

## **TOPIC: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

### **SUMMARY:**

We live in a multitasking, fast-paced world that has resulted in technology addiction. The traditional workplace of the past has evolved into a virtual workplace where most people are connected electronically. Today's workplace communicates through venues including phones, e-mail, mobile devices, texting, instant messaging, blogs, wikis, and audio and video conferencing. The more we are connected technologically, the greater the opportunity for disconnected messages. As a complement to chapter 9, this chapter focuses on electronic communications in the workplace. Due to the frequency and speed of message transmission, those who communicate through today's virtual workplace need to take great care to ensure all electronic communications are sent in a clear, concise, and professional manner.

### **OTHER RESOURCES:**

#### **POTENTIAL GUEST SPEAKERS**

- Invite a **COMMUNITY OR BUSINESS LEADER** to share his or her thoughts on the use of technology in the workplace.
- Invite a **QUALITY EXECUTIVE/MANAGER** from a local company to discuss how companies are using the Internet for business purposes.

#### **POTENTIAL FIELD TRIPS**

- Visit a local office
- Visit a mobile phone provider to learn of the various new functions.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES: *After studying these topics, you will benefit by:***

- Explaining the professional use of electronic communication tools
- Utilizing phone etiquette
- Demonstrating the proper use of portable devices and texting
- Applying professionalism to social media tools
- Identifying proper behaviors in video and teleconferences

#### ***You are a successful student if you can:***

- Write a professional email.
- Summarize professionalism regarding electronic communications
- Write a professional text.

### **OVERVIEW OF EXERCISES AND ACTIVITIES**

The following chart provides a quick overview of the activities for Electronic Communications. A complete description of each activity follows these tables. In the full description, you will find

the activity title, instructions, and how to conclude/evaluate the activity. As you review which of these activities to use, consider the following:

- None of the activities are meant to be prescriptive. Pick, choose, and adapt. You know your students and what they need better than anyone else.
- We have denoted the format in which the activities can be used. Note the column below titled “Applications.” Most of the activities can be easily replicated from the classroom to the online environment. For example, reflection papers and case studies could be posted on discussion boards or chat rooms and students could respond there. Where appropriate, additional suggestions have been included in the activity section below.
- We have included all worksheets needed to complete the activities for this topic.
- You may want to suggest means by which your students can save, retrieve, and send their activities. This is usually determined by you and the LMS used at your institution.
- The activities provided for this module are intended to give you suggestions that may assist you in providing students with activities, journal writing, thought-provoking situations, and group activities. You probably have many activities in addition to the ones found here. Use them to your best advantage. You and your ideas bring the class to life.
- TALK IT OUTS are found throughout the chapters and are set up to be used as in-class activities or may be assigned for homework.
- ACTIVITIES are found at the end of each chapter and are set up to be used as homework (some may be used as in-class activities).
- SELF-QUIZ is used as a review of key terms.
- WEB SEARCHES are for added resources if computers are available.

Activity #	Description	Related Skill and/or Learning Outcome	Applications
<b>Talk It Out</b>	Understanding of appropriate and inappropriate use of mobile device during meetings. Identify impact on workplace in next five years. Professional email	Proper use of devices and professionalism of social media tools Use of e-communication skills and proper use e-communication professionalism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Topic Situation</b>	Using social media while working. Appropriate timing and use of a mobile device. A nasty/embarrassing email response.	Proper use of devices and professionalism of social media tools e-communication professionalism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Think Like A</b>	Poorly written text	Write professional text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or

<b>Boss</b>	messages	Proper behavior in video and teleconferences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Text Activity #1 Create an E-Mail Heading</b>	Demonstrate ability to properly format professional email heading	Write professional email	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Text Activity #2 Professional Voice Mail</b>	Create a professional voice mail greeting	Professionalism re: social media tools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Text Activity #3 Current Technology</b>	Current technologies	Professional use of e-communication tools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Text Activity #4 Online Identity</b>	Check personal online identity	Professionalism to social media tools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Text Activity #5 Mobile Devices</b>	Apply current technology to target career	Proper use of social media and electronic tools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Text Activity #6 Technology Policies</b>	Technology Policies	Research use, privacy, and ownership issues	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Text Activity #7 Professional Messaging</b>	Practice sending professional text	Executing a professional text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Writing Exercises</b>	Proper and improper uses of technology		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Additional Activity #1 Online Meeting</b>	Practice having an online meeting	Professional use of e-communication tools Proper behavior in video and teleconferences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Additional Activity #2: Discussion Questions</b>	Ideas for further discussion	All	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
<b>Web Search</b>	Search and take a quiz to identify social media addition	Proper use of devices	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online

<b>Self-Quiz</b>	Review	all	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Blended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online
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## **MyStudentSuccessLab ASSESSMENTS and ACTIVITIES**

MyStudentSuccessLab ([www.mystudentsuccesslab.com](http://www.mystudentsuccesslab.com)) is an online solution designed to help students acquire and develop the skills they need to succeed. Here students can access peer-led video presentations and develop core skills through interactive exercises and projects. Rich assessments based on Bloom's Taxonomy and tied to learning outcomes provide students with the opportunity to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to communicate them more effectively. MyStudentSuccessLab helps students develop academic, life, and career skills that will transfer to ANY course or experience.

