



## **ACE Business Communication Skills (3 Semester Credits) – Course Syllabus**

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### **Description:**

In *Business Communication Skills*, you will learn how to effectively communicate in business, with an emphasis on the use of these skills as a potential leader at an organization. The course introduces important elements of successful communication, providing examples of effective communication and providing you opportunities to practice the same. The course covers the essentials of communication including professional writing, visual aids, presentations, speeches, phone and online communication, and both getting hired and finding new hires.

**Textbook:** *Business Communication Skills for Managers* – Egel, et. al. - Lumen Learning, 2018. (This text is provided to students as part of their enrollment.)

**Prerequisites:** No prerequisites

### **Course objectives:**

Throughout the course, you will meet the following goals:

- Identify key principles in business communication.
- Discuss different processes and considerations involved in writing in business.
- Identify the appropriate use of different channels of written communication in business.
- Use traditional and online tools and methods to find, evaluate, and process information.
- Identify key principles in public speaking for business.
- Discuss the usefulness of visual aids and identify common presentation tools.
- Recognize common types of tools for audio, video, and web sharing tools
- Identify common social media platforms used by businesses.
- Describe effective strategies for recruiting and selecting qualified job applicants.

### **Course Evaluation Criteria**

A passing percentage is **70%** or higher.

### **Grading Scale**

A = 95-100%

B = 88-94.9%

C = 80-87.9%

D = 70-79.9%

F = Below 70%

### **ACE Course Retake Policy**

2 (two) attempts are allowed on every quiz, and 2 (two) attempts are allowed on every final exam.

(Continued)

### **Proctorio – Video Proctoring**

All Final Exams are video proctored with Proctorio. ([www.proctorio.com](http://www.proctorio.com))

### **ADA Policy**

Excel Education Systems is committed to maintaining an inclusive and accessible environment to all students, across all of its schools, in accordance with the 1990 Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

There is a **total of 275 points** in this course:

### **Grade Weighting**

Chapter Quizzes	70%
Final Exam	30%
	100%

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Points Available</b>	<b>Percentage of Final Grade</b>
Chapter 1 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 2 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 3 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 4 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 5 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 6 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 7 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 8 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 9 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 10 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 11 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 12 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 13 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 14 Quiz	15	4.66
Chapter 15 Quiz	15	4.66
Final Exam	50	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Course Contents and Objectives**

<b>Chapter 1 – Communicating in Business</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	1.1 Why It Matters: Communicating in Business 1.2 Effective Communication in Business 1.3 Methods of Communication 1.4 Ethics in Business Communication 1.5 Staying Connected 1.6 Putting It Together: Communicating in Business
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain why communication in business is important.</li><li>• Identify characteristics of your audience in business</li></ul>

