



Newsletter June 2014

Issue 1

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From the Editor

Greetings to all and welcome to the first issue of the new ABC newsletter!

The first issue includes news from ABC headquarters, the results of the recent election, information on conferences and grants, and news from our members. A list of recent book publications showcases the talent of our members and highlights their commitment to cutting edge communication. This issue also includes seven fascinating articles by members who are sharing their professional experiences in such diverse areas as business writing, persuasion, public speaking, revising, and using the media in assignments.

We are still working on the layout and accessibility of the newsletter and are planning to have both online and PDF versions for the next issue.

Regarding content, I was excited to receive your articles and I encourage you to continue sending me items of interest to publish. These include news, notifications of book publications (please include a photo of the book jacket for multimodal impact!) information on conferences, calls for papers, and articles of 400-500 words on interesting research, teaching or consulting projects.

The newsletter is for us all to share ideas, exchange information and learn about each other's projects. It is important that it fulfills its purpose successfully: therefore, I appreciate any feedback and suggestions on layout or content.

I hope that you enjoy reading this first issue and that you look forward, as I do, to an increasingly enhanced newsletter in the future! So don't hesitate to drop me a line at news-editor@businesscommunication.org

I wish you all a very pleasant summer or winter (depending on hemisphere!) and I look forward to catching up with you in Philadelphia in October.



Sky Marsen is the Chief News Editor of ABC. When she's not working on the newsletter, she teaches professional writing, interpersonal communication and semiotics at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

From the President

Business Communication: Where the Rubber Meets the Road

Kathy Rentz, ABC President

Those of you in the U.S. who are of a certain age (like me) may remember an advertising jingle for Firestone tires that ended “where the rubber meets the road.” That expression has become a metaphor for the ultimate test of success. You can plan and invent to the best of your ability, but the actual value of your ideas will show only when you’ve put them into action.

Why do we love the field of business communication? For me, and perhaps for many of you, it’s because it’s where the rubber meets the road. Other teachers focus on knowledge in specific areas of business, English, or communication, but it’s our job to enable students to use that knowledge in workplace settings. Can they convey it to others? Can they think strategically? Can they behave professionally? Do they understand the fragile art of human relations? Can they anticipate the implications—ethically, practically, politically—of everything they say and write?

If only academic administrators shared that view. But for too many of us, defending the value of our field has become almost a routine part of our jobs. Why is there such a disparity between what employers and university administrators value? The main answer is that the academy is organized around discrete disciplines whose faculty are rewarded for developing relatively narrow, discipline-specific knowledge. More applied, cross-disciplinary fields like ours struggle in this type of reward system. There are signs that universities are beginning to adopt more collaborative structures and value more practice-oriented research, but until they do, we will have to continue explaining why bcomm is important.



Professor Kathryn Rentz is the President of ABC. She is a Professor in the Department of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Cincinnati.

Fortunately, there's an academic organization where people already get it—the Association for Business Communication. If you've ever been to an ABC meeting, you know how uplifting it is to learn from and connect with folks who care about what you care about. Your ABC leadership and committees are working hard to advance our discipline, ensure that our journals are strong, and provide opportunities for your professional development.

And you need to take every opportunity to be the best bcomm professional you can be, because that's what it takes to teach, research, and consult where the rubber meets the road.

I hope to see all of you in Philly for another inspiring ABC conference!



ABC News

Awards and Grants

Our list of awards is long, and we hope you'll consider nominating yourself or someone you know. Please read the criteria carefully, and apply soon.

Many have deadlines in July. See

< <http://businesscommunication.org/awards> > for info.

- [ABC Rising Star Award](#)
- [Fellow of the Association](#)
- [Bernadine P. Branchaw Spirit of ABC Award](#)
- [Distinguished Member Award](#)
- [Meada Gibbs Outstanding Teacher-Scholar Award](#)
- [Kitty O. Locker Outstanding Researcher Award](#)
- [Francis W. Weeks Award of Merit](#)

We also have grants that are available. The C. R. Anderson grant is run on a rolling basis, so you can apply at any time. The Marty Baker Graham Research Award is given at the annual conference, as are our 24 travel grants for graduate students, each up to \$400.

- [C.R. Anderson Research Grants](#)
- [Marty Baker Graham Research Awards](#)

Elected Office

Each year one to four individuals rotate off of the Board of Directors. If you are interested in running for one of the open positions, please contact Nancy Schullery, our Past President and Chair of the Nominating Committee. Her email address is nancy.schullery@wmich.edu.