**TALK IT OUT*****1. Identify the impact technology will have on the workplace in the next five years.***

While the obvious impact is efficiency and mobility, there is also a downside to technology in the workplace including lack of inclusion of key messages (e.g., only select individuals receive).lack of face-to-face interaction, lack of focus, lack of “down time” as a result of 24/7 access to work, and the inability for individuals to communicate informally.

***2. When is it appropriate to use the return receipt in an e-mail message?***

This is a good time to emphasize that it is inappropriate to use the return receipt for every e-mail. The return receipt should only be used in restricted situations including time sensitive e-mails, and/or important e-mails such as an emergency meeting but even in these situations, a return receipt may not be necessary. Have the class discuss the drawbacks of always using a return receipt.

***3. What should you say to someone who is inappropriately using his or her mobile device during a meeting?***

Rule one is to never publicly embarrass an individual. The most obvious action is to pull the individual directly into the conversation (e.g., Sandy, what do you think?). If the activity is overtly distracting to all and hindering the meeting’s progress, politely ask Sandy to conduct her business in another area (e.g., “Sandy, it looks like you’re dealing with important business. In an effort to provide you privacy while we move along with the meeting, it may be best for you to step out of the meeting to conduct your call.”) Depending upon the relationship, a private “after meeting” with Sandy regarding her behavior may be in order. Remind students to be factual and unemotional. This is an opportunity to teach Sandy appropriate and inappropriate behavior. She may have been unaware that her behavior was distracting.

**TOPIC SITUATION RESPONSE*****1. How might Kathy have better handled the situation of using a smart phone during a meeting?***

This discussion will give the students a chance to talk about ways to use the technology in a meeting. In addition, this is a good discussion for protocol when using the technology, when, and when not. Although this may be a good time to use the smart phone, Kathy should have let the executive know that this would be a good way to check on business during the meeting if needed (as it was). In class, the instructor will quickly note a difference in appropriate and inappropriate use based upon generational differences. Millennials do not see a problem with consistent access to a mobile device while Boomers believe the device should be used in selective situations.

***2. Did Patrick appropriately handle the co-worker's negative email? Why or why not?***

This may cause some heated discussion, but remind students that the idea is to stop the negativity. Patrick did deal with the situation appropriately by not responding to the e-mail. Avoid getting into an "email war" with coworkers. At this point Patrick needs to talk (face-to-face) with the coworker (in a professional and confrontational manner) and ask who the coworker felt should have been included in the message. Doing so will demonstrate maturity on Patrick's part and a willingness to clarify the conflict. Confronting the colleague and asking him/her to stop sending negative email messages will only fuel the fire.

***3. If you were Irene and you knew your new boss saw the social-media site open on your computer, how would you respond?***

Irene needs to make an appointment to talk with the boss. Irene then needs to remove the picture and stay off personal social media sites during working hours. Irene needs to apologize to the boss and let the boss know it will not happen again.

**THINK LIKE A BOSS**

**1. *One of your employees sends you texts that contain poor spelling and grammar. You bring the issue up with the employee who responds that he only sends poor messages to you but never to his clients. How should you handle this issue?***

Explain to your employee that he/she must consistently send professional texts and emails – no matter the receiver. You do not want the employee to develop poor habits. Stress the importance of consistently communicating in a professional manner whether it is to a coworker, superior, vendor, or customer.

**2. *Many employees are taking photos and/or videos at department meetings and company events. Should you be concerned? Why? As the boss, what should you do?***

First check with the HR department to see if there is any type of policy that forbids this behavior. If there is not, employees are free to take photos and post at their will. If photos or posts have the potential to become embarrassing for either an employee or the company, I would announce to all employees that, while there is no formal policy, it's best to keep company business private. Also remind employees that when they are at work-related functions, their behavior should not place them in a position for embarrassing photos/videos.



**Text Activity #1: Create an E-mail Heading (Exercise 10-1)**

***Your boss (Penny@workspace.star) asks you to send a copy of a meeting memo to your coworkers: Jennifer@workspace.star, Julie@workspace.star, and Gene@workspace.star. Complete the entries.***

The To: and Cc: should be as shown. The Subject: may differ; however, the Subject: should be correctly formatted.