	<p>communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the process of the social communication model.</li> <li>• Identify characteristics of your audience in business communication</li> <li>• Discuss the process of the social communication model.</li> <li>• Discuss the importance of listening.</li> <li>• Describe verbal communication and its role in business.</li> <li>• Discuss nonverbal communication and its role in business.</li> <li>• Identify key guidelines for ethical business communication.</li> <li>• Describe how to communicate ethically online.</li> <li>• Explain the importance of staying connected with colleagues and other professionals in the digital age</li> <li>• Describe the importance of staying connected with customers in the digital age</li> <li>• List the seven principles by which any communication should be evaluated.</li> </ul>
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<b>Chapter 2 – Writing in Business</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	2.1 Why It Matters: Writing in Business 2.2 Writing the Right Message 2.3 Word Choice and Tone 2.4 The Three-Part Writing Process 2.5 Word Processing Software 2.6 Putting It Together: Writing in Business
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the importance of audience to business communication.</li> <li>• Discuss the importance of writing a clear and focused message in business.</li> <li>• Differentiate between types for writing positive, negative, and persuasive messages.</li> <li>• Describe strategies for creating reader-focused writing.</li> <li>• Discuss strategies to avoid language that can confuse or exclude readers.</li> <li>• Discuss strategies to avoid language that shows bias against individuals or populations.</li> <li>• Describe strategies to improve concision in writing.</li> <li>• Discuss strategies to improve clarity in writing.</li> <li>• Evaluate the parallel structure of sentences and passages.</li> <li>• Discuss appropriate ways to indicate emphasis in business writing.</li> <li>• Explain the importance of the planning stage in the writing process.</li> <li>• Write a business message based on an outline using the appropriate components of a business message.</li> <li>• Revise a business message for tone, message, and correctness.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss common guidelines to create a professionally formatted document.</li> <li>• Use Microsoft Word to create a visually appealing and accessible document.</li> <li>• Use Google Docs to create a visually appealing and accessible document.</li> </ul>
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<b>Chapter 3 – Written Communication</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	3.1 Why It Matters: Written Communication 3.2 Changing Communication Channels 3.3 Internal Emails and Memos 3.4 Other Internal Communications 3.5 External Communication 3.6 Using the Right Communication Channel 3.7 Putting It Together: Written Communication
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the shift from traditional to modern communication methods.</li> <li>• Identify benefits of digital communication methods.</li> <li>• Identify benefits of traditional communication methods.</li> <li>• Describe the professional standards of intra-office emails.</li> <li>• Identify common types of internal emails.</li> <li>• Explain key features of the structure and format of internal emails.</li> <li>• Write an internal email.</li> <li>• Describe key features of the structure and format of memos.</li> <li>• Write an internal memo.</li> <li>• Discuss the use of email chains and listservs.</li> <li>• Compare different methods of instant messaging and text services.</li> <li>• Describe professional applications of multimedia platforms.</li> <li>• Identify professional applications of social media networks.</li> <li>• Explain various types of external emails.</li> <li>• Describe appropriate and professional responses to customers.</li> <li>• Write a response to a critical message from a customer.</li> <li>• Write a response to a customer’s request.</li> <li>• Determine the appropriate communication channel for a specific type of message.</li> </ul>

<b>Chapter 4 - Research</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	4.1 Why It Matters: Research 4.2 Conducting Research 4.3 Internal Data 4.4 Finding Secondary Sources 4.5 Source Analysis

	4.6 Writing Ethically 4.7 Putting It Together: Research Process
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the impact of research in business reports.</li> <li>• Discuss the steps in the research process.</li> <li>• Identify common types of internal and external data used for business reports.</li> <li>• Explain the role of primary research and the most common forms that are used.</li> <li>• Explain secondary research and how it is used to provide support to the report.</li> <li>• Identify types of primary sources and internal data.</li> <li>• Discuss methods for collecting and analyzing internal data.</li> <li>• Create workbooks and format data in Microsoft Excel.</li> <li>• Create workbooks and format data in Google Sheets.</li> <li>• Evaluate preliminary research strategies.</li> <li>• Discuss common tools and strategies for completing online searches.</li> <li>• Identify tools used to find scholarly secondary sources.</li> <li>• Identify the seven pillars of information literacy.</li> <li>• Discuss the importance of evaluating sources and understanding biases.</li> <li>• Describe the components of the CRAAP analysis process.</li> <li>• Describe techniques to incorporate sources into your writing.</li> <li>• Discuss the importance of professional integrity in written communication/reports.</li> <li>• Identify guidelines to avoid plagiarism, copyright, or violation of Fair Use Act.</li> <li>• Document and cite sources using the correct style and formatting.</li> </ul>

<b>Chapter 5 – Visual Media</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	5.1 Why It Matters: Visual Media 5.2 Media and Your Message 5.3 Images 5.4 Charts, Diagrams, and Graphic Organizers 5.5 Contemporary Visual Aids 5.6 Accessible Using Visuals 5.7 Using Visuals 5.8 Putting It Together: Visual Media
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe professional standards for using visual media resources for business purposes.</li> <li>• Describe basic visual design principles.</li> <li>• Identify types of images used for business messages.</li> <li>• Describe how to determine when to use an image and when to use text.</li> <li>• Discuss how to legally source images for your</li> </ul>

