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# Writing in Business and Manufacturing

## Introduction

As the economic foundation of modern American civilization, business and manufacturing affect us directly or indirectly every moment of our lives. Call to mind any city's business district, shopping malls, or industrial parks, and you have a good picture of the extent and diversity of our economy. The clothing boutique, stationery store, hardware outlet, computer franchise, record shop, appliance store, automobile dealer, florist—all are engaged in the business of moving goods from suppliers to you, as expeditiously and profitably as possible. On a larger scale, the huge chain stores, franchises, factory outlets, and department stores all fulfill the same profit-seeking function. They simply expand their business activity into regional, national, or global markets.

So where do these millions of goods for all these consumers come from? Nearly every item you see on the market, from a television set to an automobile, from a lawn mower to a CD player, from watches and cameras to computer hardware and software, originates in the manufacturing sector of the economy. Light manufacturers produce smaller, easily movable items, such as clothing, electronics components, consumer products, and paper goods. Heavy manufacturers produce automobiles, steel products, building supplies, ships, airplanes, and machinery. Manufacturers typically sell their goods in huge lots to wholesalers, who in turn sell smaller quantities to contractors and retailers, who ultimately sell the products to the general public. This wholesale and retail transfer of manufactured goods to consumers constitutes fully two-thirds of American economic activity.

But American business consists of more than simply producing, distributing, and selling goods. It includes performing services as well. Because they do not produce, package, and display tangible items in stores, service performers are sometimes not recognized as significant business entities. However, they play a vital role in our economy. A computer, for example, once manufactured and sold, must eventually be serviced—its hardware when it breaks down and its software when it is revised or updated. Service businesses perform these maintenance functions. Furthermore, while a single company may oversee the manufacturing, sale, and service of its products, such a company, because of a diversity of business needs, must seek help from other organizations that specialize in various support services. Banks, insurance companies, credit corporations, health care institutions, investment services, public accounting firms, hospitals, financial services, engineering consultants, market analysts, trade show vendors, architects, and contractors perform these vital service support functions.

What do all these areas of manufacturing, selling, and service have in common? Communication. Throughout the entire economy, hundreds of thousands of people are employed as communicators. They document operations, draft illustrations, write technical reports and manuals, prepare speeches, produce films and videos, photograph products, and

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create advertising. They communicate important financial, technical, marketing, and public relations information. They plan extensive campaigns to persuade various publics of the beneficial relationship between the corporation and the community. And they advise top management and corporate policy makers about the needs, opinions, and desires of the public, to ensure that the corporation is socially responsible. In short, because products, services, markets, and people must all be linked through human relationships, business and manufacturing simply cannot exist without communication: written, visual, multimedia, and oral.

### Communicating in business

Most entry-level positions in written communication are devoted almost exclusively to creating written communications or, more likely, editing the writing of others. For example, as an entry-level editor, you would read copy or manuscript drafts very carefully to correct errors in punctuation, grammar, and usage. Most likely you would be aided by a style guide to make sure that the phrasing and mechanics were consistent throughout the piece. Additional duties might involve working with writers on their unfinished manuscripts, helping a senior editor to track projects, and acting as liaison with graphics and production people.

Other companies emphasize writing rather than editing. In these companies, as an entry-level writer, you would write (or help to write) the copy or manuscript drafts for manuals, brochures, video scripts, articles, procedures, and the like. You might be part of a development team, meeting at times with engineers, editors, production people, other writers, or quality assurance people to help guide the final written product through all its phases.

With five or more years' experience, you would advance in rank and write a wide variety of material for various readers, from somewhat mundane (though critical) internal corporate memos, letters, and reports to rather sophisticated pieces for public consumption, such as glossy and colorful annual reports.

As you acquire more experience and assume greater responsibilities, you also might become increasingly involved in the visual aspects of communication. More and more, corporate communicators will have to understand the principles, application, and management of visual rhetoric, from publication design to video production.

In publication design, for example, even the seemingly mundane corporate report and product brochure must be carefully conceived, integrating visual and textual elements for greater readability. Understanding basic principles of visual rhetoric will help you to make intelligent design decisions. At minimum, you should know how to integrate text with an illustration, chart, table, or photograph; how to run text around graphic elements; how to select text and display typefaces; and how to choose paper weight, color, and texture. Ultimately, you may be responsible for thousands (or millions) of dollars worth of offset, black-and-white, two-color, and four-color print production.

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In addition to print publication, many corporations now release their annual reports, internal employee communications, instructional and training materials, and product or service messages on videotape. Economy of scale (low cost achieved through mass dissemination), ease of use, and immediacy of dramatic impact all make video an effective medium. As a communication manager using video, you might someday be in charge of budgeting, scheduling, story boarding, and script writing. Though you probably would not function as a video technician, you would need to be familiar with the important technical aspects of production, such as editing, mixing, lighting, sound, and camera work. Finally, you would probably be responsible for evaluating and distributing the finished video product, assuring your corporate clients that the video satisfactorily met their communication needs.

The computer's versatility also extends the print medium. As a technical communicator, you could expect to create documents in hypertext and online; to employ CD-ROM both as a storage and a publication medium; to design corporate sites on the World Wide Web; and to plan, produce, and manage interactive video for documentation and training purposes. Computer-aided design and production, in print, film, and video, will become common in even the smallest facilities.

Your job would also likely demand oral communication skills. For example, you might be called upon to speak to individuals and large groups of fellow employees about products and project team efforts. You might address department, committee, task force, product development, and sales meetings. And as your expertise became recognized, you might be invited to make recommendations to your superiors.

Outside your company, you might need to pitch campaign ideas to prospective clients or present research findings to a gathering of concerned citizens. In addition, the local and national media might seek you out as a spokesperson, to respond to an industrial accident or corporate crisis. Notable examples of such crises include the Tylenol poisonings and the nuclear accident at Three-Mile Island in the eighties, as well as the Exxon Valdez oil spill and cancer-causing silicon-gel implants in the nineties.

As a speaker, no matter what the circumstance, you would need to adapt information to your audience's needs, clearly presenting sometimes highly technical product, planning, and financial details. The ability to think on your feet, to frame reasonable arguments, to select motivational appeals, and to handle the occasional obstreperous or hostile questioner are some of the more important presentation skills that will serve you well in any of these situations. Though you might not be the actual corporate spokesperson, you might have to run a press conference, arrange a photo opportunity, or act as a media liaison for your company, to make sure that your executives could address public concerns. In addition, you might function as an internal consultant, offering your own presentation skills in the form of speechwriting advice (even coaching) to those in your corporation who must appear before the public.

