

Chapter 1 Becoming a Successful Business Communicator

1) All of the following are examples of communicating EXCEPT _____.

- A) posting updates on Facebook to keep in touch with geographically distant friends and family
- B) emailing your employer to confirm scheduling issues
- C) speaking to your mother on the phone
- D) gesturing across the table to a friend to get him to stop telling the story he has begun
- E) reciting a list of dates to memorize them for an upcoming exam

Answer: E

Explanation: E) All of the other choices are examples of the complex process of communication: planning, creating, delivering, and interpreting messages. This choice is simply a means to learn and retain information.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 3

AASCB: Written and oral communication

2) The communication skills you already possess _____ in the workplace.

- A) will likely hamper your attempts to communicate
- B) are inapplicable to communication
- C) are most likely sufficient to meet the challenges of communication
- D) will be valuable to you for communicating
- E) must all be unlearned if you want to successfully communicate

Answer: D

Explanation: D) The communication skills you have already developed will be valuable to you in the workplace, where communication is considered to be the most important of all abilities you can possess. However, your current skills may not be sufficient to meet many challenges of communicating in the workplace.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 3

AASCB: Reflective thinking

3) Which of the following is NOT an example of communication?

- A) texting a colleague that you will be a few minutes late for your meeting
- B) tweeting that you are headed to a concert in the park
- C) updating your page on a social networking site
- D) listening to classic tunes on an MP3 player
- E) whispering to a friend that her comments may be perceived as rude

Answer: D

Explanation: D) All of the other choices are examples of the complex process of communication: planning, creating, delivering, and interpreting messages. In this choice you are using an electronic device to listen to music, but are not seeking to share information with others.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 3

AASCB: Reflective thinking

4) Which of the following workplace activities is NOT one in which your communication skills will be utilized?

- A) calculating whether sales are up this quarter using the latest figures
- B) explaining why sales were down last quarter
- C) persuading your colleagues that your idea will likely lead to increased sales
- D) ensuring that your department understands that increasing sales is the top priority
- E) discussing your employee's poor sales figures without making her feel defensive

Answer: A

Explanation: A) All of the other choices represent situations in which you will need to use your communication skills. Computing sales figures from data is not an example of communication.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 3

AASCB: Written and oral communication

5) In a survey report for the Canadian Council of Chief Executives (CCCE), what skills were given the highest priority for needs?

- A) technological literacy
- B) creative thinking
- C) people skills/relationship building
- D) communication skills
- E) industry-specific knowledge

Answer: C

Explanation: C) While communication skills were considered the second-most important skill requirement, the ability to interact with people and build relationships was first.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 4

AASCB: Interpersonal relations and teamwork

6) In a survey of over 900 employers by the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers, which skills were ranked the top two out of 20 skill sets?

- A) leadership skills and communication skills
- B) flexibility and entrepreneurial skills
- C) communication skills and teamwork skills
- D) teamwork skills and strategic planning skills
- E) strong work ethic and initiative

Answer: C

Explanation: C) These were the top ranked skills sets.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 5

AASCB: Written and oral communication

Ryan, a recent college graduate, possess exemplary written and oral communication skills. He always received top marks on the papers he wrote as part of his course work and was a successful member of the school debate team.

- 7) As he begins his job search, Ryan can expect that _____.
- A) his effectiveness as a communicator will give him a competitive advantage
 - B) he will not stand out from the pack, as most post-secondary graduates possess similar communication skills
 - C) employers will not be unduly impressed by these skills, as most people in the workplace have mastered them
 - D) this ability might hinder his chances as a job candidate
 - E) his speaking skills will be a plus for him, but writing skills are taken for granted in the workplace

Answer: A

Explanation: A) Ironically, although communication skills are important, few people in the workplace have mastered them. A 2015 survey of British Columbian employers, for instance, found a high level of concern with regard to finding employees with communication skills.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 5

AASCB: Written and oral communication

- 8) In terms of his career, Ryan's communication skills _____.
- A) won't help him find a job but will help him keep it
 - B) will give him prestige in his job but won't make any difference in his salary potential
 - C) will be perceived as valuable by his employers but cannot translate into monetary savings for his company
 - D) may give him an opportunity to produce documents that save money or generate income for his firm
 - E) may have a positive impact on his professional life but a negative impact on his personal life

Answer: D

Explanation: D) Even a small change in communication can have a large return on investment for an organization, enabling it to save money or generate income. A skilled communicator can also improve a company's public image and employee satisfaction, can earn up to three times as much as a poor communicator, and can apply their communication skills their personal life as well.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 6

AASCB: Written and oral communication

9) Research confirms that communication can help your career and your employer in all of the following ways EXCEPT which of the following?

- A) Communication skills will help you find a job.
- B) Communication skills will make employers overlook that you don't have the necessary qualifications for a job.
- C) Communication skills will make you a more valuable employee.
- D) Communication skills can improve your salary.
- E) Communication skills can have a positive impact on your life outside of work.

Answer: B

Explanation: B) Because communication is a valued commodity in the workplace, it can enhance your professional and personal success. Research confirms that it will help your career and your employer in all of the ways described in the other choices.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 6-7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

Kaylin just graduated from college in June. For the last three years she successfully ran a small business at her school. Her business arranged for the delivery of personalized birthday cakes and other gifts to students in her school. Since many of these students were from out of the province or even out of the country, this service provided a way for their family and friends back home to celebrate special occasions. Kaylin used social media like Facebook and Twitter to remind potential customers of upcoming birthdays and other gift-giving occasions such as holidays or campus events (care packages for mid-term exams, picnic packs to celebrate the arrival of spring after a snowy winter, etc.).

10) Prospective employers are likely to _____.

- A) admire Kaylin's initiative but see little application to a "real job"
- B) think Kaylin should have focused on her studies while at school instead of on a side venture
- C) expect that Kaylin, as a successful entrepreneur, will have experience with many types of business communication
- D) place little value on a hobby that did not lead to many valuable skills
- E) impress upon Kaylin that real business communication will be very different from what she engaged in as an entrepreneur

Answer: C

Explanation: C) If you run your own small business as an entrepreneur, your communication abilities will be especially critical since most of the communication responsibilities will fall squarely on your shoulders.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 6

AASCB: Written and oral communication

11) How might companies view Kaylin's experience with social media?

- A) While Facebook is a good way to keep in touch with family and friends, it does not have significance in the workplace.
- B) Effective use of social media like Twitter can build a company's brand and extend its marketing reach.
- C) Communication through social media is an inappropriate way for companies to try to market themselves.
- D) Effective communication through a blog may build a company's brand at the expense of its employees' satisfaction.
- E) Such use of social media is very difficult to duplicate and would not be likely to benefit the company that Kaylin works for.