	<p>communications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the appropriate use of common tables, charts, and infographics.</li> <li>• Describe factors in deciding which type of visual aid and graphic will best report your data.</li> <li>• Describe the impact of placement, style, and coloring when incorporating graphics into a message.</li> <li>• Explain the impact of descriptive captions and titles when incorporating graphics into a message.</li> <li>• Discuss the pros and cons of using videos as a visual aid.</li> <li>• Describe the process of planning, designing, and producing a video as a visual aid.</li> <li>• Discuss the importance of making your media accessible to the widest audience possible.</li> <li>• Identify techniques and tools to make visual media more accessible to your audience.</li> <li>• Identify appropriate and professional visual representations of information for a business report.</li> <li>• Identify effective use of visual media in presentations, documents, spreadsheets, and messages.</li> <li>• Describe the process of revising and enhancing visual media to create impact.</li> <li>• Evaluate the effectiveness of a message.</li> </ul>
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<b>Chapter 6 - Reports</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	<p>6.1 Why It Matters: Reports          6.2 Business Reports          6.3 Informal Reports          6.4 Formal Reports          6.5 Putting It Together</p>
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinguish between informal and formal reports.</li> <li>• Distinguish between informational and analytical reports.</li> <li>• Compare and contrast different type of stakeholders in business reports.</li> <li>• Explain the different typical types of informal reports.</li> <li>• Discuss different methods of sharing informal reports.</li> <li>• Describe the purpose of common sections of an informal report.</li> <li>• Determine how to organize an informal report based on audience analysis.</li> <li>• Discuss how to write an informal report.</li> <li>• Define types of formal reports, including proposals.</li> <li>• Discuss different methods of sharing formal reports.</li> <li>• Describe various sections that may be used in the front of a report.</li> <li>• Describe various sections that may be used in the body of a</li> </ul>

	<p>report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe various sections that may be used in the back matter of a report.</li> <li>• Determine how to organize an formal report based on audience analysis.</li> <li>• Discuss how to write a formal report.</li> </ul>
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<b>Chapter 7 – Public Speaking</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	7.1 Why It Matters: Public Speaking 7.2 Effective Public Speaking 7.3 Delivery Techniques 7.4 Audience Engagement 7.5 Speech Tips and Techniques 7.6 Putting It Together: Public Speaking
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss key characteristics of public speaking.</li> <li>• Describe the importance of public speaking in a business setting.</li> <li>• Identify various audience needs and expectations that can be addressed by a speech.</li> <li>• List the five steps of developing an effective speech.</li> <li>• Describe effective ways to begin your speech.</li> <li>• Discuss strategies to effectively use body language and gestures to emphasize your message.</li> <li>• Discuss strategies to effectively use vocal variety to emphasize your message.</li> <li>• Identify types of language to avoid in your speech.</li> <li>• Describe techniques to gain and keep an audience’s attention.</li> <li>• Discuss effective ways to use audience participation.</li> <li>• Explain appropriate ways to respond to questions without derailing a presentation.</li> <li>• Discuss various strategies for overcoming common fears and anxiety about public speaking.</li> <li>• Describe public speaking strategies of effective public speakers.</li> </ul>