As you can see, the term "communicator" encompasses written, visual, and oral exchanges of meaning through various media. Nevertheless, this chapter concentrates primarily upon

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communications based on writing, which can be classified according to the audiences they address, into internal and external communications, and according to the purposes they fulfill as corporate communication, marketing communication, and corporate-based documentation.

### **Internal and external communication**

Internal written communication functions as a managerial, administrative, and informative vehicle inside the organization. External communication serves people outside the organization, providing information to publics beyond the corporate walls, from the general population to vendors, clients, and consumers.

#### ***Internal Written Communication***

Internal writing often has two functions: primarily, it informs employees about the ongoing business of the organization, but at the same time, it serves as the corporate memory for purposes of design, production, quality control, implementation, transportation, and litigation. It is thus the history of the corporation.

At the entry level, you might work as an internal publications specialist, writing chiefly for employee publications such as newsletters, quarterly or monthly magazines, and weekly house organs (internal newspapers), or preparing operational handbooks, procedures manuals, training materials, and the like to be used by individuals inside the organization. You'll find that internal corporate writing can be addressed to superiors, subordinates, or peers. The most challenging types of communications to write are those that must simultaneously be addressed to all three audiences.

#### ***External Written Communication***

External writing is intended for people outside the corporation, from local to international readers. These readers include customers, clients, and the public at large—anyone who may affect, or be affected by, the company's activities, products, or services. In addition, external written communication is an organization's lifeline with the public. Written materials sometimes help a company to establish and maintain its good name within the community—especially if the local attitude toward the corporation is likely to be hostile because of potential operating hazards or environmentally dangerous products (e.g., chemicals, paints, petroleum, and nuclear energy). In these threatening or rapidly changing environments, an open letter in the local paper, a pamphlet mailed to concerned citizens, a radio news release, a magazine advertorial (a paid advertisement that looks and sounds like an editorial)—all may be necessary to keep the corporate/community relationship viable. With the growing interdependence of businesses, local economies, and national and international markets, as well as the growing concern for the environment, corporations increasingly must recognize their accountability as responsible members of the community. The professional writer plays a central role in fulfilling this corporate social responsibility.

## Three types of corporate communication

The internal and external communications you prepare as you serve different audiences can serve at least three different purposes: those of corporate communications, marketing communications, and corporate-based documentation.

### ***Corporate Communication***

The main purpose of corporate communication is to forge links (using written, visual, and spoken media) between a business and its internal and external publics. To fulfill its obligation to these publics, corporate communication must be open and receptive. This means that a company takes into account information from various publics before it makes decisions, communicates them, and takes action. Corporate writers, therefore, do not simply produce brochures, pamphlets, magazines, and newsletters that tout the organization. Instead, they function as the company's ears and voice, listening to, informing, and influencing various constituencies, inside and outside the company, to ensure that management formulates responsible policies. Inside the company, writers also often assume a central position in creating a corporation's identity and in clarifying its mission by drafting position statements, policy guides, and strategic plans of positions.

Because writing is a central function in business and manufacturing, jobs appear in all types of organizations across the country. O'Dwyer's Directory of Corporate Communications 199~ for example, "lists 8,500 PR and communications people at 5,000+ companies and associations. . . . Approximately 80% of the companies have formal PR/communication titles or departments." These corporate communicators write many varied types of documents to fulfill their wide-ranging responsibilities "for press relations, employee communications, local community relations, government affairs at the local and federal levels, environmental and safety affairs, financial relations including stockholder and Wall Street communications, corporate identity programs, contributions, corporate training programs . . . and exhibits, conventions and trade shows."

## Marketing Communication (Marcom)

Marketing writers have to display the same versatility as corporate writers. However, while the corporate writer tends to concentrate upon the organization's need to connect with its internal and external publics, the marketing writer, in creating advertising and promotional copy, attempts to sell the company's product or service. A marketing communicator, for example, might publicize the company's new product at a press conference or write a press release about its features for trade publications. The corporate communicator would be spokesperson for the organization at press conferences that address the larger relationship of the corporation with its publics, aside from any product or sales considerations.

The purpose of corporate-based documentation, which includes reports, instructions, and other documents, is to provide readers with information they need to do their jobs. Such documents might include policies, procedures, and instructions for operating products used

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in the organization. They might also include proposals to obtain business and reports to keep clients informed about the work the company has performed. For many businesses, documentation is their product. Consulting firms, for example, may study some aspect of a client's management practice and issue an analytical report or a feasibility study. Marketing research and polling firms produce intelligence reports, public opinion polls, and market surveys for their clients. Some companies, providing product or service support and training for clients, produce evaluation reports, manuals, guides, curriculum plans, and workbooks. In creating these communications, writers and editors research relevant literature, conduct interviews and use other methods of gathering information, perform analyses, interpret data, compile background information, create tables and charts, plan illustrations, and write the final text for their clients.

Often these communications must be written in multiple languages for an international readership. Whatever the language, information may reside in printed form in an electronic database, or in CD-ROM, readily accessible through computer search and retrieval. Working on screens in online or CD-ROM information systems, writers might also choose colors, typefaces, formats, and the information that goes on these screens.

By considering the intersection of the documents produced for different audiences—internal and external—and for different purposes, we can see that a corporate communicator might produce an astonishing variety of documents. Typical internal communications can be classified conveniently into three types, as shown in the table below. Employee communications are used to pass the latest news and policy decisions from management. Operational communications set out instructions or describe standard procedures or policies that help employees perform particular job-related tasks. Planning communications help in the process of creating products and services.

The Internal Communication table lists three categories of internal communication. Individuals in corporations commonly produce variously across the categories.

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<b>Internal Communication</b>		
<b>Employee</b>	<b>Operational</b>	<b>Planning</b>
Announcements Audio/visual scripts Briefings Bulletin board notices Course / seminar catalogs Departmental updates Educational literature Emergency warning notices Envelope stuffers Executive announcements Handbooks Manuals Newsletters Personnel information Position papers Safety guidelines Schedules Seminar booklets Training literature	Briefings Budgets Departmental annual reports Design disclosure manuals Life cycle support Operating manuals Position papers Procedures Reference manuals Specifications Style guides Technical references Training guides User manuals	Advisory studies Briefings Curriculum guides Feasibility studies Marketing reports Meeting minutes Needs analyses Outlines Performance reports Position papers Problem analyses Production briefs Progress reports Proposals Research reports Sales reports Seminar plans Status updates Storyboards Strategic plans Testing reports Trip reports

The External Communication table below illustrates the three categories of external communication: corporate and marketing communication and corporate-based documentation.

