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# Business Standards

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## Communications

### CONTENT STANDARD

*Students in Wisconsin will communicate in a clear, courteous, concise, and correct manner on personal and professional levels.*

#### Written Communications

**Rationale:** Whether in the school setting, workplace, or in one's personal life, it is essential to be an effective writer.

#### Oral Communications

**Rationale:** Speaking and listening are essential communication skills. Whether in a personal or formal setting, communicators are required to listen, follow instructions, and deliver coherent messages.

#### Workplace Communications

**Rationale:** Communication skills are essential to be successful in the workplace.

### PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- A.12.1 Use a variety of references and resources (electronic and printed) for the purpose of written business documents
- A.12.2 Produce technical writing such as memos, forms, instructions, letters, and resumes, for appropriate audiences
- A.12.3 Write formal and informal reports supported by appropriate graphic aids
- A.12.4 Analyze and respond in writing to business situations (both individually and collaboratively)
- A.12.5 Participate in group discussions for problem resolution
- A.12.6 Organize and lead discussions; participate in meetings; answer questions in formal and informal situations
- A.12.7 Identify and overcome major barriers to listening
- A.12.8 Assess and respond to a speaker's nonverbal messages
- A.12.9 Give examples of how nonverbal messages have different meanings in various cultures
- A.12.10 Demonstrate interactive listening techniques
- A.12.11 Demonstrate strategies for overcoming communication barriers
- A.12.12 Respond appropriately to the audience and the situation
- A.12.13 Demonstrate effective negotiation skills
- A.12.14 Describe strategies for communicating with supervisors
- A.12.15 Describe strategies for communicating with co-workers
- A.12.16 Describe strategies for communicating with customers/clients
- A.12.17 Prepare persuasive messages for a variety of situations
- A.12.18 Accept or decline a request
- A.12.19 Identify elements of good customer service
- A.12.20 Participate as a productive member of a group

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# *Electronic Searching*

## **Standards**

- A.12.1 Use a variety of references and resources (electronic and printed) for the purpose of written business documents (see LA B.12.1, F.12.1, F.8.1)
- A.12.3 Write formal and informal reports supported by appropriate graphic aids (see LA B.12.1, B.12.3, E.12.1)

## **Directions**

In this activity you will find and evaluate information you locate on the World Wide Web and present your findings in a graphic format. You are to research Technical Writing courses that are offered over the Internet (or your instructor may assign a different topic).

1. Visit at least 10 sites that offer Technical Writing courses.
2. As you visit each site, evaluate the course offered. Take notes on the following:
  - Web site address
  - Course title
  - Organization offering the course
  - Special course features
  - Entrance requirements
  - Costs
3. Present your findings in a written report. Create a graphic that will allow others to compare and contrast your findings. You might create a chart, a spreadsheet, etc. Prepare a 1-page written report to supplement your findings. In your report include the following:
  - A summary of your findings
  - A recommendation for the best 2-3 courses. Include your reasons for recommending the courses
  - A reference to the chart/graph you created with your findings

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Electronic Searching***Scoring Standard*

You must achieve a rating of at least "2" or "yes" on each criterion to demonstrate competence.

*Rating Scale*

3= Exceeds requirement

2= Meets requirement

1= Does not meet requirement fully

0= Is not present, or is incomplete or incorrect

*Scoring Guide*

Criteria	Rating				Comments
1. Report includes a summary of your findings	3	2	1	0	
2. Report includes a recommendation for the best 2-3 courses	3	2	1	0	
3. Report includes reasons for your recommendations	3	2	1	0	
4. Report includes references to the chart/graph	yes	no			
5. Graphic includes Web site address	yes	no			
6. Graphic includes the course title and organization offering the course	yes	no			
7. Graphic includes special course features	yes	no			
8. Graphic includes entrance requirements for the course	yes	no			
9. Graphic includes course costs	yes	no			
10. Report is word processed and professionally presented	3	2	1	0	

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Directions to Teacher**

1. Review the directions and scoring guide. If desired, have students research a variety of courses that relate to a specific topic you might be studying: investments, lending, business trends, etc.
2. Show ways that the students might present information graphically. It might be necessary for students to be trained on how to use spreadsheet software.
3. If time allows, have students present their findings in class.