Answer: B

Explanation: B) Expertise with social media can also benefit an employer. Companies are finding that effective communication through social media (like blogs, Facebook, and Twitter) is improving employee satisfaction and building their brands while expanding their marketing reach.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 6

AASCB: Written and oral communication

12) Good business communication skills _____.

- A) can have a positive impact on your life outside of work
- B) will help advance your career but will hinder your personal relationships
- C) are inapplicable to your personal life
- D) will improve personal relationships, although they offer no financial benefits in your life outside of work
- E) are not worth the investment of time and energy necessary to acquire them

Answer: A

Explanation: A) If you learn good business communication skills, you can apply them in your personal life to improve your relationships. You may also be able to use them to negotiate a better deal on a car, persuade your cell phone provider to give you a refund, or write an effective application letter for graduate school.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 6

AASCB: Interpersonal relations and teamwork

13) Good business communication skills can have a positive impact on your life outside of work through all of the following applications EXCEPT _____.

- A) negotiating a better deal on a car
- B) convincing your landlord to refund your security deposit
- C) persuading a merchant to give you a refund
- D) calculating your monthly expenses
- E) writing an effective application essay for graduate school

Answer: D

Explanation: D) All of the other choices involve developing, creating, delivering, and interpreting verbal and nonverbal messages. Computing your monthly expenses involves numbers and calculations, not conversation and persuasion.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 6

AASCB: Interpersonal relations and teamwork

14) Which of the following is NOT a form of social media?

- A) Facebook
- B) company newsletter
- C) Twitter
- D) MySpace
- E) blog

Answer: B

Explanation: B) Social media are web-based applications designed to promote social interaction. All of the other choices are examples of social media.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 6

AASCB: Interpersonal relations and teamwork

15) Why is it that many students do NOT acquire sufficient communication skills as they pass through school?

- A) Business communication is complex, even for dedicated students.
- B) Most schools don't offer any business communication courses.
- C) Business communication is an innate skill that cannot be taught.
- D) You're either a good communicator or you're not.
- E) Since many students perceive it to be such a difficult course, they are discouraged from taking it.

Answer: A

Explanation: A) Some students do not take business communication courses, while others do but do not devote enough time to understanding what communication involves because they think it is an "easy" course. However, even for a dedicated student communicating well in a business context is complex.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

16) Which of the following is an example of unsuccessful communication?

- A) ordering an item online and deciding after it arrives that you don't like it
- B) asking a friend for advice and then trying to apply it to your problem
- C) getting instructions on how to put something together and then assembling the item
- D) making an urgent request on a colleague's voice mail and getting no reply for a week
- E) writing a letter to a manufacturer complaining about a recent purchase and receiving a discount on a future purchase

Answer: D

Explanation: D) In this example your urgent request goes unanswered. Your colleague may have misunderstood your request or your message may have been unclear. There might even have been a technical problem with the recording or playing of the message.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

17) Which of the following statements best expresses the goal of communication?

- A) The goal of communication is for a receiver to decode a message.
- B) The goal of communication is for a sender to transmit a message.
- C) The goal of communication is to develop shared meaning by communicating in a dynamic loop.
- D) The goal of communication is to select the appropriate channel for sending an encoded message.
- E) The goal of communication is to maximize the potential for feedback.

Answer: C

Explanation: C) The goal of communication is not just for a sender to transmit a message to a receiver, but for a sender and receiver to develop shared meaning by communicating in a dynamic loop, sending messages back and forth.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

18) Which of the following is an example of encoding a message?

- A) deciding how to phrase a request to your boss for clarification on your new assignment
- B) deciding that text messaging is an inappropriate medium for communicating with your professor
- C) deciding to purchase a new smartphone so that you can check and send email while you are on the go
- D) deciding to toss out an advertisement that was mailed to you
- E) deciding to read an email sent by a friend

Answer: A

Explanation: A) Communication begins when the sender has something to "say" to a receiver. To communicate this thought, the sender must encode the message—put it into words, images, or actions.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

19) Deciding that an email is the best way to request information from a colleague for the proposal you are writing is an example of which step of the communication process?

- A) sender encodes a message
- B) sender selects a medium
- C) receiver decodes the message
- D) receiver encodes feedback
- E) sender and receiver close the communication loop

Answer: B

Explanation: B) The sender transmits a message to the receiver through a medium (a channel used to transmit the message), such as a face-to-face conversation, a phone conversation, a letter, or an email message.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

20) When you _____ your message to the receiver, you also need to _____.

- A) encode; decode
- B) encode; choose your medium
- C) decode; choose your medium
- D) decode; prepare feedback
- E) encode; close the dynamic loop

Answer: B

Explanation: B) To communicate your idea to the receiver, you must encode the message; that is, put it into words, images, or actions. While you do this, you also need to choose your medium (e.g., a phone conversation, an email, etc.).

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

21) The medium you choose to transmit your message _____.

- A) makes no difference in how your message will be received
- B) will always be determined by your company's policy
- C) depends solely upon which method you are most comfortable with
- D) should take into account how the receiver will best process the information
- E) should be selected after the receiver decodes your message

Answer: D

Explanation: D) The medium you choose should depend on which one best supports the purpose of your message, as well as how the receiver will best process that information. The medium is chosen while you encode your message to the receiver, not after.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

22) The receiver decodes a message by _____.

- A) putting it into words, images, or actions
- B) selecting a channel through which to transmit it
- C) interpreting its words or actions and attaching meaning to them
- D) deciding which form of verbal or nonverbal response should be sent
- E) closing the dynamic loop

Answer: C

Explanation: C) This meaning is filtered by the receiver's knowledge, experience, and context.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

23) The process of _____ a message involves interpreting its words and actions and attaching meaning to them.

- A) encoding
- B) decoding
- C) encrypting
- D) channeling
- E) blocking

Answer: B

Explanation: B) The meaning that a receiver attaches to a message that she decodes is affected by her knowledge, experience, and context.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

24) When a message is decoded, the meaning that is attached to it is filtered by which of the following?

- A) the transmittal medium
- B) the sender's experience
- C) the receiver's knowledge
- D) the feedback response
- E) the dynamic loop

Answer: C

Explanation: C) The receiver decodes the message by interpreting the words and actions of a message and attaching meaning to them. This meaning is filtered by the receiver's knowledge, experience, and context.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

You email a fellow student requesting help on a class project and he sends a terse reply stating that he does not believe in cheating.

25) Your classmate _____.

- A) doesn't understand how to use email appropriately
- B) may have had a bad experience in the past that caused him to misinterpret your request
- C) should have used another communication medium to signal a negative response
- D) is correct that a request for help must imply cheating
- E) should have ignored your email request

Answer: B

Explanation: B) The meaning that a receiver attaches to a message is filtered by his knowledge, experience, and context. Since he read "help" and thought "cheat," he may have been asked in the past for help and found out that the classmate wanted to copy his work or have it done for him.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

26) This miscommunication might have been avoided if _____.

