

Chapter 01: Introduction to Business Communication and Character

True / False

1. Successful communication involves messages that are sent, received accurately, and understood.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

2. The components of communication are the need for communication, communicator, message, audience, and response.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

3. A communication need is one that forms within your own organization.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

4. Facial expressions such as frowns and smiles are nonverbal messages that you formulate in response to communication.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

5. Written messages might be conveyed through a brochure, blog, web page, tweet, post, or company newsletter.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

6. Individual experiences, culture, and personality affect how the communication need translates into an actual message.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

7. An example of a communication barrier in the communication system is an employee who is too busy to read an important email.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

8. Lateral communication typically involves persuading others who report to us.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

9. If you frown as someone speaks to you, you are providing the sender with your response about the message.

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- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

10. The communication process is incomplete without a response.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

11. Communication flows in an orderly, linear manner from one stage to the next.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

12. Cascading communication flows upwards and downwards from and to an important organizational leader.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

13. Using instant messaging at work may annoy some people, but it often saves time because it can provide a quick response.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

14. At work, your personal email is protected free speech, thus shielded from lawsuits.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

15. Negative comments about your company, its products, or suppliers are usually acceptable if made in electronic forums not controlled by your employer.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

16. You have achieved successful communication when your audience receives your written message, whether or not it is read.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

17. Euphemisms can be used as a type of shorthand, but can cause communication barriers if they are misunderstood by the audience.

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- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

18. The organization's formal communication network consists of upward, downward, lateral, and cross-cultural communication.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

19. When a manager asks a member of the department to complete a task, that would be considered downward communication.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

20. Upward communication fosters an environment where employees can offer suggestions and feel they are important to the organization.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

21. Lateral communication provides managers at all levels with the information they need to make decisions.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

22. Messages on social media channels are most effective if they are short, personal, and one-way.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

23. Less than half of the information communicated through the grapevine is accurate.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

24. The grapevine is active at every level of the organization, and can be used by managers to send accurate information.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

25. Managers can stop rumors by counteracting the free flow of information through the grapevine.

- a. True

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b. False

ANSWER: False

26. It is good business to share both good news and bad news with employees as quickly and completely as possible.

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

27. Differences in how the sender and the audience assign meanings to the same word can become a communication barrier.

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

28. The term *connotation* refers to the associations you have with a word.

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

29. The audience might misinterpret a word used by the sender because of the audience's personal reaction based on connotations.

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

30. When communicating internationally, you should translate important documents into the second language and then back into English to ensure correct interpretation.

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

31. Jargon is an efficient way of communicating specialized information to broad audiences.

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: False

32. Euphemisms or jargon can be perceived negatively by a broader audience, leading to communication problems.

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

33. Not all communication problems are spoken or written; some are related to how you act.

a. True
b. False

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ANSWER: True

34. If your cover letter states that you have excellent proofreading skills, a typographical error (a nonverbal signal) will overshadow the actual message content.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

35. If what we say and what we do contradict, observers are likely to believe what we say.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

36. Technology that allows multitasking is likely to result in more efficient and accurate workplace communication.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

37. Low-tech media options are best for routine, neutral, and simple messages.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

38. A communication need can come from either the sender's mind or an organizational situation.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

39. While text messaging is considered rude in many situations, it can be useful for some business tasks.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

40. When you consider what communication medium to use, you should determine whether you need the message or conversation documented.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

Multiple Choice

41. Which of the following is an example of the character dimension of vulnerability?

- a. Acting naturally during a job interview
- b. Listening to a coworker who needs support

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- c. Considering the faults in your proposal
- d. Initiating a difficult conversation with a coworker
- e. Asking coworkers for help to complete a task

ANSWER:

e

42. You will not be able to communicate effectively if:

- a. you convey your message through verbal and nonverbal means.
- b. your message contains words that the audience cannot understand.
- c. you use low-tech media options.
- d. you fail to use current technology.