## Standard

A.12.2 Produce technical writing such as memos, forms, instructions, letters, and resumes, for appropriate audiences

## Directions

For this activity, develop the memo, instructions or letter as described in the scenarios below.

1. Read through the scenario.
2. Identify the purpose and audience for the document.
3. Organize your ideas and determine the appropriate format for the document.
4. Word process your documents. Use the appropriate format.
5. Submit your documents and the scoring guide to your teacher for evaluation.

## Scenarios

### *Scenario 1*

You work in the school office of your high school. Joan Brown from Johnson City High School called to ask for written directions to your school. The school district is about 25 miles north of your school. Write a memo to Joan and include written directions to the school building.

### *Scenario 2*

Write a memo to the payroll department notifying them that there is a mistake in your last paycheck. Explain exactly what the error is and give precise information.

### *Scenario 3*

Write a letter to Big Book Store, 1441 Nelling Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55110. Order a book of your choice and have it billed to your address.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Technical Writing

### *Scoring Standard*

You must achieve a "satisfactory" rating on each criterion to demonstrate competence.

### *Rating Scale*

Satisfactory= the student completed the criteria accurately and completely

Unsatisfactory= the student did not cover the criteria accurately and completely

### *Scoring Guide*

Criteria	Rating	Comments
1. Documents are word processed in appropriate format	satisfactory unsatisfactory	
2. Documents are organized	satisfactory unsatisfactory	
3. Documents contain the correct tone and vocabulary for intended audience	satisfactory unsatisfactory	
4. Documents are prepared within the established timeline	satisfactory unsatisfactory	
5. Documents contain sufficient detail and evidence to fulfill their purpose and support the message	satisfactory unsatisfactory	

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Directions to Teacher**

1. Review the directions and scoring guide. (Revise the scenarios or add additional situations if desired.)
2. Review the appropriate format for directions, memos and letters.  
Make available necessary reference materials for students.

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## *Communicate with Customers*

### **Standards**

- A.12.4 Analyze and respond in writing to business situations (both individually and collaboratively) (see LA B.12.1, F.12.1)
- A.12.8 Assess and respond to a speaker's nonverbal messages (see LA C.12.2)
- A.12.16 Describe strategies for communicating with customers/clients
- A.12.17 Prepare persuasive messages for a variety of situations
- A.12.18 Accept or decline a request
- A.12.19 Identify elements of good customer service

### **Directions**

For this activity you will work with another student to role-play a customer service situation.

1. Read through the scenarios below. Choose one of the scenarios to role-play with another student. You should play the part of the Customer Service Representative. The other student should play the person described in the scenario.
2. Before your role-play, review the Customer Service Policy to determine the best course of action to take.
3. Role-play the scenario. Both students should try to act realistically.
4. Complete the Customer Service Report to summarize the outcome of the situation.

Make sure both students have a chance to role-play the part of the Customer Service Representative in the scenario.

### **Scenarios**

#### *Scenario 1*

You are a Customer Service Representative for Highview Hotel. A hotel guest has come to complain that the hotel room is poorly cleaned. Dirty towels were left on the floor, the refrigerator in the room was not wiped out, and the garbage cans were not emptied.

#### *Scenario 2*

You are a Customer Service Representative for Highview Hotel. A hotel guest is complaining because he/she wanted a nonsmoking room, but none were available. Unfortunately, it wasn't because the hotel was full, but rather because you were short of maid service that day and the rooms had not been cleaned. The guest was put into a smoking room with the promise that they had recently been "aired out." After one night of stay

the guest has come to complain that the room still “stinks.” The guest has three remaining nights at the hotel.

### *Scenario 3*

You are a Customer Service Representative for Highview Hotel. A crisis is in the making. Marketing double-booked the Waterford Banquet Room for this evening. The Bigley Company is planning to host their annual sales dinner in the room for 40 people. However, the Sánchez family is also scheduled to host Grandpa Juan's 80th birthday party for 20 people in the room. Catering just notified you of the error by phone. They were unaware of the Sánchez party and have the room set up for the Bigley Company. One of the Sánchez family members came early to decorate and is quite angry that the room is unavailable. You have two smaller party rooms (where you could squeeze in 20 people), one much larger party room (that seats 100), and a corner of the restaurant available to offer the Sánchez family. A member of the Sánchez family is on the way to your office now.