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<b>External Communication</b>		
<b>Corporate Communications</b>	<b>Marketing/Media Communications</b>	<b>Corporate-based Documentation</b>
Annual reports Corporate identity pieces Corporate backgrounders Directories Executive speeches Financial reports Investor reports Letters Position papers Proposals	Advertising copy Audio scripts Brochures Catalogs Customer release notes Direct mail pieces Feature stories Media kits New-product releases News releases Pamphlets Pitch letters Points-of-purchase materials Press releases Product or service case histories Product specification sheets Product status bulletins Promotional materials Public service announcements Radio scripts Sales letters and brochures Telemarketing materials Television scripts Third-party endorsements Trade show literature Video scripts World Wide Web pages	Course/seminar materials Data sheets Handbooks Installation manuals Instruction manuals Maintenance manuals On-line documentation Operating manuals Position papers Proposals Reference manuals Research papers, articles Specifications Style guides Systems manuals Technical articles Technical manuals Translation services User manuals

**Employment outlook**

As we move into the next century, the American economy will continue to shift away from

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manufacturing and toward providing services, from fast-food and automobile repair to financial advice, insurance, healthcare, and the like. The Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, predicts that from 1994-2005, "business, health, and education services will account for 70 percent of the growth -- 9.2 million out of 13.6 million jobs -- within services." Furthermore, "occupations which require a bachelor's degree or above will average 23 percent growth, almost double the 12 percent growth projected for occupations that require less education and training (4). These projections suggest that the professional and managerial ranks of our service economy are expected to grow at very healthy rates through the year 2005. Specialists in corporate communication, public relations, marketing communication, and corporate-based documentation will probably see greater demand for their skills.

You must remember, however, that employment predictions are subject to the vicissitudes of local, regional, national, and international economies. Rates of employment are also highly industry specific. Thus, depending upon locale and general economic outlook, all these industries (such as health care, tourism, banking, and financial services) have differing employment projections that you should investigate before embarking on your career.

At the managerial level across a number of these industries, however, the employment outlook is consistently positive. The Bureau predicts that, because of "increasingly intense domestic and global competition in products and services," management opportunities through the year 2005 in advertising, marketing, and public relations will "increase faster than the average." In addition, "employment of marketing, advertising, and public relations managers is expected to grow much faster than average in most business services industries, such as computer and data processing, and management and public relations firms, while average growth is projected in manufacturing industries overall (Occupational Outlook Handbook 62). Many openings will occur because of replacements, as middle managers move into top management positions. Competition for these positions will remain keen, but opportunities will vary by industry, the greatest number being available in data processing services, radio and television, motor vehicle, and business services, as well as "management and public relations firms" (Occupational Outlook Handbook 62).

The Bureau also tracks opportunities for writers and editors employed in the communication industry: newspapers, magazines, government agencies, radio, television, book publishers, journals, corporations, and public relations/advertising firms. Across all these occupational categories, the Bureau predicts that "through the year 2005," employment will "increase faster than the average," noting that the continuing expansion of scientific and technical information" will increase the demand for technical writers (Occupational Outlook Handbook 186). As one of these writers or editors, what salary might you reasonably expect to earn, at entry level and throughout your career?

## Salaries

Because salaries for writers in business and manufacturing vary according to rank, years of employment, type and size of business, location, and industry, only general and somewhat

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tentative salary information is available.<sup>1</sup> However, entry-level writers/editors in business and manufacturing can expect their salaries to average anywhere from \$22,000 to \$29,000. People with five to fifteen years' experience can anticipate that their salaries will span the mid-thirties to high forties, and senior employees can expect to earn salaries that range from the low fifties into six figures.

Two professional communication societies, the Society for Technical Communication (STC) and the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), have recently conducted salary surveys of their membership. These surveys, while illuminating, represent limited data sources; thus, you should view their results with caution.<sup>2</sup>

Generally speaking, the STC and PRSA surveys suggest the following about earnings for communication professionals in business and manufacturing:

- Practitioners in industrial/manufacturing concerns and utilities (such as heavy equipment and electronics manufacturers or gas and electric companies) enjoy the highest salaries.
- The larger businesses and manufacturers in high-risk industries or threatening, unstable environments (such as pharmaceutical, nuclear engineering, and chemical companies) tend to pay higher salaries.
- Communication employees on the east and west coasts command more money.

Practitioners with expertise in investor relations, international, environmental affairs, issues management, or technology are in more volatile, higher risk businesses and therefore receive larger salaries.

- People with advanced degrees, course work beyond the bachelor's degree, or professional accreditation usually report higher salaries than those without.
- Managerial positions, because they involve greater responsibility, nearly always pay more than the relatively low-risk technician positions.

Let's look at each of the two surveys in more detail.

### STC salary survey

The STC survey reports the mean salary in 1996 for a technical writer/editor in the United States was \$43,782 (table below). As the figures in the table below also suggest, an editor/writer in business and manufacturing with less than two years' experience could expect to make \$36,668. Since companies typically have various grades or levels of writers and editors, technical knowledge, time in grade, and demonstrated value to the company all boost salaries from this figure. As the second table shows, the highest salaries are earned by mid-level and senior managers, who have mean salaries of \$49,091 to \$54,409.

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<b>STC Mean Salary 1996</b>	
<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Mean Salary</b>
2 years or less	\$36,668
2 - 5 years	\$37,868
6 - 10 years	\$42,864
11 years or more	\$51,629
All respondents	\$43,782

**Source:** 1996 Technical Communicator Salary Survey. Arlington, VA: Society for Technical Communication, 1996, pp.4-5.

<b>STC Salaries by Employment Level 1996</b>	
<b>Employment Level</b>	<b>Mean Salary</b>
Entry	\$29,656
Mid-level, non-supervisory	\$41,161
Mid-level management	\$49,091
Senior management, non-supervisory	\$49,868
Senior management	\$54,409

**Source:** 1996 Technical Communicator Salary Survey. Arlington, VA: Society for Technical Communication, 1996, pp.4-5.

The discrepancies in salary reflected in this table may result from a number of factors unrelated to actual work performed; these include company location, staff size, and employee education level. For example, California salaries are highest, and a jump in degree level (BS to MA) can translate into as much as a \$4,600 raise.

## PRSA salary survey

In corporate communication, the salary picture looks brighter. The median salary in 1995/96 for all respondents was \$49,070. Remember, however, that these figures will vary by geographic region, gender, and size of the practitioner's market (large metropolitan versus small city, for example).