Finally, I just want to highlight how much fun we'll have in Philadelphia this year. The program chairs, Maryann and Andy Wysor are working on a stellar program, with many fine presentations and posters. In addition, we're continuing our initiative to support a nonprofit in the city that hosts us. This year, we're supporting the *Mighty Writers*, a 501(c)(3)

organization involved in teaching Philadelphia kids (ages 7 to 17) “to think and write with clarity so they can achieve success at school, at work and in life.” This organization, found online at <http://www.mightywriters.org>, offer a daily afterschool Academy, plus long- and short-term writing classes at night and on the weekends. Please consider donating an item in support of this worthy and relevant organization. We’ll also have pre- and post- conference activities (workshops, excursions), and plenty of music and good food at the receptions. As a DJ and faculty advisor for our station at Virginia Tech, I am a firm believer in the power of music to bring people together. Come prepared to listen, learn, and party!

Jim Dubinsky
Executive Director

New Web Editor for ABC

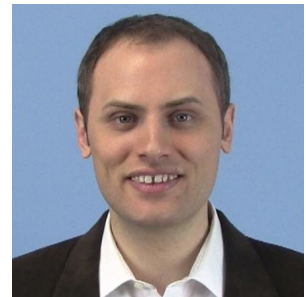
Alfredo Deambrosi will be starting his role as Web Editor on July 1st. He succeeds the present editor Barbara D’Angelo who has made an invaluable contribution to ABC’s online presence. We thank Barbara for her excellent work, and welcome Alfredo to his new position. Alfredo sends this message to ABC members:

Businesscommunication.org, the website for ABC, provides important services to members, reaches members internationally, and helps to attract new members. It is an essential tool for carrying out the Association's mission. So it is an honor for me to take on the role as ABC's new Web Editor, beginning July 1.

I am a faculty member at Bob Jones University, where I began teaching full time in 2003. My online activities both in that position and for another website that I help to direct have given me valuable experience that I bring to my new role for ABC.

There are a couple of reasons that I am confident that I will enjoy being your Web Editor. The first is the eagerness that the ABC staff has shown in a smooth and effective transition.

Ever since my initial conversations with Jim Dubinsky, Barbara D'Angelo, and Marilyn Buerkens, I have appreciated their interest in equipping the new Web Editor with the essential training, which I have received over the last couple of months.



Alfredo Deambrosi

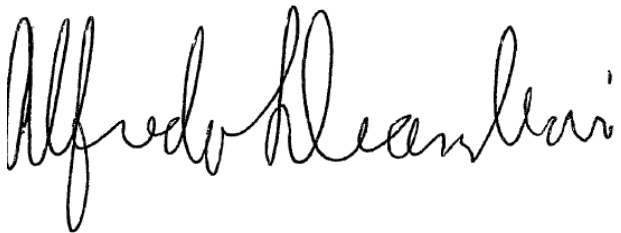
Alfredo Deambrosi is the new web editor for ABC. He begins on July 1. We wish him luck in his new duties.

Barbara has helped to make the transition smooth not only because of the hours of training she has given me but especially because of the years of persistence in improving ABC's online presence, resulting in a robust website that successfully meets the needs of the membership.

I'm also looking forward to serving ABC in this role because of the members themselves. My own experience has confirmed the praise that I have heard from the ABC staff for its members. During my time of listening and learning, I have seen that the Association is a community of highly credentialed members who are deeply interested in one another's effectiveness.

Looking ahead, I'm eager to respond to the changing needs of the ABC membership, whether technological or otherwise. As the chair of the Technology Committee, I'll learn of the charges from the Executive Committee and do what I can to help fulfill them.

Thank you for the opportunity to help you to have a satisfying and successful online experience. I look forward to meeting many of you in Philadelphia for the Annual Conference in October.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alfredo Hernandez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alfredo" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Hernandez".

Election Results

Congratulations to the following individuals who have been elected as members of the ABC Board of Directors.

2nd Vice-President:

Bertha Du-Babcock, City University of Hong Kong

Regional Vice-Presidents:

Canada VP: Carolyn Meyer, Ryerson University

Midwestern VP: Teresa Sekine, Purdue University

Western VP: Marilyn Dyrud, Oregon Institute of Technology

ABC has new
members for its
Board of Directors

Directors at Large:

Amy Newman, Cornell University, School of Hotel Administration

Sana Reynolds, NYU, Stern School of Business

Barbara Shwom, Northwestern University

Maryann Wysor, Georgia State University

Conferences

The 2015 ABC Southwestern Conference will be held in Houston, Texas, March 11-14. The conference will be held in conjunction with the Federation of Business Disciplines (FBD). The deadline for proposals is September 15. For more, see the [conference page](#)

The 13th Asia-Pacific ABC conference was held successfully in Shanghai, China, hosted by Shanghai University of International Business and Economics (SUIBE), from March 27 to March 29. The conference featured five keynote addresses, individual presentations, industry visit, and social –cultural activities. Visit the [web link](#) for photos of the event.