- A) you had been more specific about the type of help you wanted from your classmate
- B) your classmate had angrily deleted your email instead of replying to you
- C) you had used the same wording but sent your request as a letter instead of an email
- D) you had been more vague in your message about what you wanted
- E) your classmate went directly to your professor with his suspicions

Answer: A

Explanation: A) The meaning that a receiver attaches to a message is filtered by his knowledge, experience, and context. Since he interpreted "help" to mean "cheat," he may have had a bad experience in the past involving cheating. Avoiding ambiguity and specifying the help you wanted might have helped him understand that cheating is not what you intended.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

27) A(n) _____ is any obstacle that gets in the way of effective communication.

- A) encoding
- B) decoder
- C) context
- D) barrier
- E) channel

Answer: D

Explanation: D) There are many barriers that can obstruct effective communication, for example a sender's ambiguity or a receiver's lack of knowledge.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

28) Feedback _____.

- A) must be verbal
- B) can't include gestures
- C) may request clarification
- D) must be transmitted in the same medium as the original message
- E) hinders the communication process

Answer: C

Explanation: C) Feedback is any form of verbal or nonverbal response to a message sent from the recipient to the original sender.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

29) Which of the following is NOT an example of feedback?

- A) nodding your head in agreement as a colleague describes a possible solution to a problem
- B) giving the thumbs down gesture to a friend who asks your opinion of his new tie
- C) sending a text message to your friend accepting the invitation to lunch that she just texted you
- D) forwarding a funny email that you just received to a group of friends
- E) calling a client to discuss with them why the schedule they just faxed you will need some adjustments

Answer: D

Explanation: D) Feedback is any form of verbal or nonverbal response to a message sent from the recipient to the original sender. All of the other choices are feedback. This example does not involve a response to the original sender, but rather sharing information with a new audience.

E)

Diff: 3 Type: MC Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

30) Shaking your head in disapproval after your coworker makes a discriminatory statement is an example of _____.

- A) feedback
- B) decoding a message
- C) context
- D) a channel
- E) a barrier

Answer: A

Explanation: A) Feedback is any form of verbal or nonverbal response to a message sent from the recipient to the original sender.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

31) Hearing loss is an example of which type of barrier?

- A) psychologic barrier
- B) semantic barrier
- C) language barrier
- D) physiological barrier
- E) mixed messages

Answer: D

Explanation: D) A physiological barrier arises from a receiver's physical state, for example hearing loss or a migraine headache.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

32) _____ arise from language that is ambiguous or difficult to understand.

- A) Psychological barriers
- B) Semantic barriers
- C) Language barriers
- D) Physiological barriers
- E) Mixed messages

Answer: B

Explanation: B) If a colleague rushes late into a meeting and says to you, "I was held up at the train station," you might ask if the robber had a gun, when your colleague simply meant that the train was delayed.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

33) If a new employee doesn't know what is expected of her when she is asked to review the P&L, a _____ is interfering with effective communication.

- A) psychological barrier
- B) semantic barrier
- C) language barrier
- D) physiological barrier
- E) mixed message

Answer: C

Explanation: C) A language barrier arises from senders and receivers not using a shared language. One example is someone new to a company or industry not understanding its jargon, for example the fact that a P&L is a profit and loss statement.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

34) You joined a team just as it was finishing up a big and much anticipated project at your company. You feel a little insecure as the team's newest member and the one who contributed the least to this project. At the next staff meeting your boss thanks you for all your hard work in making the project a success. Instead of this making you feel good, you feel uncomfortable, interpreting the comment as a sarcastic remark about how little you actually participated in this project. This is an example of a _____.

- A) psychological barrier
- B) semantic barrier
- C) language barrier
- D) physiological barrier
- E) mixed message

Answer: A

Explanation: A) Psychological barriers arise from a receiver's attitudes toward the message or towards the sender. When you are upset, your emotions act as a barrier to effective communication.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

Padma, an avid home cook, has no culinary training or experience in professional kitchens. After dining at her house one evening, her friend Tom is so impressed by her cooking that he gives Padma the opportunity to work in the restaurant he manages.

35) On Padma's first night she is asked to help plate the appetizers for the 4-top that just arrived. Padma freezes. She doesn't understand that she is being asked to arrange the appetizers on the proper serving dishes, along with the necessary garnishes and condiments, for the table of four diners that just arrived at the restaurant. This is an example of a _____.

- A) psychological barrier
- B) semantic barrier
- C) language barrier
- D) physiological barrier
- E) mixed message

Answer: C

Explanation: C) A language barrier arises from senders and receivers not using a shared language. This does not necessarily mean that one is speaking English and the other Chinese. A less obvious example of a language barrier is when someone new to a company or industry doesn't understand its jargon. Not having worked in a restaurant before, Padma could not be expected to know what "plating" and "4-top" mean in this environment.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

36) Padma is assisting with the prep work for that evening's dinner service. The chef asks her if the mise en place for the meat station is ready. Padma answers no; she was asked to assemble and prepare ingredients, not to do mise en place. The chef storms off, angrily shouting for someone else to get it done. Padma mentions this to a coworker, who informs her that the French term "mise en place" translates to "set in place," and signifies the set-up of ingredients needed for a particular dish or area of the kitchen. Now Padma has to tell the angry chef that the job he just started someone else on is duplicating the prep work she has already done. This is an example of a _____.

- A) psychological barrier
- B) semantic barrier
- C) language barrier
- D) physiological barrier
- E) mixed message

Answer: C

Explanation: C) A language barrier arises from senders and receivers not using a shared language. In this case Padma is unfamiliar with the French term "mise en place." Even if she spoke French, she might not know that in professional kitchen jargon this term means something very specific, namely the set-up of ingredients needed for a particular dish or station.

Diff: 3 Type: MC Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

37) Padma is asked if she knows how to make a red wine reduction. Padma looks down at her feet, quietly mumbles "sure," and starts wringing her hands. Padma is confused when the job of making the red wine reduction is assigned to someone else, as she answered affirmatively that she knew how to do it. Which of the following is the best explanation of what happened here?

- A) A psychological barrier has obstructed communication; by answering quietly, Padma is signalled that she was offended by the request.
- B) A semantic barrier has occurred; since Padma answered "sure" instead of "yes," her answer was confusing.
- C) A language barrier has obstructed communication; Padma should have said "yes" in several different languages to ensure that she was understood.
- D) A physiological barrier has obstructed communication; by wringing her hands, Padma gave the impression that they hurt and that she could not perform the task.
- E) A mixed message has obstructed communication; Padma's verbal and nonverbal responses communicated different things.

Answer: E

Explanation: E) Padma's answer was "yes," but her quiet tone did not express confidence, and looking down and hand-wringing further expressed discomfort with this request. When verbal and nonverbal communications are at odds, a mixed message is said to have occurred.