<b>1995/96 PRSA Salary Survey</b>	
<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Median Salary</b>
Account Executives (Junior, senior account executives, associates, assistants)	\$32,580
Supervisors (Account supervisors, supervisors, managers, coordinators, group managers, directors, vice presidents)	\$52,860
Senior Management (Senior/executive vice presidents, senior counselors, chairmen, presidents, partners, owners)	\$76,790
All Respondents	\$49,070
<b>Source:</b> "Salary Survey of Public Relations Professionals," study conducted by Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1995/1996, published by the Public Relations Society of America, 1996, p. 13.	

As the table below shows, the highest paying respondents practiced in investor relations, issues management, environmental affairs, and government relations—all high-stakes or high-risk areas of the business. The lowest paying careers are in marketing and advertising, relatively competitive positions, very popular with new college graduates. Generally speaking, throughout the occupation, salaries are directly related to supervisory scope: the greater the managerial responsibility, the higher the salary. In fact, "the highest corporate salaries are found at management consulting firms (median salary is \$141,424) (Salary Survey 26). Thus, as you begin your career in communication, you should be aware of the distinctions between the non-managerial and managerial functions.

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<b>1995/96 PRSA Salaries by Area</b>	
<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Median Salary</b>
Investor Relations	\$72,484
Issues Management	\$66,300
Environmental Affairs	\$65,881
Government Relations	\$65,367
International	\$63,964
Crisis Management	\$59,523
Generalist	\$54,600
Corporate Communications	\$53,508
Technology	\$52,114
Employee Relations	\$51,032
Media Relations	\$50,797
Special Events	\$49,450
Community Relations	\$49,157
Publicity	\$48,886
Marketing	\$48,869
Advertising	\$45,577
<b>Source:</b> "Salary Survey of Public Relations Professionals," study conducted by Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1995/1996, published by the Public Relations Society of America, 1996, p. 31.	

Entry-level salaries, as you might suspect, are significantly lower than the salaries reflected in the table. The median entry-level salary across the occupation is \$23,030, with entry-level corporate, government, and non-profit salaries nearly \$2,500 above those for public relations firms (Salary Survey 23). Further, if you begin your career on the west coast, you will make significantly more at entry-level (\$25,790 median) than in the midwest (\$22,160 median) (Salary Survey 24).

### Career path

Early in your career, you will need to decide how to shape it beyond the entry level. Your decision will depend upon who you are and how you see yourself. You should take stock of your strengths and weaknesses. Assess your educational preparation and intelligence. Reflect upon your personality and drive. Find out specifically what will be expected of you in

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the workplace as you advance in your career. How you develop as a professional will depend upon whether you acquire increasing expertise as a technician or become a manager.

### ***Technician***

You may find a career as a communication technician very fulfilling. As a technician, you would actually produce the internal and external written materials discussed earlier. Or you might simply assist in larger promotional or documentation projects that your supervisor assigns. You will have relatively little, if any, say in establishing corporate goals. Instead, you will write the communication end-products that serve these goals (newsletters, brochures, instructions, policy statements, and manuals). Depending upon your skills, educational background, and desires, you might acquire wide-ranging experience in writing, editing, interviewing, presenting to various publics, designing publications, planning events, and the like. Many communication practitioners find this production aspect of their work to be amply rewarding as a creative outlet. The “deliverable” (finished piece) that results after hours of dedicated labor can rarely be equaled as a source of satisfaction, pride, and fulfillment.

In addition to preparing documents in print, online, or other media, recent dramatic changes in technology mean that you might, in addition to writing, maintain and produce the mailing and distribution lists, schedules, budget spreadsheets, project time-lines, and office inventory. In short, writers and editors in business and manufacturing will find that, as technology becomes ever more sophisticated, so too will their careers. Success in technician-oriented communication occupations will require high levels of intelligence, flexibility, and creativity.

These sophisticated developments in technology, however, also dramatically underscore the need for managers who can supervise the increasingly complex communication tasks that result from the alliance of people and technology.

### ***Manager***

If you aspire to communication management, you must demonstrate ability that goes beyond proficiency in writing, editing, and production. Communication management demands special personal attributes and temperament. Initiating and managing projects call for skills in handling time, tasks, money, material, and people.

Time and task management, for example, are crucial in any undertaking, but especially in complicated projects where many people are producing components at various stages. The project manager must track the team's progress along a strict time-line (with due-dates that must be adhered to), as production moves toward the final deadline. The manager also initiates and oversees the project budget, making sure that costs are controlled, and guaranteeing that everyone has enough money to complete necessary tasks. Materials management consists of making sure that needed equipment is in the right place at the right time, that everyone has whatever is necessary to do the job (from computers to paper clips).

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And because so many projects depend upon a number of people working together, a manager needs to put together the most skilled team possible help the members to work well together.

Thus, as a manager, you will deal with budgets, vendors, and clients; you will have to possess strategic, tactical, and logistical abilities. You will be expected to define problems, recognize opportunities, and set goals for entire groups and projects. As a project begins, you will supervise primary and secondary research, implement activities, and oversee communication plans. One of your chief responsibilities will be to evaluate the results of your corporation's communication endeavors. In time, you will no doubt plan and implement larger, more complicated projects (such as overseeing production of an annual report or orchestrating a new plant opening).

Probably the most critical aspect of communication project management is effectively dealing with people, those with whom and for whom you work. You must be adept at dealing with your superiors, subordinates, fellow managers, vendors, clients, customers, the general public, salespeople, editors, photographers, writers, graphic artists, freelancers, marketers, and engineers. You will have to know how to motivate and guide your project teams, committees, and task forces—to understand why particular people work well together so that you can form effective groups. You will be called upon to negotiate vendor contracts, judge product quality, and establish deadlines. Quarterly or annually, you will evaluate employee performance. You will hire and fire. You will have to quell rumors, mediate disagreements, and resolve misunderstandings. Yet, even with these challenges, managing people can be its own reward.

As you have probably guessed, communication management expertise comes only with time and experience. Usually a minimum of three to five years on the job with one company is necessary before you can break into even the lower level supervisory or managerial ranks. You must also realize that the number of management opportunities in a given industry or business can be severely limited. For example, technical documentation specialists in some companies have relatively few managerial or supervisory positions to which they can advance. To move into the management ranks, these technical writers and editors may have to become project leaders, quality assurance specialists, researchers, or trainers; they may even have to move into other corporate positions, such as marketing, promotions, production, public relations, sales, customer support, or human resources.

Because of the limited number of positions available in management within a given company, and because of the inevitable bureaucratic layering that results when too many people hold management positions, some companies are collapsing their managerial hierarchies into task groups. In these groups, each member assumes greater managerial and production responsibility for some aspect of an assigned project. This "flattening" of the managerial hierarchy, which induces the spreading of management tasks, tends to increase productivity, decrease red tape, eliminate bureaucratic buck-passing, and boost morale—resulting generally in a more efficient use of a company's time, space, material, money, and personnel. As a manager, you may have to learn to lead such groups. However, even as a

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member of a project team, you may find that you are a manager—if not of people, certainly of tasks, material, money, and time.