ABC International Annual Conference

[The 79th Annual Conference](#) will be held in Philadelphia, October 23-25. Below is an invitation from Co-chairs Andy and Maryann Wysor.

Embracing Diversity in the City of Brotherly Love

Whether your passion is history, music, art, architecture, fashion, fine dining or farm-fresh cuisine, Philadelphia is your destination. This modern renaissance city is accessible-friendly for both outdoor and indoor activities. Every place tells a story, and many stories focus on the roles this city has played in the formation of the United States of America. To learn more about both Philadelphia's and ABC's past and future, please join us for the ABC's 79th Annual International Convention from October 22-25.

When you travel to Philly, you will experience love in many incarnations. Take, for instance, the LOVE sculpture, which was created in 1978 by the American artist Robert Indiana. You can view one sculpture in Love Park and another on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania.

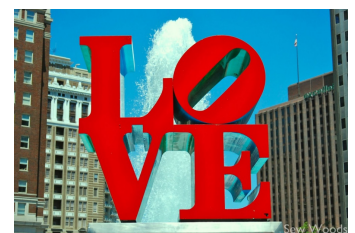


Photo by Sew Woodsy, Love Park in Philadelphia

Philadelphia's love for visitors is clearly evident in the way they work to make everyone feel at home. For example, the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau offers the [Official Visitors Guide](#) online in 10 additional languages; Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.

ABC, too, wants you to feel at home. Our choice for this year's conference is the beautiful Hyatt Regency at Penn's Landing. Situated on the Delaware River close to the Historic district, which includes Liberty Bell Center, Independence Hall, National Constitution Center, Betsy Ross House, National Liberty Museum, and Independence Visitor Center, our hotel is welcoming and full of wonderful amenities such as bike rentals, which are available for a half or full day.

When you have some free time, you can enjoy a walking, bus, trolley, or horse-and-carriage tour of the city. Reading Terminal Market is celebrating its 120th birthday as the oldest farmer's market in the US. Also, fans of the movies about Rocky Balboa can retrace his steps, leading to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Philadelphia is a city that is old and new, historical and modern. Come join us for an exciting and memorable conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania!

Micro Grants

Three scholars have been awarded micro grants by ABC in spring 2014 for international travel related to research. Visit the [project website](#).

Inga Milevica, from Alberta College in Latvia, will travel to Kyoto, Japan, to connect with colleagues from the Ukraine as well as Japan, to work on the naive argument of authority.

Olena Zelikovska, from the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine, will travel to California State University of Los Angeles, to work on intercultural competence.

Rosanne Teniente, a graduate student at Northeastern University, will travel to Switzerland to participate in the Institute for Peace and Dialogue.

Three scholars were awarded microgrants for research-related travel.

Member News

Blogs

Kathy Rentz and Paula Lentz have a blog on business communication and teaching strategies where you can share your views:

BcommTeacherXchange.wordpress.com

Mary Ellen Guffey, Dana Loewy Janet Mizrahi and Carolyn Seefer have created a new blog for busy business communication instructors. BizComBuzz, bizcombuzz.com, contains original articles, curated news, and classroom exercises to help fellow teachers keep current on issues affecting the profession and the field.

Corporate Advising in Houston

Geraldine Hynes, Katie O'Neill and Brad Wesner from Sam Houston State University (SHSU) in Texas participated in an informational program sponsored by Canrig Drilling Technology, Inc., a company headquartered in Houston. Canrig provides oilfield equipment sales, services, rental and support systems to the global energy industry. The program included exploring an oil drilling rig.



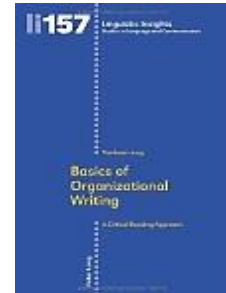
By attending this program the team learned more about the industry as well as the company. The experience was part of their preparation process as they develop communication training for Canrig's employees. The training will be offered to pre-promotional supervisors and will include modules in a range of interpersonal skills including giving instructions, giving feedback, resolving conflict, managing diversity, listening, motivating, and developing supervisor-subordinate relationships.

This partnership between Canrig and SHSU is an example of ways that ABC members are enhancing their classroom skills and research opportunities by engaging in corporate training.