<b>Chapter 8 – Developing and Delivering Business Presentations</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	8.1 Why It Matters: Developing/Delivering Business Presentations 8.2 Visual Aids 8.3 Using Microsoft PowerPoint 8.4 Using Google Slides 8.5 Making a Presentation for a Meeting 8.6 Putting It Together: Developing and Delivering Business Presentations
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss key concepts to keep in mind as you create business presentations.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe available presentation tools to help engage your audience.</li> <li>• Do the following in Microsoft PowerPoint:</li> <li>• Create and save a new presentation.</li> <li>• Add, delete, and move slides.</li> <li>• Insert text boxes.</li> <li>• Change theme on a presentation.</li> <li>• Add images and clip art.</li> <li>• Add videos</li> <li>• Arrange objects</li> <li>• Do the following in Google Slides:</li> <li>• Create and save a new presentation.</li> <li>• Add, delete, and move slides.</li> <li>• Insert text boxes.</li> <li>• Change theme on a presentation.</li> <li>• Add images and clip art.</li> <li>• Add videos.</li> <li>• Arrange objects.</li> <li>• Identify key features of a good presentation.</li> <li>• Identify the purpose, audience, and message of your presentation.</li> <li>• Discuss common mistakes in presentations.</li> <li>• Create a presentation intended for a business meeting.</li> </ul>
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<b>Chapter 9 – Communicating Through Technology</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	9.1 Why It Matters: Communicating Through Technology 9.2 Communication Tools 9.3 Scheduling a Meeting 9.4 Scheduling Remote Meetings 9.5 Audio Conferences 9.6 Video Conferences 9.7 Web Sharing 9.8 Putting It Together: Communicating through Technology
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare and contrast common tools for audio communication.</li> <li>• Compare and contrast common tools for video communication.</li> <li>• Compare and contrast common tools for screen / web sharing.</li> <li>• Explore multifeature online platforms / virtual office spaces.</li> <li>• Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of various tool categories.</li> <li>• Discuss when and how to use polling tools.</li> <li>• Discuss when and how to use scheduling tools.</li> <li>• Identify the best time for a meeting using Doodle or Calendly.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the key principles involved in scheduling meetings that use audio, video, and web conferencing technology.</li> <li>• Discuss best practices for scheduling remote meetings.</li> <li>• Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of audio in a business context.</li> <li>• Identify the five stages of a telephone conversation.</li> <li>• Identify strategies to increase comprehension and reduce misunderstanding in one-on-one telephone / VOIP communications.</li> <li>• Identify strategies to increase comprehension and reduce misunderstanding in group telephone / VOIP communications.</li> <li>• Participate in a meeting with audio sharing components.</li> <li>• Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of video in a business context.</li> <li>• Identify strategies to increase comprehension and reduce misunderstanding in a one-on-one video call.</li> <li>• Identify strategies to increase comprehension and reduce misunderstanding in group video communications.</li> <li>• Participate in a meeting with video sharing components.</li> <li>• Explain when to use web sharing tools in a business context.</li> <li>• Identify strategies for effective use of web sharing in a one-on-one setting.</li> <li>• Identify strategies for effective use of web sharing in a group setting.</li> <li>• Participate in a meeting with web sharing components.</li> </ul>
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<b>Chapter 10 – Social Media</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	10.1 Why It Matters: Social Media 10.2 Common Social Media Platforms 10.3 Additional Social Media Platforms 10.4 Selling Your Products 10.5 Building Your Brand 10.6 Putting It Together: Social Media
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the primary use of Facebook.</li> <li>• Describe the primary use of Instagram.</li> <li>• Describe the primary use of Twitter.</li> <li>• Describe the primary use of YouTube.</li> <li>• Describe the primary use of LinkedIn.</li> <li>• Describe the primary use of Pinterest.</li> <li>• Describe the primary use of SnapChat.</li> <li>• Describe the primary use of Google Plus.</li> <li>• Use social media to announce a product launch.</li> <li>• Use social media to spotlight products.</li> <li>• Use social media to announce a sale or event.</li> <li>• Use social media to cultivate community.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use social media to create a sense of affinity.</li> <li>• Use social media to announce company news.</li> </ul>
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<b>Chapter 11 – Communicating Different Messages</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	11.1 Why It Matters: Communicating Different Messages 11.2 Informative Business Messages 11.3 Team-Focused Messages 11.4 Professional Criticism 11.5 Responding to Criticism 11.6 Putting It Together: Communicating Different Messages
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the purpose and use cases of informative messages in a business context.</li> <li>• Understand how to write a short informative message.</li> <li>• Understand how to write a long informative message.</li> <li>• Discuss the purpose and use cases of team-focused messages in a business context.</li> <li>• Understand how to write a short team-focused message.</li> <li>• Describe how to write a long team-focused message.</li> <li>• Differentiate between different types of criticism in business.</li> <li>• Explain how to write an external critical message to a company you're not associated with.</li> <li>• Understand how to write an external critical message to an existing customer.</li> <li>• Describe how to write an internal critical message to a person you manage.</li> <li>• Explain how to write an internal critical message to another colleague.</li> <li>• Discuss key points to a professional response to criticism.</li> <li>• Discuss ways to remain professional when you're feeling frustrated with others or a situation.</li> <li>• Describe how to write a short message responding to internal or external criticism.</li> <li>• Explain how to write a long message responding to internal or external criticism.</li> </ul>