While much of what it takes to become a successful communication manager or technician results from experience, you can take the best advantage of this experience by carefully selecting undergraduate courses in your major and minor or by pursuing the appropriate post-baccalaureate certificate or graduate degree. The education of a business communicator, both as a technician and as a manager, must be built upon a solid foundation of college courses. Beyond these, you should consider specialized courses. The remainder of this chapter examines both kinds of preparation.

### Preparation

#### *Undergraduate courses*

The successful communicator in business can major in any undergraduate discipline that encourages creative approaches to problem-solving, sharpens analytical skills, enhances verbal acuity, and provides insight into individual and collective human behaviors. Most majors that provide this background are located in the arts and sciences. They include business communication, communication, education, English, history, journalism, modern languages, philosophy, psychology, public relations, and sociology. No matter what the major, education in the liberal arts and sciences is always a good foundation for effective communication in business, simply because such disciplines tend to foster creative, inquiring, integrative, and analytical attitudes. You should thus combine a number of opposing attributes: be creative yet analytical, flexible yet focused; be detail-oriented yet a generalist, independent yet a team player. In sum, the effective communicator should enjoy learning across a wide variety of subjects, have knowledge of current events, and be reasonably comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty.

In addition to knowledge, skills, and a flexible yet focused mindset, the best communication practitioners possess a strong sense of ethics that translates into principled behavior. The practitioner must abide by a code of ethics that guarantees responsibility to the truth, the client, the customer, the corporation, and the general public. Practitioners also take care never to violate communication law, especially as it relates to First Amendment rights, libel, and slander. Some communicators, in fact, have to know the law intimately. Investor relations practitioners, for example, must be schooled in the law on securities, financial disclosure, and insider trading. Marketing communicators must fully understand the law relative to copyrights, trademarks, logotypes, and trade names. While you may be able to take courses that focus on these topics, you will more likely find them discussed in subjects that touch on various aspects of corporate communication history, theory, and application.

Given this general profile, what particular abilities might the successful communicator in business and manufacturing be expected to have? And what course work helps to develop these?

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### ***Written Communication***

The two most important skills you can possess in communication are good writing and editing. You should be creative within the confines of virtually any writing situation. To command such versatility, you will call upon many voices, adopt many styles. Courses that best prepare entry-level writers to be versatile and adaptable are those that introduce a variety of writing tasks, with teachers who, as good editors and writers themselves, will help you to master fundamental principles. Here are some courses that will give you a good foundation:

- Technical writing
- Technical editing
- Business writing
- Public relations writing
- Marketing communication (brochures, ad copy, direct mail)
- Feature writing
- News writing
- Script writing
- Report writing
- Rhetoric
- Managerial communication (case analyses)
- Communication research methods

Often, these courses have more specialized, advanced sequels. Public relations writing, for example, may be followed by a case-oriented course in public relations campaign management. Other advanced courses may focus on writing for a specific industry such as finance, high-tech, health, sports, or tourism. With or without advanced courses, however, mastery of the fundamental principles of good writing and editing, combined with curiosity, native intelligence, creativity, ethical sensitivity, and plenty of practice on the job (under the careful tutelage of a mentor or supervisor), can ultimately lead to success in writing for business and manufacturing.

### ***Oral Skills***

Interpersonal, small group, and public speaking abilities are indispensable for anyone in communication. At some time, you will likely be called upon to brief or persuade fellow writers, editors, managers, staff personnel, members of other departments, clients, the media, and the public. Daily, your competence in interpersonal and small group communication will be tested (especially listening, interviewing, meeting, nonverbal, and

## **Writing in Business and Manufacturing**

negotiating skills). To help you attain proficiency in these areas, many colleges and universities offer the following specialized courses:

- Public speaking (introductory and advanced)
- Interpersonal communication
- Small group communication
- Interviewing
- Intercultural communication
- Organizational communication
- Argumentation
- Negotiation skills
- Persuasion
- Forensics
- Debate

Because in business, promotions and raises are often tied directly to speaking abilities, you should master the requisite principles and application of public speaking, interpersonal, and small group communication.

### ***Visual Communication***

Writers in business and manufacturing will increasingly be expected to integrate text and graphic elements; they will also manage production in other media, such as film and video. Production courses in the visual arts are therefore necessary to introduce business writers to the potential problems and solutions inherent in design decisions. Courses that explore some of these include:

- Desktop publishing
- Computer-mediated design
- Graphic design and production
- Typography and design
- Publication design
- Presentation graphics
- Visual communication theory
- Photography

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- Film making
- Television production
- Video production
- Visual communication management

You should remember that, while writers in business need not be gifted visual artists, the more you understand the strengths and limitations of desktop publishing and other visual technologies, the principles governing effective integration of text and graphics, and the burgeoning new computer-mediated film and video technologies, the more communication options you will have to choose from.

### **Computers**

As I suggest above, you are likely to be required to be familiar with text and graphics processing software in DOS, Windows, OS/2, UNIX, or the Macintosh operating environments. Larger companies may have employees linked to a mainframe computer or to networked PCs, Macs, or workstations. Whatever the computer environment, you will be expected to learn the various file management, document formatting, printing, and text manipulating functions of at least one full-featured word processing program (such as Ami Professional, Xywrite, WordPerfect, WordStar, or Microsoft Word). You will have an edge if you can tastefully use the program's typography and graphics features, especially proportional fonts, page layout, files importation, and construction of graphs, charts, and tables.

Many employers today assume that you will have some experience with a full-featured desktop publishing package such as Frame Maker, Ventura Publisher, PageMaker, or Quark Express. Knowledge of a spreadsheet program (including Lotus 1-2-3, Quattro Pro, or Excel) and graphics or presentation software (such as Arts & Letters, Harvard Graphics, Aldus FreeHand, Corel Draw, or Freelance Plus) will give you other important functional competencies. While your prospective employer may not use software with which you are familiar, the fact that you are comfortable using full-featured programs and can produce tastefully designed documents argues persuasively for your communication effectiveness in any office. Courses that introduce you to computers in these areas of communication include:

- Fundamentals of computing (word processing, spread sheets, graphics, networks, and databases)
- Desktop publishing
- Computer-aided design and illustration
- Computergraphics
- Software-specific short courses (in Director, HTML, Hypercard, Lotus 1-2-3,

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Quattro-Pro, MS Word, WordPerfect, Ventura, Page Maker, etc.)