Members' Books

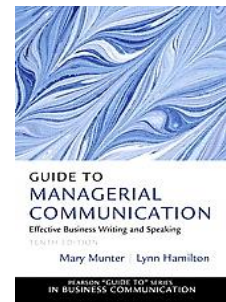
Basics of Organizational Writing: A Critical Reading Approach

(Peter Lang, 2014) by Yeonkwon Jung. This book is a study of social interaction in organizational writing, looking at how and why members of specific groups use language in the ways they do. It shows how the discursive practices of writing shape and influence behavior of an organization's members and their perceptions and judgments of what they consider in reality as criteria for the practices. [Book website](#)



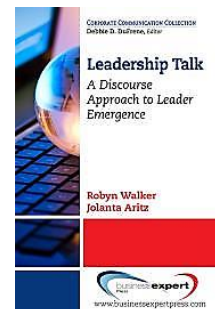
Guide to Managerial Communication (10th ed. Pearson, 2014) by

Mary Munter and Lynn Hamilton. The book is a brief, professional, reader-friendly guide to improving managerial communication. It cultivates effective written and oral communication in a managerial, business, government, or professional context. [Book website](#)



Leadership Talk: A Discourse Approach to Leadership Emergence (Business Expert Press, 2014) by Robyn C. Walker and Jolanta

Aritz. The book takes an in-depth look at an emerging approach to the creation of business leaders, the discourse approach, which assumes that leadership is created through communication practices. This approach complements the more traditional management one, which assumes that leadership is located within the individual, often as a personality trait or psychological attribute. [Book website](#)



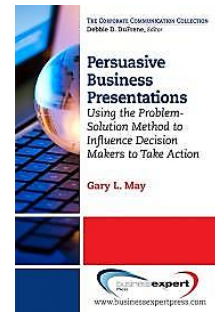
M: Business Communication (3rd edition, McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2014) by Kathy Rentz and Paula Lentz. The book's focus on the essentials required of today's digital workplace makes it easy for instructors to cover all the materials presented within the semester, and its student-centered design and study resources ensure success. For this edition, the book includes tear-out editing exercises (with answers in the Instructor's Manual), and the accompanying website offers over 100 new problem-solving cases, an extensive collection of web links, and several bonus chapters. [Book website](#)



Persuasive Business Presentations: Using the Problem-Solution Method to Influence Decision Makers to Take Action (Business Expert Press 2014) by Gary May.

This book focuses on a specific presentation context: a problem-solution persuasive presentation to decision makers delivered in a conference room environment. The author blends his extensive business experience with current research on persuasion to provide a practical, applied approach to using the problem-solution pattern.

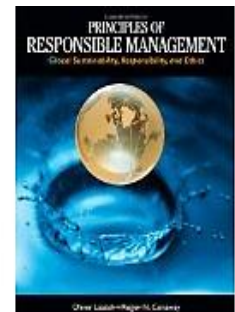
[Book website](#)



Principles of Responsible Management: Global Sustainability, Responsibility, Ethics (Cengage Learning, 2014) by Oliver Laasch and Roger N. Conaway.

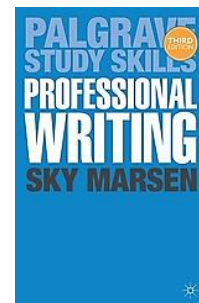
The book addresses the urgent need for an applied and comprehensive textbook for responsible management education in business schools. The book is designed to be a primary textbook for sustainability, responsibility, and ethics courses at business schools. It integrates business communication principles within chapters and stresses the importance of effective communication of responsibility management.

[Book website](#)



Professional Writing (3rd ed. Palgrave 2013) by Sky Marsen. The book is a comprehensive and engaging guide to writing for business, industry and technology. Based on research in the field, it covers all the major writing needs of the workplace, providing guidelines on communicating effectively with management, clients, peers and the wider public. The book contains chapters on topics such as public relations and social media, business and technology journalism and working in teams.

[Book website](#)



Rhetoric in Financial Discourse: A Linguistic Analysis of ICT-Mediated Disclosure Genres (Rodopi, 2013) by Belinda Crawford Camiciottoli.

The book focuses on two technology-mediated genres which are widely used, yet remain largely unexplored from a rhetorical perspective: earnings presentations and earnings releases. Using an innovative methodological approach, the book shows how corporate speakers and writers use distinctive rhetorical strategies to achieve their professional goals. [Book website](#)



Web Content: A Writer's Guide (Business Expert Press, 2013) by

Janet Mizrahi. This book will help readers produce web content that generates results. Writing for the screen differs from writing for a printed page, and those who use the web to communicate in any genre must be aware of rhetorical considerations unique to writing for the web. This concise, easy-to-follow guide takes you through the underlying principles including web reader habits and the challenges of producing content across multi-platform formats. [Book website](#)



From the Classroom to the Boardroom and Back

Marylyn E. Calabrese

I began my career teaching English in a high school classroom. For many years I taught writing and corrected papers. Then one day everything changed. At a poetry fest, I met the mother of one of my students. She was a management consultant and looking for someone who could provide writing coaching to several of her clients. Was I interested? Yes, but...