To:	Jennifer@workspace.star;Julie@workspace.star;Gene@workspace.star
Cc:	Penny@worspace.star
Bcc:	
Subject:	Meeting Memo

To:	
Cc:	
Bcc:	
Subject:	

**Text Activity #2: Professional Voice Mail (*Exercise 10-2*)**

***You are the Account Clerk at Garret and Danielle Accounting. Create a professional voice mail greeting for your company supplied smart phone.***

Answers will vary but should follow the information under the Phone Etiquette section: brief and professional, include the student's name and company name. No clever greetings, jokes, or music.


**Text Activity #3: Current Technology (Activity 10-1)**

***Research current technologies that are being used in your target industry. How can this technology be abused?***

Responses will vary by industry. Consider opportunities for using equipment for personal business, sharing the company property with others, or theft.

<b>New Technology</b>	<b>Potential Abuse</b>

**Text Activity #4: Online Identity (Activity 10-2)**

***Check your online identity by conducting an Internet search on yourself. Is there anything you need to change?***

Some students may come up with nothing. Others may discuss friends' postings, pictures, or other information that may not want out in the public. Request that students provide follow-up activities (e.g., they will remove or ask friend to remove).


**Text Activity #5: Mobile Devices (Activity 10-3)**

*Research the most current mobile devices to identify features and how necessary these features are for your target career.*

Technology is constantly changing, so it will be interesting to see what students come up. Remind them to relate the key features to the primary duties of their target job that they identified in chapter 8.


**Text Activity #6: Technology Policies (Activity 10-4)**

***Research technology use policies and report on the use of technology, privacy issues, and ownership issues.***

Make sure students cite their sources and remind them to not just cite the first policy that pops up on their search engine. Follow-up activity – what did they learn from their research re: privacy and ownership.


**Text Activity #7: Professional Messaging (Activity 10-5)**

*You are out of the office with a client who is unhappy. Write a text to your boss.*

Instructors can easily establish a google account so students do not have to text to an instructor's personal number. Check for a complete thought and the elimination of emoticons and text jargon (e.g., misspelling). The message should be brief and factual.

Example text: With Smith Account. Unhappy client. Would like to waive one month fee. Please approve or share alternative ASAP. Thanks.


## **WRITING EXERCISES**

1. In this chapter, write a paper on the proper use of technology in the workplace. Include what kind of technology is used and how you found this information.
2. Research and report how to break an addiction to your mobile device.



**Additional Activity #1: Online Meeting**

Using a tool such as Google Hangout, have students log in for an online meeting. Remind students to integrate information from the chapter regarding video conferences. Check for background noises/distractions, professional appearance, and professional behavior. Students will have to also ensure they have appropriate technologies.

**Additional Activity #2: Discussion Questions**

1. Discuss what communications devices are most commonly used in the workplace.
2. Why is it important to properly identify e-mails when sent and received?
3. Discuss etiquette of answering/talking/texting while others are present.

**WEB SEARCH**

*Are you addicted to social media? Conduct a web search to identify and take an online quiz to determine if you are addicted to social media.*

Have students share what specific online quiz they found, the results, and if the exercise results in any changed behavior.

**Self-Quiz**

**Matching Key Terms:** *In the blank column match the key term to the definition using the identifying number.*

<b>Key Terms</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Definitions</b>
conference call		1. An interactive communication using two-way video and audio technology
online identity		2. Interactive communication that connects individuals through a phone line without the opportunity of visually seeing all participants
technology use policy		3. Meetings utilizing technology
teleconference		4. Outlines expectations including technology privacy, liability, and potential misconduct issues related to the use of company technology.
video conference		5. Image formed when someone is communicating and/or researching you through electronic means

**Self-Quiz Answer Key**

<b>Key Terms</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Definitions</b>
conference call	3	1. An interactive communication using two-way video and audio technology
online identity	5	2. Interactive communication that connects individuals through a phone line without the opportunity of visually seeing all participants
technology use policy	4	3. Meetings utilizing technology
teleconference	2	4. Outlines expectations including technology privacy, liability, and potential misconduct issues related to the use of company technology.
video conference	1	5. Image formed when someone is communicating and/or researching you through electronic means

**ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS  
ASSIGNMENT SHEET**

Assignment	Points	Notes
Read Chapter		
Exercise 10-1		
Exercise 10-2		
Topic Situation: Smart phones @ meetings		
Topic Situation: Misinterpreted email		
Topic Situation: Social-media at work		
Self-Quiz		
Think Like A Boss #1:		
Think Like A Boss #2:		
Activity 10-1		
Activity 10-2		
Activity 10-3		
Activity 10-4		
Activity 10-5		