- Corporate electronic publishing
- Computer-based project management

As a communicator, your value to the corporation may be directly measured by your knowledge of these new computer-mediated technologies.

With a firm grasp of written, oral, visual, and computer competencies, you have a solid foundation upon which to build a communication career. You should, however, also devote some time to acquiring expertise in specialized areas.

### ***Advanced Degrees***

As a communicator in business, you have a number of options for study beyond the bachelor's degree. Many colleges offer master's degrees in communication, public relations, rhetoric, composition and rhetoric, journalism, communication management, technical and professional writing, technical communication, radio and television, creative writing, and the like. If you already have an undergraduate degree in communication, business communication, or an allied major, do you need one of these advanced degrees? Possibly—especially if your employer desires, for purposes of advancement, that you certify your communication abilities beyond the undergraduate degree. You will recall that both the STC and I)RSA salary surveys found a correlation between advanced degrees and higher income.

But before you decide to pursue an advanced degree in communication, be very clear about what you are looking for and why you might seek this advanced degree. After about three-to-five years' experience beyond your bachelor's degree, carefully assess your long-term career goals. Examine your educational strengths and weaknesses; then match these against the post-baccalaureate degree programs that appeal to you. Talk with the program directors, some of the faculty, and current students in the various programs. Be sure to ask these questions: How many years will this program take? Do the courses reflect state-of-the-art technology and current research? Can course selection be tailored to my needs? Are the faculty well qualified as practitioners, researchers, and teachers? Is this degree chiefly academic or practical? Does this degree justify its cost in time, money, and energy? Will my employer be able to pay for some or all of the courses? And the ultimate question to which the rest tend: What new personal and professional opportunities will this advanced degree provide? If you wish to enhance your business mobility, an advanced degree in communication may not be right for you. Perhaps you should pursue an MBA instead, with a concentration in communication, computer systems, marketing, management, accountancy, or finance—especially if your communication expertise is strong, and what you really need to ascend into management is a deeper understanding of business functions. Maybe all you need is a course or two in some communication or business specialty, a six-week seminar that will shore up a weak spot in your education. If, on the other hand, you hope eventually to teach or conduct communication research in a four-year college or university, you will need to consider the Ph.D.

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Remember, only you can answer the question of whether an advanced degree is important. As you examine your options, carefully balance the costs against the benefits. Above all, be an enlightened and discriminating academic consumer.

### ***Professional Accreditation***

In addition to, or instead of, an advanced degree, you may some day seek professional accreditation through the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), or the Business/Professional Advertising Association (B/PAA). Accreditation is evidence that your peers in one of these associations are confident of your status as a “professional” practitioner. To achieve accreditation, you must be an association member in good standing, have practiced for a certain number of years (five for the PRSA; eight for the B/PAA), and demonstrate (through oral and written examinations) historical, theoretical, ethical, legal, and practical knowledge of the profession. In addition, the IABC requires a portfolio evaluation. The PRSA awards successful candidates the Certificate of Accreditation and the designation of “PRSA Accredited” or “APR” (Accredited in Public Relations). The IABC designates successful completion with “ABC” (Accredited Business Communicator), and the B/PAA awards a CBC (Certified Business Communicator).

Seminars, courses, and workshops are also made available through these professional associations so that practitioners can keep abreast of advances in communication knowledge, theory, and practice. With communication technology changing so rapidly, with research continually reshaping the theoretical body of knowledge, and with on-going, sometimes profound, developments in international law, politics, and economics, communication practitioners are continually challenged to develop professionally. The associations thus employ accreditation and continuing education to monitor the quality of their members’ contributions to themselves, their companies, their clients, their customers, and to society at large.

## **Conclusion**

A career as a writer in business and manufacturing can be very rewarding. Whether you work for a manufacturer, wholesaler, or retailer, in goods or in services, your skills as a communicator will present many opportunities for advancement. The Bureau of Labor Statistics is optimistic about employment for the next decade: communicators in corporate, marketing, and corporate-based documentation should find increasing and diverse opportunities in an expanding service economy. While entry-level salaries for writers and editors may remain low, salaries for people at the supervisory/managerial levels, especially in the high-risk areas of business, will most likely remain robust. The secret to your career success will be judicious planning. Make your early choices wisely (in selecting courses, a major, a minor, and the first job), and you will build your career upon a solid foundation. In planning your career, examine the corporate annual reports, brochures, and pamphlets in your library or career planning center at school. Talk to your professors—in a number of

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different subjects, not just communication courses. Conduct information interviews with communicators in businesses that interest you. Read articles and books like this one, for these give you a clear sense of available careers and advancement opportunities. (See the references and suggested readings at the end of this chapter). Take courses that buttress your skills in written, oral, and visual communication, as well as courses in computers, business, and a technical specialty. Consider an internship. And when you are finally near graduation, begin your search for entry-level positions in industries you consider interesting. Remember that as a communicator, you must feel good about the industry, about your employer, and about the product or service you represent as a communicator. For upon graduation, you do not want simply to begin a job. You want to begin a career—a lifelong career.

### Professional Profiles

#### ***Christine Makis***

Christine Makis is the Marketing Communication Coordinator for Galactic Industries Corporation, publishers of high performance data processing software for scientists in the fields of spectroscopy and chromatography. Communication plays a vital role in the scientific software business because customers need information about products, newly released products, and updates. Christine says that “Galactic has hired professional communicators since 1987, their first year of organization. For the first two years they use an outside public relations firm and then, realizing the importance of this area, hired their first internal Marketing Communication Coordinator in 1989.”

Christine is very enthusiastic about the challenges of being a Marketing Communication Coordinator. In her fifteen months at Galactic, she has performed numerous communication tasks. Besides writing press releases, Christine has also written and designed advertising copy, direct mail copy, fact sheets and brochures. She says that “the audience for most of these pieces is potential users, but often we target our current users as well.” Christine notes that she spends time “meeting with advertising sales representatives, preparing monthly sales and leads reports, and designing, preparing, and demonstrating products at trade shows.” She especially likes attending trade shows because of the opportunity to travel and to meet many interesting people.

“Professional communicators are very important in the scientific software field,” Christine notes. “Anywhere you have highly specialized people in two different areas trying to communicate to each other, you always risk the chance of misinterpretation. In Galactic’s case, our potential customers are spectroscopists and chromatographers who are not necessarily computer literate—and then there are the Galactic engineers who know enough about these fields to program software, but they are truly programmers. Because the programmers are so immersed in the technical aspects of the product, Christine emphasizes that they “need professional communicators who understand the product and the benefits it will bring to the scientists. From that understanding, the communicators relay a message to

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potential customers without getting too technical.”