How could I jump from a high school English classroom to the world of high-powered executives whose writing demands I knew very little about? At first, since I was teaching full-time, I met with these people after school. Later, after I retired early, I worked as a writing coach full time.

But for several years, during the same period of time, I taught high school students *and* coached business executives.

In the beginning, I led a double life, but eventually, my responses to students' writing began to change.

Basically, I stopped correcting papers.

Why? Well, of course I couldn't edit and grade the executives' writing, so I developed feedback methods of reading and questioning, along with other techniques which I eventually called a *coaching model* for responding to writing. When I started to use these same techniques with my students, I saw how successful they were. So I took this coaching model that I originally developed for the executives straight into my high school classroom.

My complete project includes the specifics of the coaching model, but here are a few basic principles.



Marylyn E. Calabrese, Ph.D., has authored many journal articles on teaching writing; her book *Quick Skills: Writing in the Workplace* was published by Southwestern in 2000. She has coached business executives, as well as taught writing to high school and graduate students. Her Ph.D. dissertation from the University of Pennsylvania focused on revision.

What I learned about teaching writing from coaching business executives

1. Focus on the writer, not the writing. The writer has all the answers but doesn't know it.

2. Think of the writer as an "athlete" and the teacher/responder as a "coach." This role is important for repetitive practice and for different kinds of feedback.

However the teacher or coach responds to the writer, that is how the writer—when revising independently—will respond to his or her own writing.

3. Focus on making meaning rather than on correcting errors. Move beyond editing and judging to reading and questioning as primary responses. Use a hierarchy of concerns, with mechanical errors last after meaning and structure.

4. Find the reader inside each writer, as Donald Murray explained in his landmark article, "Teaching the Writer's Other Self, the Writer's First Reader" [CCCC, 1982], and develop those readers so that they will learn how to read their own writing for the purpose of revision, thus taking charge of their own writing improvement.

Writers can become their own first readers when teachers and other responders (coaches and peers) respond as readers first, rather than as editors. Then writers of all ages can review their writing without first focusing on errors, an approach, I believe, that gets in the way of productive revision.



The Golden and Platinum Rules: Be Gracious to Everyone You Meet Because you Never Know When You Are Entertaining an Angel

Thomas D. Clark and Julie Marie Stewart

Xavier University, Cincinnati

The great civil rights leader, Whitney Young, said 'It is better to be prepared for an opportunity and not have one, than to have an opportunity and not be prepared for it.' That is, you should strive to create a positive and lasting impression in every interaction you have, especially with those who may provide just the right insight to assist you in achieving a career goal.

First impressions: A famous ad once cautioned, you never get a second chance to make a first impression. One of the first steps that you can take is to learn how to prepare for meetings--even those that are unexpected--is to look at themselves through the eyes of a business professional and to ask: How would the ideal student behave in this situation?

Two fundamental rules will help guide you: the golden rule and the platinum rule.

The golden rule: The golden states that you should treat others as you would want to be treated if you switched places with them.

For example, if someone were to invite you to share a meal at a restaurant, he or she might observe how you treat the server and other restaurant workers as an indicator of your character and as a predictor of how you might treat others on the job. So smiling and establishing eye contact with the restaurant staff, listening to the server attentively without interruption, and complimenting the service and the food would all suggest you would make a positive and agreeable co-worker.



Thomas D. Clarke is Professor of Management at Xavier University



Julie Marie Stewart is Adjunct Professor of Sociology at Xavier University

The platinum rule: The platinum rule states that you should treat others as they would want to be treated. This requires that you analyze the situation and predict what the other person might consider polite behavior. Seeing you as a healthy, young student, for example, older or physically impaired people might expect you to open a door for them while younger, physically fit persons might not. Or you might demonstrate the high energy and politeness at the same time by acting to be the first person to reach a door, opening it for people coming in the opposite direction and continuing to hold it until your entire party passes through.

In essence, following the golden and platinum rules are excellent guides that will allow you to create the kinds of positive impressions that are key to people wanting to help you achieve your career goals.

Peer Review: Benefits and Opportunities

Catherine Flynn
School of Business, Kaplan University

In 1997, I was teaching writing at Colorado School of Mines, an engineering school. Writing courses were considered a waste of time by many students who possessed stellar skills in math and science and little interest in writing. The only thing they hated more was peer review. One student in particular grumbled and moaned. But Mines students are grade conscious, and no one skipped class even when facing these horrors. Grumbling Student sat with his group, chin to chest, ball cap pulled tight, reading his peer's paper. I was pleased when he sat up, head lifted, the hint of a smile. "Looks like you had a good experience with the process! Do you think peer review has some value after all?" He smiled large and said, "Absolutely! I thought I was the worst writer in the class and now I know I'm not!"