Diff: 3 Type: MC Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Interpersonal relations and teamwork

38) Effective communication is also challenging because it takes place in a specific context, which is defined as _____.

- A) a set of circumstances that influences the purpose of communication, the best medium to use, and how receivers interpret messages
- B) a set of principles that guide decision-making and lead someone to do the right thing
- C) a medium used to transmit a message
- D) the process of working together to achieve a common goal
- E) the act of influencing or convincing your audience to accept your position

Answer: A

Explanation: A) Effective communication is also challenging because it takes place in a specific context or set of circumstances that influence the purpose of communication, the best medium to use, and how receivers interpret the message.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 9

AASCB: Application of knowledge

39) _____ influences the purpose of communication, the best medium to use to communicate the message, and how receivers interpret the message.

- A) Collaboration
- B) Context
- C) Conciseness
- D) Clarity
- E) Channel

Answer: B

Explanation: B) Context, or the set of specific circumstances in which a communication occurs, influences all these factors.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 9

AASCB: Written and oral communication

40) Communication typically occurs _____.

- A) in a vacuum
- B) between two people
- C) between people with identical concerns
- D) among multiple people with different contexts
- E) among multiple people who encode and decode messages in exactly the same way

Answer: D

Explanation: D) Communication typically occurs among multiple people who encode and decode messages differently and who have different contexts, backgrounds, concerns, and agendas.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 9

AASCB: Written and oral communication

41) Oral communication methods are required for all of the following EXCEPT _____.

- A) one-on-one meetings
- B) podcasts
- C) teleconferences
- D) wikis
- E) webcasts

Answer: D

Explanation: D) A wiki is a collaborative website created about a particular topic. As such, it uses the written word, not the spoken word.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 9

AASCB: Written and oral communication

42) Caroline knows that while her oral presentation skills are stellar, her writing style could use a bit of work. Which of the following would be the best medium for Caroline to communicate effectively?

- A) a podcast
- B) a wiki
- C) a blog
- D) a text chat
- E) an email

Answer: A

Explanation: A) A podcast is an oral communication method, while the other choices all involve the written word.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 9

AASCB: Written and oral communication

43) Questions such as, "What is your goal?" and "How can you organize your message to state and support your main point?" are related to which characteristic of effective business communicators?

- A) strategic
- B) professional
- C) ethical
- D) adaptable
- E) collaborative

Answer: A

Explanation: A) Strategic communicators are always making decisions and asking themselves questions such as these to ensure their messages are purposeful, audience-oriented, and (in many cases) persuasive.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 9

AASCB: Written and oral communication

44) According to the text, which question is relevant to the strategic aspect of being an effective business communicator?

- A) Is my message ethical?
- B) What medium should I use for my message?
- C) Am I communicating in a way that is appropriate to the situation?
- D) Is my communication medium current with technology?
- E) How can I make my message work with many cultures?

Answer: B

Explanation: B) All of these questions are related to being an effective communicator, but only this choice is relevant to the strategic aspect. A strategic communicator is purposeful, audience-oriented, and (in many cases) persuasive.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 9

AASCB: Written and oral communication

45) According to the text, considering whether your message is appropriate to the situation is related to which characteristic of effective business communicators?

- A) strategic
- B) professional
- C) technological
- D) adaptive
- E) collaborative

Answer: B

Explanation: B) The professional aspect of effective communication deals with being appropriate to the situation, being ethical, and being clear and concise.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 10-13

AASCB: Written and oral communication

46) According to the text, which consideration is relevant to the adaptable characteristic of effective business communicators?

- A) What do I want to accomplish with my message?
- B) With whom should I communicate to accomplish my goal?
- C) Is my message able to work with other cultures?
- D) Is my message clear and concise?
- E) Is my message ethical?

Answer: C

Explanation: C) The adaptable characteristic of effective communicators involves being current with technology, being able to work with other cultures, and being collaborative.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 10-19

AASCB: Written and oral communication

47) When communicating, being specific about your intended outcome is _____.

- A) not recommended, as it is unprofessional
- B) risky, as it may offend some people
- C) a good idea, as it will make it harder for your audience to say no
- D) strategic, as it makes it easier for your audience to understand what you want them to do
- E) appropriate only when you know that your audience is likely to decline your request

Answer: D

Explanation: D) Successful business communicators plan their writing and speaking to achieve a specific purpose. For example, if you email a colleague asking for "help," he or she might be unwilling to commit without knowing exactly what you want and say no or need to ask for clarification before deciding to assist you. If you specify that you'd like your colleague to run some figures for you, he or she will be able to comply or decline more quickly and easily. The easier you make it for your recipient to do what you are asking, the more likely that they will comply.

Diff: 3 Type: MC Page Ref: 9-10

AASCB: Written and oral communication

48) When sending your message as an email, the subject line _____.

- A) is unnecessary
- B) should be omitted unless your email is a response to an earlier message
- C) is best stated generally
- D) should be specific
- E) has no ability to capture the reader's attention

Answer: D

Explanation: D) A specific subject line that immediately alerts the reader to the purpose of the email will capture the reader's attention.

Diff: 3 Type: MC Page Ref: 12

AASCB: Written and oral communication

49) Good business communicators understand that _____.

- A) their message must influence anyone who might come across it
- B) their message must be able to reach their targeted audience
- C) reaching an audience requires only that you be a good writer
- D) being a good listener is not necessary to understand audience concerns
- E) being a good reader is vital, as it is the only way to gain insight into audience concerns

Answer: B

Explanation: B) Messages must reach and influence the audience, the individual person or people for whom a message is intended. Being able to reach an audience requires that you be a good reader and listener to understand audience concerns and compose easy-to-read messages that address these concerns.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 11

AASCB: Written and oral communication

You are organizing a charity event in which local high school students will participate in a two-day tennis tournament to raise funds for the renovation of the community tennis courts. This will involve communicating with students, their parents, school administrators, coaches, local businesses, and the general public.

50) One of your first tasks is to attract sponsors who will provide funding for the event in exchange for promotional considerations. When you draft the letter trying to secure this funding, your audience will be _____.

- A) students
- B) students' parents
- C) school administrators
- D) coaches
- E) local businesses

Answer: E

Explanation: E) You would look to local businesses to sponsor your event in exchange for promotional considerations such as publicity and branding of the tournament.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 10-11

AASCB: Written and oral communication

51) You are drafting a letter to high school tennis coaches looking for potential players for the tournament. In this letter, citing which benefit would likely have the LEAST impact on convincing the coaches to help you recruit players?

- A) This event will generate great publicity and goodwill for sponsors.
- B) The tournament will put a spotlight on your high school's tennis players.
- C) The event will generate interest in tennis and attract young players to the game.
- D) The event could attract more funding for high school tennis programs.
- E) The event will raise a lot of money to renovate the community tennis courts.