## Customer Service Policy

At Highview Hotel, giving exceptional customer service means going the extra mile with enthusiasm, eagerness, and innovation.

Customers want to know that you will treat them the way they deserve to be treated. As a Customer Service Representative at Highview you are expected to:

- Go the extra mile for our customers.
- Find ways to give them more than they expect.
- Treat your customer the same way you would treat an honored guest invited into your home.
- After the business transaction, make some follow-up contacts to insure your customers are satisfied.
- When you make a mistake, make it right with the customer.
- If there is any doubt in your mind, always rule in favor of the customer.
- Always remember . . . The customer is the reason you have a job.

All Highview Hotel employees are empowered to respond immediately to customer service problems by making adjustments up to \$150 without receiving manager approval. Adjustments may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Adjusting the price of a room
- Offering a complimentary room upgrade
- Offering a complimentary breakfast, lunch or dinner in our dining room
- Offering to move a guest to another room
- Offering to waive the price of the room

Do what you have to do to take care of the customer. After every transaction, file a Customer Service Report.

## Customer Service Report

<b>Your Name</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Customer Name</b>	
<b>A Complete Description of the Customer Complaint:</b>	
<b>Action(s) Taken to Satisfy the Customer:</b>	
<b>How well did you handle the customer's request? How effective and efficient were you?</b>	
<b>What could you do differently next time to promote Customer Service at Highview?</b>	

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Customer Service Report

### Scoring Standard

You must achieve a rating of at least "1" on each criterion to demonstrate competence.

### Rating Scale

3= Exceeds expectations

2= Meets expectations fully

1= Meets expectations, some rework or redesign may be required

0= Does not meet expectations; work is incomplete, incorrect or missing

### Scoring Guide

Criteria	Rating	Comments
1. Report is word processed in the appropriate format	3 2 1 0	
2. Report includes a complete description of the customer complaint in non-judgmental terms	3 2 1 0	
3. Report includes a description of the actions taken to satisfy the customer; the actions are in accordance with the Customer Service Policy	3 2 1 0	
4. Report includes a comment on how well you handled the situation	3 2 1 0	
5. Report includes suggestions for how the situation could be handled differently	3 2 1 0	
6. Report is professionally presented	3 2 1 0	

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Directions to Teacher**

1. Divide students into pairs.
2. Review the directions and scoring guide.
3. Discuss the Customer Service Policy attachment. Distribute copies of the Customer Service Report form. You might request that students word process a copy of the form for completion, or you could create a Customer Service Report word processing template for students to complete.
4. Describe the process for the role play. Each student should take a turn role-playing the Customer Service Representative.

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## *Write a Code of Conduct*

### **Standards**

- A.12.5 Participate in group discussions for problem resolution (see LA C.12.13)
- A.12.6 Organize and lead discussions; participate in meetings; answer questions in formal and informal situations (see LA C.12.13)
- A.12.10 Demonstrate interactive listening techniques (see LA C.12.3)
- A.12.13 Demonstrate effective negotiation skills
- A.12.20 Participate as a productive member of a group

### **Prompt**

A local employer has made the decision to create a code of conduct for all employees at the company. A task force has been charged with gathering information about employer behavior codes and preparing a sample code for all employees in the company.

### **Directions**

For this activity you will work as a member of a task force (small group) to create or revise a code of conduct for a specific group or business.

1. Read through the Trail User's Code of Ethics, a sample code of conduct.
2. Choose a group or business for your code of conduct. Consider the following: companies you or your relatives work for, groups you participate in at school or as an extracurricular activity, companies in your business community, school groups, professional organizations, etc. You might also consider national groups such as the NBA, the Olympics, or the Boy Scouts. Obtain approval from your instructor for your topic choice.
3. Review the Code of Conduct scoring guide to see how you will be evaluated on this activity.
4. As a task force, collect information you need to develop the code of conduct. Split search duties to ensure each task force member collects information from different sources. Use the Internet, e-mail, interviews, professional literature and/or company manuals to conduct your research. Your sources should be up-to date, relevant, and reliable (authoritative). You might want to obtain samples from other groups or businesses. If the organization has a code of conduct, obtain a copy.
5. Brainstorm a list of items to be included in your code of conduct. Discuss the elements and reach consensus on what your code of conduct will include.