Often students do think their writing skill is far below or far above that of their peers. Peer review can ground us. Many studies support the use of peer review for improving student writing. Through peer review, students learn about themselves and their own composition skills by reviewing the work of others.

Students in Kaplan's School of Business graduate programs complete a Business Communications course designed to introduce and review concepts of business writing. Despite the high percentage of students who are working professionals, a surprising number have not participated in a peer review environment. While many express trepidation at the prospect of offering guidance to their peers, the vast majority of students comment that the experience is both valuable and rewarding.



Dr. Catherine Flynn teaches business communications in the graduate MBA and MSM programs with Kaplan University's School of Business. Catherine has also taught at Colorado School of Mines, Western State Colorado University, and Central New Mexico College. Catherine lives in SW Colorado with her family.

The first peer review is "safe." Students write a memo requesting that their employer scholarship their participation in a business writing course. Students justify the benefits of a business writing course, outlining the course outcomes, cost, and how they will manage their time. After students submit the assignment for grading, they post it to the next unit's discussion. They review memos written by peers, offering three strengths, three weaknesses, three suggestions for improvement. It's "safe" because the assignment has already been submitted for grading; the reviews supplement the feedback students receive from the professor. Value comes in familiarity with the peer review process itself, and in seeing how others managed the same assignment. Students then complete two peer reviews of the rough draft of the course researched proposal, answering a set of specific questions. One final peer review is conducted of the PowerPoint presentation in the last unit.

Educators in business see the value of the peer review process in their own careers, and incorporate peer critiques into their classrooms to support the feedback process among students. Often the emphasis is placed on the value of peer review to the recipient of the input – the person whose writing is being reviewed. And while the writer does receive valuable insight into his or her own writing, an equally powerful outcome of peer review is the insight gained by the student conducting the peer review.

Teaching Argumentation to Technology Majors

Ana Lucia Magalhães
Sao Paulo State Technological College

Many students majoring in information science and technology are not keen on humanities and do not think of Business Communication as vital for their development. That naturally poses a challenge for the instructors.

Harvard professors, as part of the activities of a joint program with 14 Brazilian colleges and universities interviewed managers of major corporations in the country on difficulties with recent graduates. The response was almost unanimous: starting professionals have poor capacity of expressing themselves and cannot present consistent argumentation when required to do so.

As part of the Business Communication program of the Sao Paulo State Technological College, an activity was designed to help students both to grasp rhetorical concepts and to learn the basics of good argumentation. The methodology comprises both theory and practical exercises. The theoretical part is centered on the presentation and discussion of the basic concepts on argumentation, through the difference between persuading and convincing, and use of the rhetorical triangle according to Aristotle: (ethos, pathos and logos). In short, convincing is performed by the use of arguments based on the structure of what is perceived as real and in sheer logic, in other words, logos. Persuasion, conversely, uses emotional appeal, pathos. It must be mentioned that this categorization is merely pedagogical, since argumentation always means the use of both logos and pathos. Ethos is the image the orator conveys of himself to the audience, which carries both his knowledge (logos) and his persuasion-driven passion (pathos). The theory is followed by a number of examples and a climate of debate naturally develops and provides a rich environment of interaction involving students and teacher. This brief outline is necessary for students that have the impression that rhetoric is just a way of deceiving people with tricky talk.



Ana Lucia Magalhães is Professor of Corporate Communications with FATEC, a network of technical colleges, owned and funded by the State of Sao Paulo, where she also teaches language & literature and coordinates graduation projects. She also teaches language in MBA courses for computer science and business administration majors. She holds a Doctorate in Rethoric from the Catholic University of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

After that, a lively exercise follows starting with the story of a real case of a robbery trial presented for the students to read. Some students prepare arguments for the prosecutor – they are told to use both logical and emotional arguments, clearly identify them and construct the piece of accusation. Others do the same thing for the defense. A simulated trial follows: prosecution talks, defense replies, prosecution comments on defense arguments and defense makes the final talk. Jury analyzes arguments presented and indicates which side is believed to have provided better arguments. The teacher directs the trial and at the end evaluates and classifies the arguments. Performance of all three groups is then graded. It is a dynamic class, with a lot of student participation.

The results have been satisfactory so far. The students are reminded that in order to move up in life and become managers or to work in sales they have to develop the skills that are taught in that class. A short inquiry is given to the students two weeks later and a majority acknowledges to have been convinced and persuaded on the importance of developing argumentation abilities.