Answer: A

Explanation: A) A persuasive communication emphasizes the benefits you are offering to your audience. A high school tennis coach would probably be very interested in helping his school's program and players, and, to a lesser degree, in helping the sport in general. Publicity for the sponsors would likely be of least interest to a high school coach.

Diff: 3 Type: MC Page Ref: 11-13

AASCB: Written and oral communication

52) You're drafting a letter to send to the parents of interested high school tennis players to obtain permission for their children to participate in the tournament. In the context of this letter, which of the following statements would be an example of the persuasive technique of responding to an anticipated objection?

- A) This tournament will be a great opportunity for your child to meet students from neighbouring schools.
- B) Your child will know the satisfaction of having made a difference in our community.
- C) When renovated, the community tennis courts will provide a wonderful resource for families in the area.
- D) The tournament will be scheduled in conjunction with all the participating high schools so that it will not interfere with classes or school events.
- E) Local businesses will put together gift bags for the students in appreciation of their participation.

Answer: D

Explanation: D) All of the other statements look at the topic from the parents' point of view, citing the benefits their child will receive by participating in the tournament. This statement is a response to the unstated objection that the tournament might interfere with the child's schoolwork.

Diff: 3 Type: MC Page Ref: 11-13

AASCB: Written and oral communication

53) Active listening _____.

- A) is the same as hearing
- B) is an innate skill that involves "reading between the lines"
- C) is a learned skill that requires focusing on the speaker
- D) never involves feedback on the information
- E) decreases the chances of correctly understanding the information

Answer: C

Explanation: C) Active listening is a learned skill that requires you to focus on the speaker, make sense of the information that he or she presented, and, when possible, provide feedback about the information to ensure you understand it correctly.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 14

AASCB: Written and oral communication

54) Melinda is talking to her supervisor, suggesting they implement a new process for their department. While Melinda is speaking, her boss is fidgeting in his seat and glances at his watch several times. When Melinda asks what he thinks he stands up and walks out the door saying, "Sure, sure. It sounds fine. Let's talk later." As an active listener Melinda _____.

- A) will interpret this as an unequivocal acceptance of her suggestion
- B) knows that they will have to work out the details but her suggestion is definitely approved
- C) will perceive that her boss was in a hurry and that they will likely need to revisit this discussion
- D) knows that he was anxious to leave the room because he disliked her idea so much
- E) understands by his nonverbal cues that he has rejected her idea, though in a way that spares her feelings

Answer: C

Explanation: C) An active listener will perceive emotional cues and body language, even when they are at odds with the words being spoken. Her boss clearly seems anxious to leave the conversation. While this doesn't necessarily indicate that he dislikes her idea and won't consider it, it seems to suggest that he might not have been focusing his full attention on it.

Diff: 3 Type: MC Page Ref: 14

AASCB: Written and oral communication

55) Which of the following behaviours most likely indicates that the listener disagrees with the idea she is hearing?

- A) twirling her hair around her finger
- B) staring off into space
- C) jotting down notes on a pad
- D) rolling her eyes
- E) drumming her fingers on the table

Answer: D

Explanation: D) Rolling one's eyes is a gesture that indicates dislike or annoyance at what is being said. Most of the other behaviours indicate boredom or a lack of interest. Jotting down notes on a pad could indicate interest in the idea, but this could be in favour or against. The notes might even be about an entirely different subject, which would again demonstrate a lack of interest in the idea.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 14

AASCB: Written and oral communication

56) An active listener does all of the following EXCEPT _____.

- A) work to interpret meaning to understand what a person is saying
- B) work to interpret meaning to understand why a person is saying what he or she says
- C) filter out emotional cues
- D) perceive body language
- E) think about what is not being said

Answer: C

Explanation: C) An active listener engages in the behaviours described in all the other choices. Additionally, an active listener will perceive emotional cues.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 14

AASCB: Written and oral communication

57) _____ is the process of influencing your audience to agree with your point of view,

recommendation, or request.

- A) Coercion
- B) Persuasion
- C) Active listening
- D) Encoding
- E) Channeling

Answer: B

Explanation: B) When you want to influence people's thoughts or actions, your message needs to be persuasive.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 12-13

AASCB: Written and oral communication

58) Which of the following statements about professionalism is NOT true?

- A) Professionalism refers to the qualities that make you appear businesslike in the workplace.
- B) Professionalism is limited to projecting a professional image.
- C) Professionalism involves living up to the standards of your profession.
- D) Professionalism is expressed by your actions and attire.
- E) Professionalism is expressed by your attention to correct grammar and proofreading in all of your messages.

Answer: B

Explanation: B) Professionalism does go beyond projecting a professional image. It also involves living up to the standards of your profession, including ethical standards.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 12-14

AASCB: Interpersonal relations and teamwork

59) Just as you're about to shut down your computer for the day, you remember that you need to send an update to your boss. You dash off a quick email and press send without spell checking or proofing it. Doing so _____.

- A) is fine since this is not a formal report
- B) is the right approach, since email does not require proofreading
- C) is a poor idea, since you need to proofread and use correct grammar in all of your messages
- D) is unprofessional, since doing so means failing to counter unstated objections
- E) is unethical and may get you fired

Answer: C

Explanation: C) Failing to proofread and pay proper attention to grammar in an email to your boss may result in mistakes and typos that will project an unprofessional image. Your attention to these details, especially when communicating to a superior or a client, is very important.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 13

AASCB: Interpersonal relations and teamwork

60) Which of the following behaviours best expresses professionalism?

- A) slouching in your chair during an interview
- B) wearing frayed pants to a company luncheon
- C) texting a thank-you message to an interviewer using acronyms and emoticons
- D) typing up an email to your boss on the fly, paying no attention to tone or grammar
- E) leaving early enough for a meeting so that, despite a traffic jam, you arrive a few minutes early

Answer: E

Explanation: E) Professionalism is expressed by your actions, attire, wording of messages, body language during meetings, tone of voice, and attention to grammar in all of your messages. By allowing enough time to ensure arriving at your meeting on time, you express professionalism and a respect for the other people's time.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 13

AASCB: Interpersonal relations and teamwork

61) Your audience will understand _____ language faster than _____ language.

- A) clear; concise
- B) complicated; wordy
- C) clear and concise; wordy and complicated
- D) wordy and complicated; clear and concise
- E) complicated and concise; wordy and clear

Answer: C

Explanation: C) In business, people value clarity and conciseness because time is a scarce resource.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 15

AASCB: Written and oral communication

62) _____ refers to the principles you use to guide decision making, leading you to do the right thing.