ANSWER:

b

43. Which of the following drives initial decisions in a communicative interaction?

- a. Sender
- b. Connotation
- c. Message
- d. Communication need
- e. Denotation

ANSWER:

d

44. Which is an example of an internal communication need?

- a. You read a memo from your supervisor requesting sales figures for the past five years.
- b. While photocopying reports, you overhear two managers talking about upcoming layoffs.
- c. Your office is too hot because the air conditioner isn't working properly.
- d. You notice an intern pocketing money from the petty cash fund.
- e. You dream about an idea for a new commercial to promote your company's product.

ANSWER:

e

45. A message is not always transmitted accurately because of:

- a. feedback.
- b. response.
- c. barriers.
- d. feedback mechanism.
- e. communication process.

ANSWER:

c

46. Which of the following is an example of a response?

- a. The personality of the receiver
- b. The culture of the sender
- c. Socioeconomic status
- d. Nonverbal feedback given to the sender
- e. An individual's emotional state

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ANSWER:

d

47. Which of the following is considered a traditional channel of communication?

- a. Web seminar
- b. Instant message
- c. Face-to-face meeting
- d. Blog
- e. Tweet

ANSWER:

c

48. If you put on a puzzled look as a coworker tries to explain the company's new sick-leave policy, you are:

- a. using a nonverbal medium to filter the message.
- b. adding noise to the communication environment.
- c. providing an internal communication need for your audience.
- d. simultaneously sending and receiving a message.
- e. eliminating the feedback portion of the process.

ANSWER:

d

49. A microblog would be most appropriate when:

- a. social cues are required to send the message.
- b. the sender and receiver need to interact.
- c. the message is routine or simple.
- d. the message must be sent in real time.
- e. the message is emotional.

ANSWER:

c

50. Which of the following statements is true of technology-based communication?

- a. Companies will often rely on a single communication channel.
- b. Phone calls tend to be the default choice for internal communication.
- c. Texting apps are online spaces where people collaborate.
- d. Email allows you to know when someone is available for a quick response.
- e. Rich media like Zoom and similar platforms are close to being live.

ANSWER:

e

51. What term describes synchronous, overlapping communication?

- a. Geolocating
- b. Multicommunicating
- c. Instant messaging
- d. Posting to Facebook
- e. Microblogging

ANSWER:

b

52. Which of the following is a logistics consideration helpful in selecting communication media?

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- a. Is this message confidential or private?
- b. Do you need the message documented?
- c. How urgent is the message?
- d. Are you building a relationship with the audience?
- e. How is the audience likely to react?

ANSWER:

c

53. Which of the following would be considered a lean medium for communication?

- a. Oral presentation
- b. Chat over coffee
- c. Phone call
- d. Email
- e. Formal department meeting

ANSWER:

d

54. Which of the following is a true statement about social media?

- a. Its main value is that it provides "presence awareness."
- b. It allows for real-time meetings that are similar to meeting face to face.
- c. It is ideal for sending short, direct messages to customers.
- d. It is typically the leanest form of communication media.
- e. Much of the online content is user-generated.

ANSWER:

e

55. Texting may be useful when one needs to:

- a. deliver a complex message.
- b. rely on nonverbal feedback.
- c. confirm if someone is available.
- d. provide extensive background information.
- e. share files in a meeting.

ANSWER:

c

56. A computer-support specialist who sends an email to other computer-support specialists in the same company about the need for training on the latest software is engaging in what type of communication?

- a. Upward
- b. Downward
- c. Lateral
- d. Matrix
- e. Informal

ANSWER:

c

57. When considering downward communication, department heads might make the mistake of assuming that it is:

- a. being received and understood by other department heads.
- b. offering employees the opportunity to air grievances.

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- c. received and understood by people who report to them.
- d. sharing complete information with their peers.
- e. an informal network trusted by employees.

ANSWER:

c

58. Which of the following is a reason why upward communication is important?

- a. It provides feedback to let receivers know that lateral messages have been received and understood.
- b. It allows employees to influence each other.
- c. It gives employees the ability to coordinate work.
- d. It provides opportunities for employees to offer input, make suggestions, and air grievances.
- e. It allows information to flow from managers to receivers throughout the organization.