Students after two weeks, writing about argumentation

Feasibility Report: No Longer an Assignment That Everybody Dreads

Olga Menagarishvili
Georgia Institute of Technology

Feasibility report has traditionally been one of the most feared assignments in a professional and technical communication course. After having used it as the final assignment in my classes a couple of times, I decided to try something new. I needed an assignment that would allow my students to work with the business community and that would be more fun than a regular feasibility report. I asked my students at Georgia Institute of Technology to create "Feasibility Study Websites."

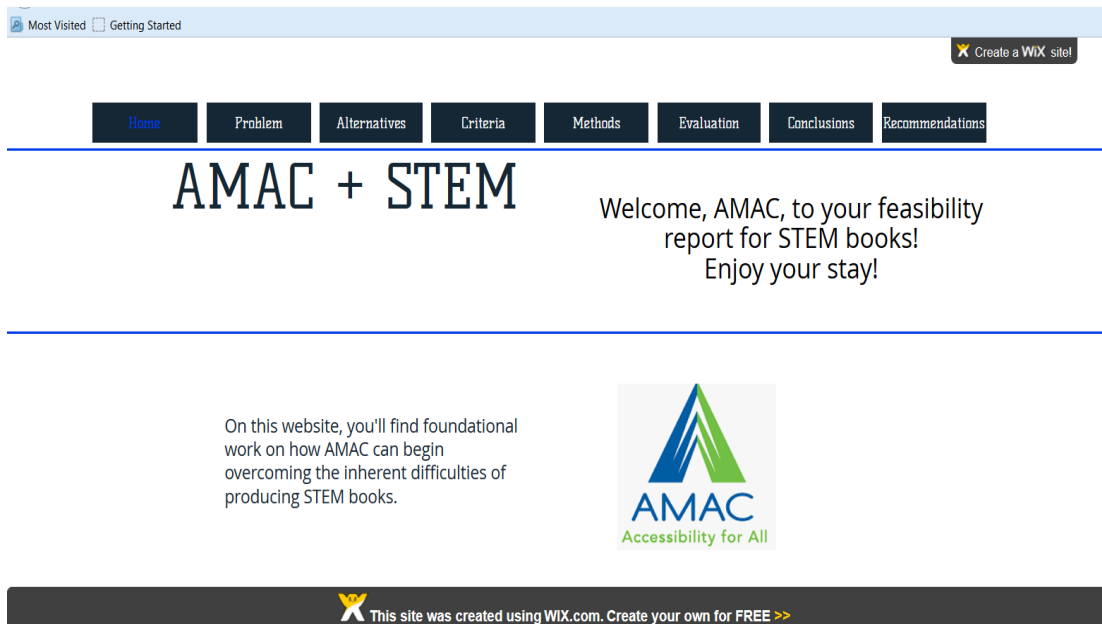
For this project, each student had to find a problem that existed in a local business organization, identify several ways to solve that problem, come up with a list of evaluation criteria, evaluate each solution, discuss the results, and provide a recommendation. Then each student needed to create a website based on that research. The audience was supposed to be the client – someone from the organization the student had been working for who had the power and authority to make the changes the student was proposing. Additionally, because in my classes we discuss the multimodality of professional communication, the website needed to include at least two visuals such as a table, chart, graph, or video to illustrate the findings. The students' response has been great, and here are two examples of the "Feasibility Study Websites" that I received.

One of the students chose to work with AMAC (Alternative Media Access Center), which specializes in educational needs for students with disabilities and offers both services and educational materials for them. The goal of the feasibility study was to find the best solution that would improve the organization's science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) e-books. The student looked at several keyboard-based, speech-to-text, and optical character recognition alternatives and



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dictionaries and
encyclopedias as
multimodal artifacts of
scientific and technical
communication and on
the use of multimodality
in technical
communication
pedagogy.

recommended to use one of the keyboard-based solutions:



Another student worked with Georgia Health Services Network, which is a Medicaid Provider for the State of Georgia. The student found out there was

no functional system for filing discharged clients at the main office in Atlanta. After evaluating several options using ease of implementation, cost, and functionality as evaluation criteria, the student recommended on-site filing with digital backup. The website contained a video that discussed the final recommendation:



Other students worked with such businesses as Cbeyond Inc., WST (Women, Science, and Technology) Apartments, Andretti Indoor Karting & Games, PartnerTech, Modern Metals Inc., Curious Intentions Media, Riverside Pizza, US Permit, Target, and Hewlett-Packard. According to the students, the focus on multimodality made the assignment more fun, and the "feasibility side" was easier to handle because of that. I look forward to this multimodal assignment in the future.