- A) Adaptability
- B) Ethics
- C) Feedback
- D) Context
- E) Social media

Answer: B

Explanation: B) As a professional, you are likely to face a number of ethical dilemmas that are difficult to resolve. Doing the right thing is not always obvious, and making the wrong decision may put your career, colleagues, customers, or company at risk.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 15

AASCB: Ethical understanding and reasoning

63) Which of the following statements about technology is NOT true?

- A) Technology reduces the distance between communicators.
- B) Technology allows an immediate exchange of information across distance and time zones.
- C) Technology changes very rapidly.
- D) Technology is not prey to pitfalls so it eliminates the risk of failed communication.
- E) Technology allows people to share documents instantaneously.

Answer: D

Explanation: D) Technology traps abound and effective communicators know how to avoid them. They include losing specialized fonts when moving a document to another computer, having photos turn up as boxes with red Xs, having colours change in a presentation in Power Point, and losing formatting in emails.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 18

AASCB: Information technology

64) A good communicator _____.

- A) must know all technologies
- B) knows that all technology choices can be used interchangeably
- C) understands that social media are inappropriate for business communication
- D) thinks about the implications of technology options and uses technology wisely
- E) avoids trendy new technology choices in favour of tried-and-true methods like phone calls, memos, and face-to-face meetings

Answer: D

Explanation: D) As a good communicator, you don't need to know all technologies but you do need to think about the implications of technology choices and use your options wisely.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 17-19

AASCB: Information technology

65) You are collaborating on a report with a coworker and want to share the latest version of your document. Which of the following statements is TRUE?

- A) Emailing the document will make sure that your coworker receives it.
- B) Uploading the document to the company intranet will deliver it to your coworker's mailbox.
- C) A wiki does not allow users to track the history of changes.
- D) Using a team wiki will allow both of you to constantly update the document to a shared space.
- E) The most efficient method would be to call your coworker on the phone and describe the changes you have made.

Answer: D

Explanation: D) A wiki is a collaborative web application that is accessible by multiple users, so it would be useful in this case. It allows for tracking the history of changes as well. Sharing the actual document in a collaborative workspace would be more efficient than the other options.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 18

AASCB: Information technology

66) Miles is writing an email to the project team working on a big presentation. Knowing that some of his audience are not native English speakers, which of the following would be the best way for him to complete the statement below?

So let's do our best to _____ for the presentation.

- A) have all our ducks in a row
- B) dot our i's and cross our t's
- C) be well-organized and prepared
- D) make sure we're on the same page
- E) be on the ball

Answer: C

Explanation: C) If you know that your audience contains non-native English speakers, it is a good idea to steer clear of idiomatic expressions (like those in the other choices) in favour of clear, plain language.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 20

AASCB: Interpersonal relations and teamwork

67) _____ refers to the learned and shared patterns in a society.

- A) Context
- B) Ethics
- C) Collaboration
- D) Professionalism
- E) Culture

Answer: E

Explanation: E) People demonstrate their culture through values, ideas, attitudes, and their approach to communication.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 19

AASCB: Diverse and multicultural work environments

68) In the context of doing business with people of other cultures, effective communicators _____.

- A) memorize a list of cultural difference between countries
- B) are ready to adapt to different cultural needs
- C) ignore cultural differences and treat everyone equally
- D) treat others as they would like to be treated
- E) follow exclusively the communication conventions of their own culture

Answer: B

Explanation: B) While it would be nearly impossible to memorize a list of cultural differences between countries, effective communicators approach their tasks with an open mind and are ready to adapt to different cultural needs.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 19

AASCB: Diverse and multicultural work environments

69) Cultural sensitivity _____.

- A) refers only to international communication
- B) deals exclusively with people who are non-native English speakers
- C) does not refer to cultural differences among people of different ages
- D) may include cultural differences between people of different genders
- E) is impossible given the diversity in the world today

Answer: D

Explanation: D) People who differ in age and gender may also be separated by cultural differences.

Diff: 2 Type: MC Page Ref: 19

AASCB: Diverse and multicultural work environments

70) _____ is defined as the process of working together to achieve a common goal.

- A) Professionalism
- B) Collaboration
- C) Persuasion
- D) Active listening
- E) Communication

Answer: B

Explanation: B) This is crucial in the workplace since so many projects are team-based.

Diff: 1 Type: MC Page Ref: 20

AASCB: Interpersonal relations and teamwork

71) In the workplace, communication is considered to be among the most important abilities you can possess.

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: The communication skills you have already developed will be valuable to you in the workplace, where communication is considered to be the most important of all abilities you can possess.

Diff: 1 Type: TF Page Ref: 4

AASCB: Reflective thinking

72) Although communication skills are valued by employers, they are rarely mentioned explicitly in job postings.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: A study of online job ads found that 63 percent of them mentioned communication skills.

Diff: 2 Type: TF Page Ref: 4

AASCB: Reflective thinking

73) Since communication skills like speaking and writing are so important, most people in the workplace have mastered them.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: Ironically, despite the importance of communication skills, few people in the workplace have mastered them.

Diff: 2 Type: TF Page Ref: 5

AASCB: Reflective thinking

74) Gesturing to some friends across the room to wait for you is not an example of

communication, since no written or spoken language is involved.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: Communication may be verbal or nonverbal.

Diff: 2 Type: TF Page Ref: 3

AASCB: Written and oral communication

75) The Conference Board of Canada notes a high level of concern amongst employers about finding employees with adequate communication skills.

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: These concerns were noted in surveys in both British Columbia and Ontario.

Diff: 1 Type: TF Page Ref: 5

AASCB: Reflective thinking

76) Research has shown companies that communicate effectively financially outperform companies that communicate less effectively.

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: Consulting firm Towers Watson found this in a 2011 study.

Diff: 1 Type: TF Page Ref: 5

AASCB: Reflective thinking

77) Even basic communication is complex.

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: Even the simplest forms of communication can go wrong. For example, you might order food at a restaurant and be served the wrong meal.

Diff: 1 Type: TF Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

78) Most students acquire sufficient communication skills as they go through school.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: Most students do not. Some do not take business communication courses, while others who do fail to devote enough time to their studies, thinking it is an "easy" course.

Diff: 2 Type: TF Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Reflective thinking

79) One of the goals of communication is to avoid participating in a dynamic loop.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: The goal of communication is actually to develop shared meaning by communicating in a dynamic loop, sending and receiving messages back and forth.

Diff: 2 Type: TF Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

80) Deciding that you should have a face-to-face conversation with your boss to receive clarification on an assignment is an example of the sender selecting a communication medium.

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: The sender transmits a message to the receiver through a medium—a channel used to transmit the message. This medium could be a letter, an email, a face-to-face conversation, etc.

Diff: 2 Type: TF Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

81) Deciding how best to phrase a request to a coworker for the information that you need to create a proposal is an example of decoding a message.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: When you communicate a request by putting it into words, images, or actions, you are encoding a message. When you interpret the words and actions of a message and attach meaning to them, you are decoding a message.