<b>Chapter 12 – Collaboration In and Across Teams</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	12.1 Why It Matters: Collaboration In and Between Teams 12.2 Team Communication in the Workplace 12.3 Collaborative Projects 12.4 Workplace Etiquette 12.5 Putting It Together: Collaboration in and Across Teams
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the value of teams in business communication.</li> <li>• Describe types of teams in organizations.</li> <li>• Explain advantages and disadvantages of teams and team dynamics.</li> <li>• Discuss impact of group size on communication.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe various ways of interpreting and responding to conflict in interpersonal communication.</li> <li>• Explain different styles of decision making in groups.</li> <li>• Discuss digital tools for communicating with groups.</li> <li>• Describe the process of collaborating with others to create a business message.</li> <li>• Describe digital tools for collaborative writing.</li> <li>• Discuss appropriate ways to behave in a workplace.</li> <li>• Discuss appropriate and inappropriate conduct at company events.</li> </ul>
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<b>Chapter 13 – Social Diversity in the Workplace</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	13.1 Why It Matters: Social Diversity in the Workplace 13.2 Diversity in the Workplace 13.3 Intellectual Communication 13.4 Working Across Genders 13.5 Working Across Abilities 13.6 Working Across Generations 13.7 Combating Bias 13.8 Putting It Together: Social Diversity in the Workplace
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify factors that define a diverse group of employees.</li> <li>• Explain the advantages of employee diversity within organizations.</li> <li>• Describe the challenges of employee diversity within organizations.</li> <li>• Compare and contrast race and ethnicity.</li> <li>• Discuss how cultural differences among races may influence communication.</li> <li>• Explain how cultural differences among individuals from different countries may influence communication.</li> <li>• Discuss how cultural differences among individuals from different religions may influence communication.</li> <li>• Describe strategies to adapt communication for an intercultural audience.</li> <li>• Discuss different strategies to use gender neutral language in business communication.</li> <li>• Compare and contrast how gender might impact communications styles.</li> <li>• Discuss how various physical and mental disabilities might affect communication.</li> <li>• Describe the language differences found across different generations.</li> <li>• Discuss strategies for bridging intergenerational communication gaps.</li> <li>• Describe the differences between stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the impact bias might have on communication in the workplace.</li> </ul>
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<b>Chapter 14 – Finding a Job</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	14.1 Why It Matters: Finding a Job 14.2 Professional Skill Building 14.3 Networking 14.4 Résumés and Cover Letters 14.5 Interviewing 14.6 Putting It Together: Finding a Job
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List specific skills that will be necessary for your career path.</li> <li>• List transferable skills that will be valuable for any career path.</li> <li>• Explain how to acquire necessary skills, both in and out of class, for your career goals.</li> <li>• Describe the stages of career development.</li> <li>• Identify strategies for networking.</li> <li>• Discuss the purpose and contents of a résumé.</li> <li>• Identify characteristics of an effective résumé.</li> <li>• Create a résumé customized for a specific job opening.</li> <li>• Identify characteristics of an effective cover letter.</li> <li>• Describe effective strategies to prepare for an interview.</li> <li>• Differentiate between types of interview situations and identify appropriate interview techniques for each.</li> <li>• Discuss various question types common in interviews.</li> </ul>

<b>Chapter 15 – Recruiting and Selecting New Employees</b>	
<b>Lessons</b>	15.1 Why It Matters: Recruiting and Selecting New Employees 15.2 Finding Qualified Job Applicants 15.3 Interviewing a Candidate 15.4 Selecting a Candidate 15.5 Putting It Together: Recruiting and Selecting New Employees
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a compelling job advertisement.</li> <li>• Identify methods for finding qualified potential employees.</li> <li>• Describe the laws designed to prevent bias and discrimination in hiring.</li> <li>• Describe techniques to help screen a potential employee.</li> <li>• Discuss the usefulness of creating additional assignments for potential candidates to complete.</li> <li>• Identify who should be present at an interview.</li> <li>• Discuss how to come up with effective questions for an interview.</li> <li>• Describe the process of effective phone interviews.</li> <li>• Discuss the process of effective face-to-face interviews.</li> <li>• Explain methods of selecting the best candidate.</li> <li>• Describe how to complete a job offer</li> </ul>

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