6. Prepare a draft copy of your code of conduct as a one or two-page document. Evaluate your draft for thoroughness, clarity, appropriateness and accuracy. Make sure you have included all of the elements you identified in your brainstorming session. Revise your work if necessary.
7. Publish a final copy of the code of conduct.
8. Evaluate the other members of your group using the scoring guide.

## **Trail User's Code of Ethics**

Here are a few pointers on trail etiquette to ensure safe travel for trail users:

### *Protocol*

Basically, hikers yield to horses and bikers yield to everyone. In certain situations this may not be the case, but use your head to ensure everyone's safety.

### *Communicate*

Greet other users and if necessary, warn your passers of upcoming trail conditions.

### *Courtesy*

Conflict between users can only result in trail closure. Common courtesy by everyone can avoid conflict and maintain trail enjoyment.

### *Stay on the trail*

Keep on existing trails to minimize impact in the backcountry. This is especially true in the alpine environment where vegetation is very fragile.

### *Limit trail damage*

Traveling along trails during heavy spring runoff or in wet conditions can seriously damage a trail route, especially if you are riding an ATV, bike or horse. Limiting use during these conditions can go a long way to maintaining trail quality.

### *Respect private property*

In urban areas, many trails travel through private land tracts. Respect these areas and their rules in order to keep the owner-trail relationship a positive one.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Task Force Team Member Evaluation***Scoring Standard*

You must achieve an "observed" rating on at least 7 of the 10 criteria to demonstrate competence.

*Scoring Guide*

Criteria	Rating	Comments
1. Task force member contributed relevant information, asked relevant questions or answered questions directly during the meeting(s)	observed not observed	
2. Task force member used appropriate eye contact with all members of group when leading discussion	observed not observed	
3. Task force member took turns participating in the discussion without interrupting other members	observed not observed	
4. Task force member demonstrated courteous and attentive listening strategies to all speakers during discussion	observed not observed	
5. Task force member responded to other members in an acceptable manner	observed not observed	
6. Task force member shared in the problem resolution process by gathering information	observed not observed	
7. Task force member used correct tone and vocabulary during discussions	observed not observed	
8. Task force member contributed to helping accomplish the goal(s) of the group	observed not observed	
9. Task force member used appropriate questioning skills (open-ended, closed, yes/no/maybe)	observed not observed	
10. Task force member showed support of the group decision	observed not observed	

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Code of Conduct

### Scoring Standard

Your group project must achieve a rating of "2" on all criteria to demonstrate competence.

### Rating Scale

2= Exceeds expectations

1= Meets expectations

0= Not observed

### Scoring Guide

Criteria	Rating	Comments
1. Code of Conduct is presented in an attractive, appropriate format	2 1 0	
2. Code of Conduct list rules of acceptable conduct for individuals	2 1 0	
3. Code of Conduct incorporates valid information collected from up-to-date and reliable resources	2 1 0	
4. Code of Conduct is thorough and accurate	2 1 0	
5. Code of Conduct is clear and concise	2 1 0	

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



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## *Orally Present Cultural Protocol*

### **Standards**

- A.12.7 Identify and overcome major barriers to listening (see LA C.12.2, C.12.3)
- A.12.9 Give examples of how nonverbal messages have different meanings in various cultures (see LA D.12.2)
- A.12.11 Workplace Communications—Demonstrate strategies for overcoming communication barriers
- A.12.12 Respond appropriately to the audience and the situation

### **Prompt**

Next month your company will be hosting a group of international business customers. You are in charge of introducing co-workers to the correct protocol for working with the international customers as well as suggesting ways to assist in the business negotiations that will undoubtedly take place while the visitors are at your company. You will make a presentation to your co-workers at the next company meeting.

### **Directions**

For this activity you will prepare and give a presentation on the business protocol appropriate for a particular country.

1. Read the prompt above.
2. Select a foreign country to research for protocol and negotiation techniques. You must use at least three up-to-date, relevant, reliable research sources. Research the following information:
  - Common stereotypes and biases demonstrated in our culture toward the visiting culture
  - At least ten examples of how messages may be affected by factors such as culture, gender, status, language and nonverbal cues
  - At least ten culturally-specific rules of protocol for communication
  - Rules of protocol for conducting business negotiations and how to deal with them
3. Prepare and deliver an oral presentation to your co-workers presenting the information you discovered. Use appropriate visual aids to support your information. Make sure your presentation meets all of the requirements on the scoring guide.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Orally Present Cultural Protocol

### Scoring Standard

You must achieve a rating of "2" on each criterion to demonstrate competence.