Diff: 2 Type: TF Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

82) After receiving an email from your boss asking if you are free to help with a project on Saturday, you reply with an email asking how long it will take and what you will be required to do. This is an example of feedback.

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: Feedback is any form of verbal or nonverbal response to a message sent from the recipient to the original sender. It may be a quick response to the request, a request for clarification, or the addition of new ideas to think about.

Diff: 1 Type: TF Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

83) Barriers to communication can occur at any point in the communication process.

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: Obstacles to communication can occur at any point in the communication process.

Diff: 1 Type: TF Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

84) A mixed message occurs when the sender transmits a message in a language that is not spoken or understood by the receiver.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: When the sender and receiver do not use a shared language, this is called a language barrier. A mixed message arises from a conflict between verbal and nonverbal communication.

Diff: 2 Type: TF Page Ref: 8

AASCB: Written and oral communication

85) The transactional model of communication is comprehensive and captures all the complexities of the communication process in a dynamic business environment.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: The transactional model is too limited to capture all the complexities of communication. It depicts communication as happening between two people, however it typically occurs among multiple people with different contexts, backgrounds, agendas, etc.

Diff: 1 Type: TF Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

86) A communication strategy is a plan for what and how to communicate to ensure that your message achieves its purpose.

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: The best communicators always have a communication strategy to make sure their messages are purposeful, audience-oriented, and, in many cases, persuasive.

Diff: 1 Type: TF Page Ref: 9

AASCB: Written and oral communication

87) Communication is all about self-expression.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: Good business communicators understand that their messages must reach and influence their audience. Being able to reach an audience means first being a good reader and listener so that you can understand audience concerns.

Diff: 1 Type: TF Page Ref: 10

AASCB: Reflective thinking

88) Research suggest that people in the workplace spend much less of their communication time listening than they do speaking, reading, or writing.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: Research suggests more time is spent listening than on the other aspects of communication. Being a good listener is arguably even more important than being a good reader.

Diff: 2 Type: TF Page Ref: 10

AASCB: Reflective thinking

89) Active listening is an innate skill.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: Active listening is a learned skill that requires you to focus on the speaker, make sense of the information presented, and, when possible, provide feedback about the information to ensure you understand it correctly.

Diff: 2 Type: TF Page Ref: 14

AASCB: Reflective thinking

90) As a good communicator, you need to know all technologies.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: You don't need to know all technologies, but you do need to think about the implications of technology choices and use your options wisely.

Diff: 2 Type: TF Page Ref: 16

AASCB: Reflective thinking

91) Given that communication skills are so important to success in the workplace and are highly desired by employers, why do you think that so many university and even graduate school graduates are lacking in these skills?

Answer: Since communication is something we all do, everyday, people might think that they already possess sufficient communication skills and not think of it as an area in which they need to improve. If someone needs to learn a skill that they don't possess at all, they are likely to see it as something difficult and worthy of learning. But since most people already know how to make a phone call, write a letter, or send an email, they don't necessarily appreciate the nuances involved in adapting their communication skills to the workplace. They also might not realize how important it is to communicate correctly the first time with a minimum of confusion and antagonism. Also, it can be hard to quantify communication skills, so students are not able to evaluate their proficiency in this area.

Diff: 3 Type: ES Page Ref: 4-6

AASCB: Reflective thinking

92) Padma, an avid home cook, has no culinary training or experience in professional kitchens. After dining at her house one evening, her friend Tom is so impressed by her cooking that he gives Padma the opportunity to work in the restaurant he manages. Describe some of the communication challenges that Padma may face as she works in a professional kitchen for the first time.

Answer: As someone without formal training or restaurant experience, Padma may not be familiar with the jargon used in this environment. Phrases like "2-top," "plating," and "refire" mean specific things in this setting that Padma may not be aware of, and she may misunderstand or need to ask for clarification of these terms. Depending on the cuisine at the restaurant, language may also be an issue. For example, if it is an Italian restaurant with Italian employees, Padma may run into a problem if she doesn't speak Italian as well. Both of these are examples of language barriers, which arise from senders and receivers not using a shared language. Psychological barriers may also present a problem. If other employees resent Padma for getting her job through a friend, without the usual training and education, their emotions may act as a barrier to effective communication. Physiological barriers could be present as well. Kitchens can be loud, hectic places with lots of noise generated by the kitchen appliances and equipment. This is especially true for someone unused to such an environment, and could lead to a headache and/or make hearing difficult, both of which could interfere with even the simplest communication.

Diff: 3 Type: ES Page Ref: 7-8

AASCB: Reflective thinking

93) Discuss why selection of the communication medium is so important.

Answer: There are many different channels through which to communicate: letter, email, phone conversation, voice mail, face-to-face meeting, social media, etc. When you choose your channel, you should pick the one that best supports the purpose of your message. Imagine that you need to make a request of a coworker. Is it an easy request to explain that could be accomplished with a brief phone chat? Or does it require a more complex explanation that would best be served by a well-organized written document? You must also consider the channel that will best allow the receiver to process the information you are communicating. While a short chat may seem the quickest way to make your request to a coworker, it might have pitfalls. The coworker may be busy at the time of an unexpected phone call and not have the ability to properly focus on your request while you are speaking. Consequently, she may not understand what you are asking and either incorrectly fulfill your request, or need to keep contacting you with questions. A written document, on the other hand, would allow your coworker to refer back to details of your request without asking for clarification. So the selection of the communication medium has a great effect on whether or not your message is clearly communicated and correctly decoded by your receiver.

Diff: 3 Type: ES Page Ref: 7

AASCB: Written and oral communication

94) Consider the various barriers to communication, and discuss how they might play out in professional situations.

Answer: Physiological barriers arise from a receiver's physical state. If you work with patients at a hospital, their physical states (confusion, dizziness, nausea, pain, etc.) might create barriers to communication. These might be dealt with by speaking more slowly and clearly, repeating oneself, etc. Language barriers can occur due to unfamiliarity with the jargon used in a particular business. In law enforcement, numerical codes are often used to describe situations and infractions, so someone unfamiliar with this jargon might mix up the codes and have to ask for clarification. In a professional setting where one company takes over another, there may be resentment on the part of employees when the new company imposes its policies and procedures. Being sensitive to the psychological state of the employees and taking care not to phrase changes so that they sound like criticisms of the old ways will facilitate communication and probably compliance as well. There are many other examples that can illustrate each of the communication barriers.

Diff: 3 Type: ES Page Ref: 7-8

AASCB: Reflective thinking

95) Why is it important to be aware of the different types of barriers to communication?