A business communication major as an undergraduate, Christine began working for Galactic immediately upon graduation from Bentley College. While this is her first position with the company, and her first full-time professional communication position, Christine points out that she gained a great deal of on-the-job experience working part-time and in an internship at Cahners Publishing Company in Newton, Massachusetts. During her one-semester internship as a senior, Christine was a Promotion Art Assistant. She was involved in various “production tasks, such as type specking, mechanical paste ups, mounting art for displays, and making corrections on the Macintosh.” The internship was useful too because Christine learned how to manage projects. She “organized and managed logo and magazine files, performed various clerical tasks, ordered art and obtained price quotes.” Christine feels the internship with a major communication company like Cahners gave her a valuable head start in seeking her first position after graduation: “People who had read my resume knew Cahners, of course, and they were impressed that I had worked there.”

Besides the internship, Christine gained valuable professional experience over the past few years working part-time as an editor for the Institute of Internal Auditors, Greater Boston Chapter. As editor, Christine designed and produced the chapter’s monthly newsletter. She scheduled and organized articles, wrote and edited copy, designed page layouts, and oversaw production of the newsletter. Christine gained much of her layout and design experience in a summer job as a desktop publisher with Desktop Design, Springfield, Massachusetts. In this job, she formatted newsletters, magazines and manuals. She also assisted in designing brochures, flyers, and advertisements. Christine says that one of the things she enjoyed most in this job was “consulting with customers about their design preferences.”

With her varied experience and education, Christine feels very confident about her professional future. She says, “Working for a small company like Galactic, I have gained—and am still gaining—a great amount of experience and knowledge in written and visual communication.” She hopes “to remain part of Galactic for quite a while.” Though it is a small company, Galactic “is rapidly growing in every aspect, including,” she notes, “my responsibilities and challenges. I would like to stay with Galactic as long as I am challenged and am confident that both parties are benefiting.”

In reflecting upon her career, Christine “doesn’t think it is feasible to pick out one specific career path for someone who does what she does.” She believes “there are many different avenues a person could take. The most reasonable and, depending on the person and the company, the most desirable career path would be to work your way up through the various levels of the marketing communication department until you hit the top.” Christine feels, “it is reasonable to focus on a single area like technical writing or graphic design and either open your own business or work for a firm established in this area.

Christine is excited about her work as a Marketing Communication Coordinator and about her future as a technical communicator. She credits her early success to choosing business communication as an undergraduate major, for she was able to learn about both business and communication. Christine says that in addition to the ten business courses she took, she

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“was able to put together interesting combinations of communication courses like public speaking, technical writing, communication theory, public relations, and graphic design.” Besides carefully selecting courses that would prepare her well as a professional communicator in business, Christine emphasizes “the importance of gaining experience through part-time work and an internship.” Once employed full-time, she has devoted herself to the job, working long, often challenging hours in a field she loves.

### ***Mat Tavares***

As Operations Manager for the Technical Services Operation of Raytheon Service Company (RSC), Mat Tavares oversees technical communication products and services that account for approximately \$120 million in annual sales. RSC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Raytheon, provides these services world-wide for Raytheon companies and for a wide variety of other companies needing help in project management, systems engineering, training services, technical information services, and the like. Responsible for the day-to-day operations of RSC, Mat is involved in planning, directing, and controlling technical communication activities in all the major programs of this 1,200-person organization.

RSC operations include all areas of technical communication: writing and editing, basic research, computer graphics, training, video and film production, interactive videodisc production, graphic design, photography, photocomposition, custom exhibits, reprographics, information management, word processing, and printing. Mat's responsibilities are now managerial; that is, he no longer writes or edits projects. As a manager, he makes sure that the right personnel are assigned to projects, oversees proposals and bids, manages the budget, and makes sure that bid contracts are fulfilled. His ultimate responsibility is to ensure that RSC operates annually at a profit. Thus, with well over three decades of experience as a technical communicator, supervisor, and manager at Raytheon, Mat is familiar with all phases of careers in technical communication for business and manufacturing.

In what Mat calls a “deep tech” company (like his own, an engineering-based technocracy), a successful writing career must be carefully prepared for and nurtured over time. The fundamental qualification, Mat feels, is an undergraduate degree in a science, especially physics, computer science, or one of the engineering sciences. This scientific/technical education must be linked with good writing skills, of course, but Mat firmly believes that the ability to understand complex concepts, data, and technical plans constitutes the foundation for writing at Raytheon. After a few years' experience, a writer will probably have defined a technical niche, that is, will have become very familiar with a product area and its market. In time, then, a good “deep tech” writer becomes conversant with the concepts, operating principles, and technical language of the engineers and designers who form the various product teams.

Mat sees the writing field today as tremendously challenging. In addition to possessing good writing skills, the successful writer has to be adept at problem-solving, especially in analyzing products, markets, and target audiences within those markets. Writers are thus

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becoming communicators in the fullest sense, because they have to choose, from among a bewildering array of communication possibilities, the exactly right medium or mix of media to convey technical information. Mat points out that the major developments in technical communication are directly linked to technological developments in media. Communicators in business and manufacturing should therefore become familiar with all aspects of technology, from paper-based publishing to electronic publishing (knowing both its software and hardware), to CDROM and on-line venues. In addition, communicators should know when and how to use the appropriate video technologies as well as various combinations of interactive computer and video.

For those communicators wishing to rise into the supervisory and managerial ranks, Mat emphasizes that a background in business is absolutely essential. Experience plus an undergraduate business degree, advanced studies certificate, or a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree will help to provide the business understanding that communicators, functioning as supervisors or managers, will need to maximize a company's investments in personnel, technology, product development, and quality control. But this sort of understanding does not come simply from education or degrees, nor does it come overnight. Years of experience in an industry or with a company and its products, plus initiative, organizational ability, people skills, and an entrepreneurial bent are, to Mat, what ultimately spell success. His own career, in fact, illustrates well the upward path of a technical communicator in a "deep tech" corporate environment.

Coming to the Raytheon Company in 1961 as a Senior Engineering Writer/ Supervisor, Mat's early experiences with the company were indeed varied. He planned and coordinated the efforts of the draftsmen, illustrators, and other writers to ensure consistent quality and compliance with specifications. As a senior engineer and instructor for Raytheon Company, Electronic Services Division, Mat planned and developed training courses on various guidance and target tracking radar systems. As a senior instructor, he presented these courses to military, civilian, and government personnel.

