

Reviews

Contemporary Business Communication, by Louis E. Boone, David L. Kurtz and Judy R. Block. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1994. (ISBN 0-13-225947-8). \$50.00.

"A fundamental objective of *Contemporary Business Communication* is to link effective written and oral communication with the ability to find and keep a challenging, personally satisfying job in today's increasingly competitive business world." ¹ If the reader has the ability and desire to develop effective written and oral communications skills, in my reading, it would be difficult to find a better guide than *Contemporary Business Communications*.

The text is divided into seven areas:

Fundamentals of Business Communication exposes the reader to communicating in an organization and the communication process.

Writing Basics introduces planning, organizing, composing, designing, revising, and editing business documents.

Organizational Letters and Memos deals with writing direct requests; good-news, goodwill and informative messages; bad-news and negative messages; and persuasive messages.

Report and Proposal Writing includes: planning and researching business reports and proposals, using visual aids in business reports and proposals, organizing and writing short and long reports and proposals.

Forms of Oral Communication focuses on delivering speeches and oral presentations as well as communicating at formal meetings, by telephone, and during informal conversations.

Employment Communication helps the reader to target a career, write resumes and cover letters, and participate in effective employment interviews.

Communication Challenges confronts communication in the 1990s; communicating in a global marketplace, the challenge of diversity, and communication technology are explored.

Contemporary Business Communication captures all of the above in its 702 pages of attractively designed and colorfully illustrated text — followed by 33 pages of helpful appendixes in the areas of preparing business documents, basics of grammar and usage, and resources for business communicators; references; a six-page glossary; and a nine-page index to facilitate finding specific material quickly.

A major strength of this text is the inclusion of interviews with business professionals providing helpful hints in the subject area of each chapter. This is the first business text of this type to devote a full chapter to consideration of diversity in the workplace. The authors have treated the concerns of international communication and communication technology with a completeness that is missing in most other works in this area of study.

One of the difficulties I have found in the teaching of communication in a business setting has been the lack of video support directly related to the specific concerns of the course, and text. *Contemporary Business Communication* provides eight videos from Communications Briefings at no cost to users of the text. To help keep video timely in courses, ABC News Video Library provides news features that are listed in the *Video Activity Guide* that is included in the *Instructor's Resource Manual*.

In fact, there is a complete instructional package to support teachers and learners using *Contemporary Business Communication*. Geraldine E. Hynes, University of Missouri-St. Louis, has annotated the instructor's edition. Anna Easton and Judy McClain of Indiana University developed the *ABC News Video Activity Guide*, some 1600 test items for the Academic Testing and Learning Analysis System (ATLAS Test Bank), and developed an excellent study guide. And full-color transparencies by Lewis B. Hershey of Hershey Consulting Services are available in acetate and electronic formats.

If you are looking for an excellent instructional package in business communication, do not miss looking at *Contemporary Business Communications*. It is a valuable text that will become a source book to which its owner will return for help again and again in the complex world of business communication.

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¹Boone, Louise E., Kurtz, David L. and Block, Judy R. (1994). *Contemporary Business Communication*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. xix.