ANSWER:

d

59. What type of communication occurs when peers within a department share ideas, coordinate activities, and negotiate differences?

- a. Upward
- b. Downward
- c. Lateral
- d. Vertical
- e. Outsourced

ANSWER:

c

60. Which of the following is an example of lateral communication?

- a. Your supervisor sends you an email that lists your strengths and weaknesses.
- b. Three state senators discuss the pros and cons of passing new laws against hate crimes.
- c. The vice president of marketing prepares a report to share with the marketing representatives.
- d. You respond to an internal survey conducted by a colleague from another department.
- e. You prepare a year-end sales report for your supervisor's approval.

ANSWER:

d

61. You are using the grapevine when you:

- a. ask top management, during a company meeting, about the company's recent merger.
- b. write a memo to your boss suggesting how to publicize the company's recent merger.
- c. post a news release on your company's website announcing its recent merger.
- d. write an article for your company's newsletter, quoting the CEO's comments about the recent merger.
- e. discuss the company's recent merger while you carpool with a coworker.

ANSWER:

e

62. Which statement about the grapevine is correct?

- a. It is a way that employees move information through the organization.
- b. It can be eliminated by a truly savvy manager.
- c. Even with good formal communication, the grapevine tends to take over.
- d. Information spread through the grapevine is usually inaccurate.

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- e. It is set up in a way that keeps managers from using it to share messages.

ANSWER:

a

63. Savvy managers respond to the grapevine in their organization by:

- a. slowing down the free flow of information.
- b. identifying the filters that affect employees' perceptions.
- c. sharing all news with employees in a timely manner.
- d. counteracting the horizontal flow of information.
- e. extending the network to the top of the organization.

ANSWER:

c

64. Which of the following would be a verbal barrier to communication?

- a. Cultural differences
- b. Political views
- c. The moods of the communicators
- d. Inappropriate use of expressions
- e. Hearing loss

ANSWER:

d

65. Which of the following is a verbal barrier to communication?

- a. A person's body language does not correspond with his spoken message.
- b. Audience interpretation of a message is not the same as the sender's interpretation.
- c. Two individuals have differing perceptions of a manager's comments based on their personal experiences with her.
- d. People are not focusing on a convention speaker because the seats are too small and are placed too close together.
- e. A customer service representative has a prejudice against customers who have a southern accent.

ANSWER:

b

66. Stereotyping, when we assume everyone in a group behaves the same way, is what type of communication barrier?

- a. Language
- b. Cultural
- c. Attitudinal
- d. Emotional
- e. Environmental

ANSWER:

b

67. Which of the following is an example of distracting noise?

- a. A messy workspace
- b. Misdirected email
- c. Poor Internet connection
- d. An uncomfortable chair
- e. The air conditioner not working

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ANSWER:

a

68. People who exhibit the character dimension of humility will:

- a. take responsibility.
- b. stand up for principles despite the risks.
- c. act consistently with both their own and society's values.
- d. be willing to accept emotional exposure.
- e. recognize their limits and be willing to learn.

ANSWER:

e

69. What character dimension would you be exhibiting when you initiate a difficult conversation with a team member?

- a. Accountability
- b. Compassion
- c. Vulnerability
- d. Integrity
- e. Courage

ANSWER:

e

70. Which of the following is an example of environmental noise?

- a. You are expected to attend two different meetings that overlap each other.
- b. You miss half the presentation because the speaker is not using a microphone.
- c. You have ten minutes to read two reports before you prepare a summary for your boss.
- d. You are closing a big sale to one client as another client calls with a question.
- e. You receive urgent instant messages from several colleagues who need information right away.

ANSWER:

b

71. What type of ethics is characterized by people being susceptible to inappropriate behavior because of circumstances?

- a. Professional ethics
- b. Social ethics
- c. Individual ethics
- d. Situational ethics

ANSWER:

d

72. If you would never cheat on a test because you believe that cheating is wrong, your decision is being guided by what type of ethics?