Mat's demonstrated planning acumen made it possible for him to advance to Technical Writing Manager, responsible for preparing corporate-based documents, such as system and equipment-level manuals for publication. Mat assigned writers as well as estimated, planned, and controlled the various writing tasks. He was the liaison between the publications task and the design and project management groups. As a manager, Mat was always on the lookout for new managerial talent. He evaluated the personnel directly under his supervision and was careful to develop their writing and administrative abilities so that his company could effectively groom its next generation of managers.

Mat himself moved on to become the Assistant Department Manager at Raytheon's Technical Information Operation, a position he held for eleven years. He was responsible for the activities of over 800 technical information specialists involved in a wide range of military and commercial technical information programs aimed at internal and external audiences. An important part of his duties was to develop new business in markets requiring technical information services. Mat identified, assessed, committed resources, and judged

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the profitability of these markets and opportunities. He also established departmental objectives, strategies, and action plans. In performing these high-level business activities, Mat feels that his MBA degree was essential. The MBA, in fact, helped open the doors to his current position as Operations Manager at the Raytheon Service Company.

Mat Tavares foresees that communicators will continue to function as key players in development teams, from product inception through manufacture, delivery, operation, maintenance, and training. With quality control becoming ever more the watchword in business and manufacturing, communicators will play increasingly important roles in selecting, controlling, and communicating information to ensure their company's success. For those technical communicators who carefully plan their education and careers, who are versatile, intelligent, and willing to put in long hours, Mat sees a bright future.

### **The Bentley College Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Communication: a Sample Curriculum**

The table below shows how the Business Communication major (BS degree) works. It consists of 8 courses selected from a wide range of offerings in written, oral, and visual communication theory and application. Within the major, to complement this selection of Business Communication courses, you may take BC-related electives in other departments, such as computer information systems, foreign language, literature, marketing, advertising, management, psychology, or sociology. And like other Bentley business majors, you'd also take the ten courses business minor in areas such as economics, marketing, management, or computer information systems. Other students opt for an arts & sciences minor in disciplines such as English, history, math, behavioral sciences, or philosophy.

<p><b>The Bentley College Business Communication BS Major</b></p>
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<b>Business Core (10)</b>
Financial Accounting Managerial Accounting Business Statistics Computer Information Systems Managerial Finance Business Law Management Marketing Operations Management Business Policy
<b>Major (8)</b>
Effective Speaking Comm theory elective BC elective BC elective BC elective BC elective BC/BC-related elective BC/BC-related elective
<b>Minor (4)</b>
Elective Elective Elective Elective
<b>Arts &amp; Sciences (18)</b>
Humanities Expository Writing I Expository Writing II Literature I Literature II Philosophy Humanities elective  Social Sciences History I History II Government Psychology/Sociology Microeconomics Macroeconomics

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Math & Science Math I Math II Computer Science Science I Science II Math/Science elective
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### Professional Communication Associations

#### ***The Association for Business Communication (ABC)***

Robert J. Myers, Executive Director

Baruch College, CUNY

Department of Speech

17 Lexington Avenue

New York, NY 10010

Voice: (212) 387-1620

Fax: (212) 387-1655

Web: [www.courses.sha.cornell.edu/orgs/abc/](http://www.courses.sha.cornell.edu/orgs/abc/)

The ABC is the oldest international association of business communication professionals in the world. ABC members include communication consultants, corporate communicators, and academics. The Association publishes the scholarly Journal of Business Communication and the ABC Bulletin.

#### ***IEEE Professional Communication Society (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers)***

305 East 47th Street

New York, NY 10017

Voice: (212) 705-7018

## **Writing in Business and Manufacturing**

Fax: (212) 705 7865

Web: [www.comsoc.org](http://www.comsoc.org)

The Professional Communication Society is an organization located within the framework of a larger professional association, the Institute for Electrical Engineering Education. Its primary objective is to improve the communication of technical information.

### ***International Association of Business Communicators (IABC)***

One Hallidie Plaza

Suite 600

San Francisco, CA 94102

Voice: (415) 433-3400

Fax: (415) 362-8762

Web: [www.iabc.com](http://www.iabc.com)

IABC is dedicated to fostering communication excellence, contributing more effectively to organizational goals worldwide, and being a model of communication excellence. In pursuit of this mission, IABC provides a full range of member services, adheres to sound fiscal and association management policies, and promotes better public understanding and recognition of the value of professional communication.

### ***National Investor Relations Institute (NIRI)***

Louis M. Thompson, Jr., President & CEO

8045 Leesburg Pike

Suite 600

Vienna, VA 22182

Voice: (703) 506-3570

Fax: (703) 506-3571

Web: [www.niri.org](http://www.niri.org)

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NIRI is an association of investor relations executives, whose goals are to identify the role of the investor relations practitioner, to protect a free and open market with equity and access to investors of all kinds, to improve communication between corporate management and shareholders, present and future.

### ***Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)***

33 Irving Place

New York, NY 10003-2376

Voice: (212) 995-2230

Fax: (212) 995-0757

Web: [www.prsa.org](http://www.prsa.org)

The PRSA was organized in 1947 and, with a national membership of more than 17,000, is the leading public relations association in the world. PRSA members come from business and industry, public relations counseling firms, government agencies, educational institutions, trade and professional groups, hospitals, and other not-for-profit organizations. PRSA has a Code of Professional Standards, backed by effective enforcement procedures, to which all members must adhere.

### ***Society for Technical Communication (STC)***

William C. Stolgitis, Executive Director

901 North Stuart Street

Suite 904 Arlington, VA 22203-1854

Voice: (703) 522-4114

Fax: (703)522-2075

Web: [www.stc.org](http://www.stc.org)

STC has over 20,000 members in 141 chapters worldwide. It is the largest professional society in the world dedicated to the advancement of the theory and practice of technical communication in all media.

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## NOTES

1One of the more comprehensive salary studies is Fisher, H. S. (Ed.) (1997). *American salaries and wages survey*. 4th ed. Detroit: Gale research. For a glimpse at some regional salary figures, see "Advertising copywriter," p. 34, "Marketing, advertising & public relations manager," p. 422, 427-428; "Public Relations," pp. 571-572; and "Technical Writer," pp. 702 and 763-64. However, even Fisher's survey is spotty and should not be considered definitive.

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2 STC's 1996 Technical Communicator Salary Survey represents the responses of over 900 of 2,000 members of the Society for Technical Communication in the United States and Canada. The response rate for the entire survey was 45%. STC has over 20,000 members. The PRSA Salary Survey results, conducted by Simmons Market Research Bureau, Inc., surveyed "a total of 6,000 sample members on an "nth" basis: 1,000 APR-accredited members, 2,500 non-accredited members and 2,500 non-members [of the PRSA]," p. 3.

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