Answer: There are many barriers to communication and they can occur at any point in the communication process. The reason you should be familiar with them is not so that you can academically catalogue them as they occur or impress a colleague by pointing out what type of barrier resulted in a miscommunication. You should be aware of them so that you can anticipate and avoid them as much as possible, and deal with them appropriately when they do occur. In some situations this is more obvious than others. If, for example, you are communicating with someone who speaks another language, you will need an interpreter and should be very of and sensitive to communicating as clearly as possible. Other barriers may be less obvious, like using idiomatic expressions that can be misunderstood. Being aware of such expressions and avoiding them is a good idea. Also, paying attention to the body language you are using can help avoid sending mixed messages. If you say you're excited to be part of a new project team, but keep fidgeting during the meeting and looking at the clock, your body language is giving the opposite impression of your spoken words.

Diff: 3 Type: ES Page Ref: 7-8

AASCB: Reflective thinking

96) Kaylin just graduated from college in June. For the last three years she successfully ran a small business at her school. Her business arranged for the delivery of personalized birthday cakes and other gifts to students in her school. Since many of these students were from out of the province or even out of the country, this service provided a way for their family and friends back home to celebrate special occasions. Kaylin used social media like Facebook and Twitter to remind potential customers of upcoming birthdays and other gift-giving occasions such as holidays or campus events (care packages for mid-term exams, picnic packs to celebrate the arrival of spring after a snowy winter, etc.). Describe some of the communication issues related to Kaylin's business.

Answer: For a small business such as hers, Kaylin would not be in a position to advertise her business in traditional media outlets, so she would need to communicate to her potential customers directly to let them know about her services. She would have to communicate clearly what she was providing and what steps customers would need to take to order from her. Social media like Facebook and Twitter would be useful tools, but some of her target audience (parents, grandparents, etc.) might not be familiar or comfortable with these means of communication. In cases where the family and friends of the student were non-native English speakers, she might also face language barriers. She would have to communicate clearly and carefully to avoid ambiguous language and semantic barriers. She would have to be strategic, professional, and adaptable in her communications in order to be successful in this venture.

Diff: 3 Type: ES Page Ref: 4-21

AASCB: Reflective thinking

97) Olivia works in the main office at a public elementary school. After only a week on the job, she has been asked to deal with a difficult situation. The kindergarten teachers were finding that many of their students' parents were lingering in their classrooms past the start of the school day, consequently making the emotional transition harder for their children. The parents were also crowding the limited physical space within the classrooms and hallways. Olivia has been asked to draft a notice to be distributed to the kindergarteners' parents to try to rectify this problem. Olivia believes this is a simple enough task and she writes the notice below. Discuss her draft and how you might improve it.

Attention kindergarten parents: Do not remain in your children's classrooms for too long, as this is causing problems.

Answer: This notice is too blunt and too vague. The parents are probably lingering because they are worried about their children starting school and want to stay and support them. This message will likely suffer from a psychological barrier, as it fails to take their emotional state into account. Wording the message more gently and explaining that this request is aimed at making things better for their children would likely make parents more willing to accept the message and comply with it. A semantic barrier is also likely. The message says parents are remaining for "too long," which is vague and still leaves it to parents to judge when they should leave. To ensure that parents comply, the message should provide a specific instruction (leave immediately, may stay until 8:30 am, etc.). Another problem might be a language barrier. Some parents might not be native English speakers, so translating the message into other languages might be wise.

The message should be strategic, professional, and adaptable. It would be better to be audience-oriented, designed with parents' concerns and likely reactions in mind. Putting it into the context of understanding the parents' motivation for lingering in the classroom, but explaining that this is actually making the children's transition more difficult, may persuade them to comply. The notice should also be specific as to the behaviour the parents are expected to adopt. Issuing a solution-oriented message would make it more likely for the audience to comply. To be professional, Olivia should remember that this message is directed at parents, not students, so it shouldn't talk down to them or treat them as if they are children. It should also be appropriate to the situation. The original is vaguely accusatory, blaming the audience. It is not clear whether the parents have already been told that their behaviour is problematic, so expecting them to follow a rule that they may not know and chastising them for it will likely anger the audience. To be adaptable, the message should be available in English and any other language spoken by the school community. It should be available as a flyer handed out to parents, and also as a posting on the school website, an email to the kindergarten parents, etc.

Diff: 3 Type: ES Page Ref: 4-21

AASCB: Application of knowledge

98) You are organizing a charity event in which local high school students will participate in a two-day tennis tournament to raise funds for the renovation of the community tennis courts. This will involve communicating with students, their parents, school administrators, coaches, local businesses, and the general public. Discuss some of the communication tasks and challenges you will face in organizing this event.

Answer: To organize this event you will need to communicate with coaches to find students willing to compete and then contact the students to see if they are interested in participating. Since they are high school students you will also need to communicate with their parents and perhaps school administrators to obtain their permission. To run any event you need financial resources, so you will need to communicate with local businesses and convince them to donate their goods, services, and dollars to sponsor your event. One of the biggest challenges will be dealing with multiple audiences. While all are involved in the same event, student players, parents, coaches, school administrators, and local businesses will have varying concerns and viewpoints. When trying to secure funding from local sponsors, for example, you will want to emphasize the benefits to them, including advertising and branding opportunities. Yet emphasizing the commercial aspect of the event would not be useful with players, parents, coaches, or school administrators. You will need to use your reading and listening skills to gain insights into the particular concerns of each audience and craft your messages with these in mind. In some cases, a message may address multiple groups and you will have to juggle and balance the concerns of the various segments of your audience. In all your communication you will need to avoid barriers. In this case, most likely semantic and language barriers. You will also need to promote your event and sell tickets to the general public. Using the various forms of technology and social media available can be a big help to you in this regard.

Diff: 3 Type: ES Page Ref: 7-19

AASCB: Application of knowledge

99) You have an interview for an internship that you really want. Discuss the ways in which you can display professionalism in this situation.

Answer: Your actions, attire, body language, tone of voice, and attention to accuracy in written documents are all ways to express professionalism. Do some research to prepare for the interview. This will show the organization that your interest is serious and you are motivated to prove it. Express appreciation for the interviewer's time in meeting with you. Wear clothing that is appropriate to the situation, possibly a conservative outfit like a suit (depending on the nature of the business). During the interview, pay attention to your body language. Make eye contact and sit up straight and attentively in your chair. Try not to glance at your watch, as it will appear that you are bored or anxious to leave. After you have left the interview it is good etiquette to send a thank you message. Be sure to spell check and proofread it to show that you are serious about your interest in this internship.

Diff: 3 Type: ES Page Ref: 13

AASCB: Application of knowledge

100) Describe the "headline test" in the context of professional business communication.

Answer: When you are facing an ethical challenge you can use the "headline test" to assess your proposed course of action. Sum up your actions as the headline of a newspaper article and imagine how reading it would make you feel. If the headline makes you feel uncomfortable or guilty about your actions, this is a sign that you have probably acted against your own ethical principles.

Diff: 3 Type: ES Page Ref: 13

AASCB: Application of knowledge