How to Feel Confident for a Presentation and Overcome Speech Anxiety

Amy Newman
Cornell University

Year after year, students tell me about their speech anxiety. They dread our business communication courses, knowing they will give video-recorded presentations. To help students, I developed a tool that summarizes relevant research and makes it easy for students to try new strategies. Designed as a web-based tool, "How to Feel Confident for a Presentation and Overcome Speech Anxiety" is developed primarily from scholarly research. Sources include Communication Education, Communication Quarterly, Business Communication Quarterly, Harvard Business Review, Cognitive Therapy and Research, Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, Journal of Anxiety Disorders, and others. The tool also includes newer strategies, such as Amy Cuddy's "power posing," described in her popular TedTalk.

Without too much reading, students learn just enough about each strategy. Students read short descriptions of the 22 strategies, see footnotes for further reading, and watch embedded videos. Then, by clicking and dragging, they select a few strategies they plan to use before, during, and after a presentation. Some strategies map clearly when they would be used, while others may be used at multiple times. The results can be printed.



Amy Newman is a senior lecturer of management communication at the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration. She teaches core classes on business writing and persuasive comm and a corporate comm elective that focuses on crisis comm and comm technologies. Amy is author of the textbook *Business Communication: In Person, In Print, Online* (Cengage, 9e) and maintains a blog, bizcominthenews.com.

Although the tool is suitable for freshmen and sophomores, I use it in our upper-level, required persuasive communication course. In the middle of the semester, students plan an upcoming team project. To prepare for their team presentation, students use the tool as homework and then discuss their results in team meetings during class. Hearing others' strategies tells students how they can support their team members—and gives them ideas for their own preparation.

Regardless of their level of anxiety, students learn from the tool. Even the most comfortable presenters identify a few strategies they want to use. The most anxious speakers often change their thinking: they consider their presentations more as conversations than as formal presentations. These students also realize how little control they have over how their body reacts—and yet how much control they have over how their physical state affects their delivery. Students recognize that how they feel does not necessarily correlate with how they're perceived by an audience.

If you're looking for a mobile version, it's not nearly as interactive, but students can see a list of the strategies and sources. In the meantime, the tool offers several good sources for preparing, delivering, and evaluating a business presentation. You and your students can access the tool as follows:

Website: speaking.amynewman.com

Email: user

Password: Statler65

The Use of Amazon.com Book Reviews and Twitter for Virtual Reading Circles in Teaching Global Business Communication

James (Skip) Ward and Yaprak Dalat Ward
Fort Hays State University

Students in a virtual 400 level Global Business Communication course used Amazon.com Book Reviews and Twitter to expand their knowledge in self-identified interests. One exercise was to select one out of eight books as a team and form structured reading circles. The teams wrote reviews and individually tweeted an “aha” moment.”

The following instructions guided team meetings. Teams reported their results on a Google Drive spreadsheet. The instructor provided feedback on team progress. Preferences for meetings were Skype, texting and email.

The team size was limited to three in the same time zone to accommodate work schedules. The teams were permitted to “fire” a dysfunctional team member.

Virtual Team Meeting One Instructions

- a. Introduce one another.
- b. Review the team meeting instructions.
- c. Set the dates and agenda of the remaining meetings.
- d. Determine a book review writing process.
- e. Set up a Google Drive document to draft your review. Note- provide access to team members as well as your instructor.



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Virtual Team Meeting Two Instructions

- a. Begin with each member tossing one question to the group for discussion.
- b. One team member will report out on the Blackboard Discussion Board.

Virtual Team Meeting Three Instructions

Review the written document. All team members will have the doc open on Google Drive. One member will edit as you go. One team member will report out on the Discussion Board and, after instructor review, post the document to Amazon.

The identified eight books and related course objectives are below.

1. Globalization: A Very Short Introduction by Manfred Steger. (Name three challenges of globalization.)
2. Cultural Intelligence: A Guide to Working with People from Other Cultures by Brooks Peterson. (Describe a diverse workplace.)
3. Organizational Culture and Leadership by Edgar Schein. (Draw a visual of an approach to organization. Describe the concept.)
4. Socialnomics: How Social Media Transforms the Way We Live and Do Business by Erik Qualman. (Describe how business reflects social and economic conditions.)
5. The Social Media Bible: Tactics, Tools, and Strategies for Business Success by Lon Safko. (Draw a visual of a network approach to organization. Describe the concept.)
6. The Age of the Platform: How Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google Have Redefined Business by Phil Simon. (Describe the role of innovation and organizational change.)
7. The Essentials of Business Etiquette: How to Greet, Eat, and Tweet Your Way to Success by Barbara Pachter. (Draw a visual of a relational strategy to organization. Describe the concept.)
8. Ethics 101: What Every Leader Needs To Know (101 Series) by John C. Maxwell. (Describe the relationship between communication, ethics and rhetoric.)

A book review is an analysis, a critical function of business writing which enables the learning environment to shift from the instructor to a global community.