

### 3.5.13: Putting It Together- Communicating Different Messages

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As we have discussed in this module, business communication is an exercise in problem solving. The strategy for creating and delivering professional written messages calls for a thoughtful approach to the situation at hand, going beyond simply what you want to say.

We explored the prevalence of informative messages in the workplace. An informative message in the workplace is simply the sharing of meaningful information among people in an unbiased and professional manner. Informative messages can be short or long, formal or casual in tone, internal or external in focus, and direct or indirect in structure depending on the situation. Like all forms of communication, the purpose of informative messages is to promote understanding, encourage action, stimulate thinking, or promote ideas.

We listed the following guidelines for creating informative messages:

1. Get to the main idea as quickly as possible.
2. Use a greeting to identify the audience.
3. Be clear and concise with the presentation of information.
4. Check your message for grammatical errors.
5. Include a call to action.

For short informative messages, we discussed using IM and Twitter as delivery possibilities. For longer informative messages, we explored the use of email, blog, presentation and podcasts.

Our discussion then turned to team-focused communication. We started by stating the importance of collaborative teams in the workplace. Successful teams are the key to productivity in business today, and team-focused communication was shown to be a key ingredient in creating the proper atmosphere for building and supporting team-based workplaces. We then explored the many options for team-focused written messages and discussed the pros and cons of several of them. At the end of the day we came to the conclusion that team collaboration software platforms are probably the best answer.

Critical messages make up another large segment of communication in business. We discussed several likely scenarios: a critical message to a non-related company, a critical message to a customer, a critical message to a subordinate and a critical message to a colleague. Going back to our thoughtful strategies based on circumstances, we demonstrated how the direct versus indirect style, the constructive style and active versus passive voice style could be used for each scenario.

Finally we explored written responses to criticism. We noticed that this topic involved our behavior as much as our expertise when the criticism was incoming. We discussed ways to remain professional despite frustration and other workplace issues. And we discussed guidelines and recommendations for written responses to external and internal criticism. Even the best corporate culture will see conflict arise from within and without. The tools in this module will be invaluable in dealing with them.

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