

# Professional Communications

## Prepare Students for the Modern Workplace

Build the skills students need for effective workplace communication through engaging, “learn-by-doing” projects.

Each project builds students’ confidence and competence in a specific communication situation. Students explore

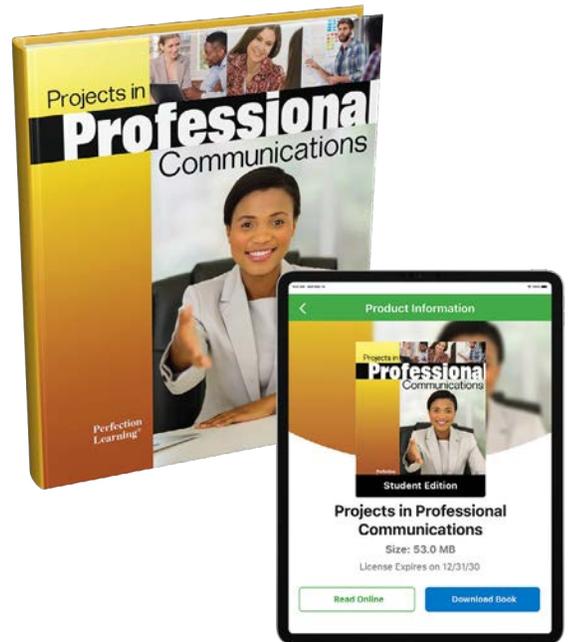
- communications basics.
- effective interpersonal communication.
- problem solving.
- productive group interactions.
- developing and delivering presentations.
- finding and evaluating sources.
- putting technology to work in oral, written, and digital presentations.

Essential questions engage students in critical thinking and deepen learning.

### Effective, lifelong communication

Teacher and students engage in whole class, small group, and peer discussions. Students explore and discuss issues that will matter in their professional lives such as

- the interview process.
- social and ethical responsibilities in communications.
- solving problems and managing conflict.
- gender and cultural communication differences.
- communication careers.



CHAPTER 1

## Professional Communications in a Digital Age

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What is it like to have a job in professional communications?

Chapter Project: Personal Inventory

What do you want to do in life? It's a big question. When you think about how you want your future to look, you can start by considering the kinds of things you are good at and enjoy doing right now. For this project, you will fill out a personal inventory to identify and take stock of your own natural preferences and talents.

Once you have completed the inventory, you and your fellow group members will take part in a five-minute discussion to share with the class significant personal experiences that illustrate and reflect the results of the inventory. You can find an evaluation rubric for your presentation on page 27.

CONCEPT	professional communications spans a large area
AUDIENCE	classmates and teacher
PURPOSE	identify those areas of the field where your talents lie
SITUATION	exploratory classroom demonstration

# Lesson planning and instructional support

The Teacher Package provides planning guidance and instructional support.

- A **Teacher’s Wraparound Edition** includes teaching and pacing suggestions, strategies for differentiating instruction, cross-curricular activities—even activities for the substitute teacher.
- A **Teacher Resource** contains blackline masters of related activities and assessment for each chapter.
- **Classroom presentation tools** include hundreds of PowerPoint slides for content reinforcement of chapter concepts.
- **ExamView®** test generator allows teachers to generate and score tests.
- A **Companion Website** features open-source videos, reproducible activities, interactive career surveys, and other useful resources.
- An **ELL Teacher Resource** offers support for academic vocabulary with text frames, graphic organizers, and suggestions for purposeful groupings and cooperative learning.

**Unit One**  
Culminating Activities

**Workplace Workout**

Review the details of Elena’s story, especially her attempts to solve the problem—initial research, her attempts to interview people, and her uncredited use of printed materials.

**What Went Wrong?** Make certain that responses include that Elena basically misled her readers. She misrepresented her own skills as a reporter and misrepresented the people at the shelter by creating a character who, based upon the director’s response, did not resemble them. She also used material that had already been printed without saying so, comparable to including someone else’s ideas in a paper without citing the source in a footnote.

**Make It Right** Answers may vary, but they should include that Elena might have used the fact that years of being ignored or mistreated can make people wary of strangers. She might have observed them first, perhaps volunteering her services without specifically posing as a reporter, observing different characters without actually interviewing them. Then, if people were still unwilling to be interviewed, she might have offered portraits of them based upon what she had observed. Then she might have supplemented what she had by interviewing the director to see if she could provide information (perhaps using created names only to protect privacy) that would supply the human dimension to the story. Remind students that this is an opportunity to use their analytical and problem-solving skills, noted as necessary skills on page 69.

**Workplace Workout**

Elena works for a community newspaper. She was working on a story about homeless people in her community. She had gathered information from local government and social service agencies about the numbers of homeless people in the area and the kinds of services that were available to them. She put the story together based on what she had learned but failed to stay on top of her schedule and soon found herself short on time.

When she showed a draft of the story to her editor, the editor asked her to add human interest to the story by highlighting an actual person who lived on the streets.

Elena talked to a few people she met at a soup kitchen to try to get some information about their lives, but they did not seem to want to cooperate and share their stories. With time running out, Elena cut corners and created a “composite” of a homeless person based on a few interesting personalities she had read about in other newspapers and magazines. The story ran, but one of the directors of one of the homeless shelters, who knew all the homeless people in her region, was suspicious, since this person did not sound familiar. When confronted with this suspicion, Elena admitted she made up the person. The newspaper printed an apology and Elena was fired.

**What Went Wrong?** With a partner, use what you have learned about legal, ethical, and responsible communication to analyze what went wrong in Elena’s case.

**Make It Right** With your partner, make a list of other ways Elena could have solved her problem. Then share your ideas about what Elena could have done differently with the rest of the class.

82 Unit One Introduction to Professional Communications

**Differentiated Instruction**

**Struggling Learners** Review the facts of Elena’s situation and clarify any needed information. Review the notion of ethics and ethical responsibilities of communicators that students learned in Chapter 1 to help them analyze the situation.

**Audio Learners** Invite interested students to role-play a conversation between the editor and Elena. Have her explain her actions and then have the editor explain why those actions were wrong. Students might then debate if Elena should have been fired, noting other possibilities, such as her writing the apology to her readers and then being assigned to another job in the paper to prove herself.

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