- a. Professional
- b. Situational
- c. Individual
- d. Social

ANSWER:

c

73. Which question in the Framework for Ethical Decision Making asks you to identify stakeholders?

- a. Who will be affected by the decision and how?

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- b. Does the action comply with the company values?
- c. How will I feel after the decision is known?
- d. Is the action legal?
- e. Does the action comply with the company's policies and guidelines?

ANSWER:

a

74. Which of the following is an example of professional ethics?

- a. A belief that discrimination is wrong based upon an experience with negative stereotyping
- b. Legal requirements that employees must be U.S. citizens or have a valid work visa
- c. The expectation of gifts to potential clients in a foreign country
- d. An understanding with other company salespeople that you will not attempt to sell to each other's current clients
- e. A company policy that prohibits attending sporting events with suppliers

ANSWER:

e

75. Which of the following is an example of synchronous communication?

- a. You send a text with billing reminder to a customer.
- b. You IM the corporate delivery service to inquire about a missing delivery.
- c. You participate in an online meeting with your project team.
- d. You send an email to a colleague.
- e. You post a photo and descriptive comments on a social media platform.

ANSWER:

c

76. Which of the following would be the best action for building a relationship with a manager in another division?

- a. An emailed report on your responsibilities and accomplishments
- b. A voice message left on the manager's phone
- c. A face-to-face meeting in a neutral meeting room
- d. An invitation to download your vlog
- e. A Facebook friend request

ANSWER:

c

77. A private company network for people outside of the company is a(n):

- a. Internet.
- b. extranet.
- c. blog.
- d. intranet.
- e. tweet.

ANSWER:

b

78. Which of the following would most likely be the leanest form of communication media?

- a. A printed newsletter
- b. A blog posting
- c. Email

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- d. A phone call
- e. A text message

ANSWER:

a

79. Which of the following guidelines for online communication is *least likely* to protect both you and your employer from problems?

- a. In your message, you identify yourself as a company employee but add "my opinion only" to messages and posts.
- b. You don't cite or reference customers or suppliers without their prior approval.
- c. You avoid sharing proprietary company information about products or strategies with anyone outside of the company.
- d. You don't insult or disparage your employer or any specific employee, even if specific names are not mentioned.
- e. You avoid doing anything online that would not be acceptable in a face-to-face situation in your workplace.

ANSWER:

a

80. It was recently reported that a clothing retailer had some suppliers who used under-age workers to make its clothing. In response to the public outrage in response to the news reports, the company quickly stopped selling these products, launched an investigation, and publicly committed to sever ties to any implicated suppliers. In this case, the company's actions are being driven by:

- a. situational ethics.
- b. professional ethics.
- c. religious ethics.
- d. social ethics.
- e. individual ethics.

ANSWER:

d

81. Which one of the following is a true statement about individual ethics?

- a. They parallel or mirror the legal rules of society.
- b. They are often based on family values.
- c. They are universal and apply across all cultures.
- d. They tend to vary based upon circumstances.
- e. They are primarily defined by the organizations we work for.

ANSWER:

b

82. Which of the following is a question you might ask specifically when considering the audience in selecting communication media?

- a. Where are the receivers located?
- b. What access to technology does the audience have?
- c. How easily will the receivers understand the message?
- d. Are interactivity and feedback important?
- e. What are the organizational norms for this type of communication?

ANSWER:

d

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83. Without good formal communication, the “grapevine” will take over. This is also known as:

- a. lateral communication.
- b. upward communication.
- c. a cascading communication network.
- d. the informal communication network.

ANSWER:

d

84. If you were planning to collaborate on a presentation with several people working in different locations, which communication tool would be the best fit?

- a. Zoom
- b. Email
- c. Phone
- d. Text message

ANSWER:

a

85. When you are not sure whether it is acceptable to text in a business situation, you should:

- a. assume it is acceptable.
- b. assume it is unacceptable.
- c. try to text without being noticed by your peers.
- d. pay attention to what your respected peers do, and adjust your behavior to match theirs.

