

In some ways, communicating in an academic environment has become easier in the last few years. Since more and more people have computers and are using the Internet, students have been finding more efficient ways of researching and writing assignments. Through e-mail and voice mail they benefit from simpler ways of keeping in touch with instructors and classmates.

At the same time, the growth of global business, of diverse cultures in the workplace, and of team assignments has made effective communication more complex. It now requires more sensitivity and awareness of the business world. Thus the central challenge of communication remains—the need to adapt to suit the context.

If you are wary about writing or about speaking in public, this book can help you build confidence and competence. It provides advice on putting words on a page or computer screen. It will take you through the steps of planning and producing good letters, memos, and reports. It will reveal strategies for attacking common business-writing problems—ways to address different kinds of readers for different purposes. You will learn how to write with a clear, concise, and vigorous style.

You will also discover when and how it is best to talk—what to do for an oral presentation and how to handle a job interview or run a meeting.

Good writing and speaking reflect good thinking. The explanations and exercises in *Impact* show how thinking through a task and making informed choices will bring you better results. The book is deliberately lean, focusing on the least you need to know to do the job well. It's a practical approach since, after all, business is a practical matter.