with the colleagues, employees and customers is something we need to learn with great care and attention.

**Chapter 8** of this Unit focuses on Persuasive Messages. Persuasive communication is an important skill. Some may have some natural instincts, or skill to communicate persuasively. Mothers have some natural skill to communicate with their children persuasively. But even they may not succeed on occasions. They know how to become persuasive! Sales messages have to be persuasive. Claims and complaints submitted should also be persuasive. Persuasion comes in oral as well as written forms. How do we start and how do we complete such messages should be learned with great attention.

**Unit 4 Business Reports and Proposals – Best Practices** has two chapters. **Chapter 9** discusses preparation of informal reports. Informal report does not mean that it is a sort of tentative report that will be subjected changes and corrections in due course. It is more a report of information. Report writing is a special skill. Preparing reports in digital age is focused upon in this chapter. General issues such as identifying the problem, defining the purpose, and collecting the data, etc. are dealt with.

**Chapter 10** discusses various aspects of preparing business proposals. Formal business reports are dealt with in this chapter. Place of visual aids, etc. is also pointed out. How to read and understand a formal report is also presented. Indeed, mastery of writing and analysis is very important here.

**Unit 5 Professionalism, Teamwork, Meetings, and Speaking Skills.** Note that the book started with the importance of listening skill. Then it moved to an emphasis on writing and writing skill. Now this unit begins with an emphasis on speaking skill. In addition, the authors also emphasized the reading skill, handling and understanding various formats of communication documents. Speaking skill becomes an important tool in interpersonal direct conversation. Speaking skill is important at all levels of business: street corner shops, street selling, small and large stores, etc. We all want to attract customers and keep them coming to our store again and again. As modern companies insist on scheduled meetings, even virtual meetings, business administrators need to really speak with clarity of pronunciation, tone, controlling emotions, appropriate intonations, etc. Each language group within India and South Asia has their own English accent. So, we need to carefully, and slowly, speak our own English so that our listeners

will be able to understand and follow what we say. Over the years, we may be able to acquire some sort language-neutral or region-neutral English accent.

This Unit has two chapters. **Chapter 11** is given the title **Professionalism at work: Business Etiquette, Ethics, Teamwork, and Meetings**. This descriptive title clearly communicates with us about the content of this chapter.

**Chapter 12** is on **Business Presentations**. It includes information on how to organize contents of our reports to connect with audiences, understanding the functions of current visual aids and how to use them effectively, effective multimedia preparation, rehearsing, polishing our delivery and suitable follow up processes.

**Unit 6 Employment Communication** This Unit is absolutely important for all those who are interested in a career in the discipline/department of Human Resource Development.

**Chapter 13** deals with job searching techniques using employment agencies, etc. available online. This is also an important skill for those who seek employment abroad. Open Job Market searching for jobs is dealt with in in this Chapter. How Networking will help and how it should be pursued is also focused upon in this Chapter. The most important of all the personal skills when it comes to job seeking is writing a Resume that can be suitably modified quickly to apply to various offers available in the job market. This also is discussed. Our Digital tools are important, and chapter 13 of this unit enables us to use these tools effective in searching for job. Finally, the focus is on cover message or covering letter that goes with the resume.

**Chapter 14** is on Interviewing and Following Up. The chapter emphasizes the importance of effective interview offered by the candidates in our competitive world. What should be done before the Interview, what should be done during the Interview and after the Interview are dealt with to help us all. Interview is depended also on the kinds of employment documents the candidates submit. This chapter helps us all to prepare effective documents.

## To Conclude

Note all these require not only reading the chapters of this interesting and well-written textbook but also carefully practice what is recommended. I would highly recommend this textbook to our teachers and students and do all the exercises recommended in this textbook. Note that it is important to search, find and add examples from our own Indian and South Asian contexts. Even if you work in a modern corporation, each corporation may, or may have already developed their own traditions, etc. We all need to be conscious of these practices and absorb them in our work and in dealing with our coworkers, customers, and others.

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