ANSWER:

d

86. Which of the following is a logistical consideration when choosing communication media?

- a. How long and complex is the message?
- b. How is the audience likely to react?
- c. What are the organizational norms for this type of communication?
- d. Are interactivity and feedback important?

ANSWER:

a

Objective Short Answer

87. List the four emotional intelligence competencies and give an example of each.

ANSWER: Self-Awareness: Understanding one's own emotions and how they affect others, recognizing one's strengths and limitations, and demonstrating self-confidence.
Self-Management: Keeping emotions in check, acting with integrity, being adaptable, striving for excellence, taking initiative, and demonstrating optimism.
Social Awareness: Demonstrating empathy by recognizing others' perspectives and taking them into consideration, understanding group dynamics, and considering customers' needs.
Relationship Management: Developing others, inspiring people, initiating or managing change, influencing, managing conflict, and working with others toward shared goals.

Subjective Short Answer

88. Describe the importance of communication in today's business world.

ANSWER: Communication is important to share information, coordinate activities, and make decisions. In order for an

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organization to succeed, people must be able to communicate effectively with each other to achieve common goals. Effective communication is needed to prepare well-written correspondence (both in print and online) and reports. Communication is important to convey ideas effectively and to prevent misunderstandings.

89. List and briefly describe the basic components of communication.

ANSWER:

- The **communication need** is an event that creates the need to communicate.
- The **communicator** creates the message, selects the medium, determines objectives, analyzes the audience, and interprets the context.
- The **message** is the information that needs to be communicated.
- The **audience** is the receiver of the message.
- The **response** has to do with the audience interpreting the message and continuing the communication process.

90. Describe at least three advantages that oral communication has over written communication. Provide an example of a situation in which oral communication would be more effective than written communication.

ANSWER: Oral communication allows more ways to get your message across to the receiver. You have the opportunity to clarify confusing or misleading statements or comments. The audience has the opportunity to provide immediate feedback. You can use nonverbal clues while communicating with your audience. Providing additional information orally is easier than providing it in writing. Using oral communication, you can pause, accent, and change your voice tone to stress or play down certain points. For example, when assigning a task to a subordinate, a supervisor can stress certain factors that the employee wants to cover in a report. The employee can immediately ask questions so that the supervisor can clarify the project or provide additional suggestions or requirements.

91. List the three types of communication that make up an organization's formal communication network and describe the types of communication that occur in each. Explain one problem that can occur in each direction.

ANSWER:

- Downward communication.** Information flows from a supervisor to an employee. Downward communication includes information about job performance, daily operations, and other organizational business. One major problem is that managers tend to simply assume that their audiences receive and thoroughly understand their messages.
- Upward communication.** Information flows from an employee to a supervisor or to someone else with higher authority. Upward communication includes statistics and information that is requested by upper management for decision making. Also included are employee suggestions and grievances. Suggestions may not be well received by upper management.
- Lateral communication.** Information flows horizontally among individuals of generally equal status. Employees may coordinate work, share plans and activities, negotiate differences, and develop interpersonal support. It may be challenging to influence people without management authority over them.

92. Briefly describe a personal example of upward, downward, and lateral communication in your life.

ANSWER: Answers will vary. An **upward** communication example might involve the student's communication with a professor, supervisor, or parents. A **downward** communication example might be directed to younger siblings or interns at a lower level. **Lateral** communication might involve team projects for a college assignment.

93. Describe and contrast the formal and informal communication networks.

ANSWER: The formal communication network of an organization utilizes downward, upward, and lateral, communications within the structure of the company. In contrast, the informal communication network, or grapevine, is the movement of information through unofficial channels.

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94. What is the informal communication network? How effective is it? How does an effective manager deal with it?

ANSWER: The informal communication network is the formal name for the grapevine. Information flows through random, nonofficial channels, such as when people are carpooling, making photocopies, taking breaks, and the like. Most of the information conveyed through the informal communication network is accurate, and information travels very quickly from one person to another, especially when major changes such as layoffs are taking place. Effective managers do not try to eliminate the grapevine. Instead, they try to act promptly to minimize the effects of negative information and to clarify misunderstandings or false rumors. Savvy managers also identify key influencers in an organization to get accurate messages infused into the grapevine.

95. Discuss what causes differences in interpretation. Provide an example of communication that involves interpretation problems.

ANSWER: Differences in interpretation occur when senders and receivers assign different meanings to the same word or phrase. People often attach different connotative meanings to words. These connotations have subjective, emotional meanings, and thus they cause different personal reactions. Cultural, attitudinal, and emotional barriers can also lead to differences in interpretation. Student examples will vary but should clearly indicate an interpretation problem.

96. Explain the difference between denotation and connotation when referring to the meaning of a word. Give an example of each.

ANSWER: Denotation is the literal dictionary definition of a term. Connotation is a subjective, emotional meaning attached to a word. The denotative meaning of heap is "a pile of some material." But connotatively, you might refer to your car as a heap--either affectionately or in a negative sense.

97. Give an original example of a nonverbal message that reinforces a verbal message and of a nonverbal message that contradicts a verbal message.

ANSWER: Students will have a variety of answers. Here are a couple of examples.

- Looking at a student in the eye and smiling while praising the student
- A business executive maintaining eye contact, smiling, and shaking hands firmly when greeting a client
- Saying "Good morning" in a somber tone without smiling
- Acting extremely nervous and not maintaining eye contact during an important job interview

98. Explain types of nonverbal barriers to communication and give some examples.

ANSWER: Nonverbal barriers to communication include everything other than what is actually said. They could be cultural, attitudinal, or emotional. For example, culture might influence how we dress, and how we judge or trust speakers based upon how they are dressed. Attitudes such as political views or ideas about power and change will cause us to interpret communication according to our way of thinking. Emotions, such as anger at a coworker, might prevent one from fully listening to that person. Other nonverbal barriers include physiological and physical barriers as well as both environmental and distracting noise.

99. In what circumstances should you choose traditional oral communication for your message?

ANSWER: This form of communication is rich rather than lean, allowing people to develop trust and judge credibility. It also allows two-way communication, so it is appropriate for situations in which the audience might need to ask questions. It is the best choice for building relationships.

100. Describe the potential benefits and drawbacks of texting at work.

ANSWER: This technology can provide quick, relevant information. It allows the users to know if someone is available for a quick response, and thus saves time. On the other hand, some people dislike what they may view as an

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interruption, and others may resent it if you text in front of them. Avoid texting in situations that demand your full attention elsewhere.

101. Blogs that allow open comments may generate negative responses from consumers. Why do many companies view them as worth the risk?

ANSWER: Blogs allow companies to connect with employees and customers, and to convey relevant, timely information. The best blogs encourage interactivity and thus develop relationships beyond one-way messaging. Even negative comments allow company representatives to respond quickly, mitigate the situation or provide the company's point of view—and perhaps repair the relationship. Good companies use customer feedback to identify areas for improvement.

102. Give examples of situations that might require selecting rich media. Give examples of situations that might require lean media.

ANSWER: Answers will vary. In general, rich media are best for difficult, complex, or emotional messages. Examples might include providing negative performance reviews, explaining a new strategic direction, or meeting with a key client who is unhappy with her service. Lean media are best for routine, neutral, or simple messages. Examples might include weekly progress reports, product updates, simple service bulletins, or brief news reports.

103. How can an employee avoid negative legal consequences of his or her communication?

ANSWER: First, be aware of, and follow, any company policies concerning communication, including policies that forbid the sharing of company information. You can protect yourself and your company by paying careful attention to what you put in writing and what you say. Ask yourself questions like whether or not you would be comfortable in the future being cross-examined in court in front of a jury about the content of this email you are about to send. If you wouldn't, then don't send the email. You might ask yourself the same question for all communications related to your company.