### Rating Scale

3= Exceeds expectations

2= Meets expectations

1= Does not meet expectations

0= Not observed

### Scoring Guide

Criteria	Rating	Comments
1. Presentation includes common stereotypes and biases demonstrated in our culture toward the visiting culture	3 2 1 0	
2. Presentation includes at least ten examples of how messages may be affected by factors such as culture, gender, status, language and nonverbal cues	3 2 1 0	
3. Presentation includes at least ten culturally-specific rules of protocol for communication	3 2 1 0	
4. Presentation includes the rules of protocol for dealing with business negotiations	3 2 1 0	
5. Presentation confirms the accuracy of the information by citing at least three up-to-date, relevant, reliable, reference resources	3 2 1 0	
6. Presentation is clearly prepared for the specified purpose and audience	3 2 1 0	
7. Presentation provides appropriate visual aids as necessary to support information	3 2 1 0	
8. Presenter interacts/responds appropriately with the audience	3 2 1 0	

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Directions to Teacher**

1. Review the directions and scoring guide.
2. You may want to assign specific countries for students to research as information may not be readily available on all countries.
3. You may want to have the other students (the co-workers) evaluate the presenters. If so, you will need to provide additional copies of the scoring guide.

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# *Communicating with Supervisors and Co-workers*

## **Standards**

A.12.14 Describe strategies for communicating with supervisors

A.12.15 Describe strategies for communicating with co-workers

## **Directions**

In this activity you will conduct an interview with someone in business regarding communication with supervisors and co-workers.

1. Set-up an interview with someone in a business setting. This is not a job interview, it is an interview for the purpose of gathering information. You will act as the interviewer. You can conduct your interview over the phone or in person as directed by your instructor. The purpose of the interview is to determine the communication practices used with co-workers and supervisors at the business.
2. Before your interview, do some research on good business communication strategies and principles for use in the workplace. Do your research on the Internet or use materials available in your library or classroom. Determine at least six strategies or principles. Create a list of your findings.
3. Conduct your interview.
  - Share with the person you are interviewing the list of communication strategies you created. Ask the person to comment on whether the strategies/principles are used at his/her workplace. Probe for specific examples of situations when the strategy/principle was used or not used. Record the examples.
  - Ask the person to comment on typical communication problems that exist among co-workers. Record at least two examples.
  - Ask the person to comment on typical communication problems that exist between workers and supervisors. Record at least two examples.
4. Write a report summarizing the information you found in your interview and research.
  - Begin with a description of the interview: the name of the person you interviewed, the organization where he/she works, his/her job title, and how you conducted your interview (in person or over the phone).
  - Provide at least two examples of typical communication problems that exist among co-workers in the organization. Follow the examples with your recommendations of specific strategies for addressing the problems.
  - Provide at least two examples of typical communication problems that exist between workers and supervisors. Follow the examples with your recommendations of specific strategies for addressing the problems.



- Close with a summary of at least six strategies or principles for good communication in the workplace. Use the findings from your research.
5. Make sure your report meets the requirements on the scoring guide. Submit your report and scoring guide to your teacher for evaluation.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Workplace Communication Report

### Scoring Standard

You must achieve a rating of at least "2" on each criterion to demonstrate competence.

### Rating Scale

3= Exceeds expectations

2= Meets expectations

1= Does not meet expectations fully

0= Information is incorrect, incomplete, or missing

### Scoring Guide

Criteria	Rating				Comments
1. Report includes a description of the interview	3	2	1	0	
2. Report includes at least two examples of communication problems among co-workers	3	2	1	0	
3. Report includes recommendations for addressing the co-workers' communication problems	3	2	1	0	
4. Report includes at least two examples of communication problems between workers and supervisors	3	2	1	0	
5. Report includes recommendations for addressing the communication problems	3	2	1	0	
6. Report includes at least six strategies or principles for good communication among co-workers and supervisors in the workplace	3	2	1	0	
7. Report is organized and mechanically correct	3	2	1	0	
8. Report is professionally presented	3	2	1	0	

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



### **Directions to Teacher**

1. Review the directions and scoring guide.
2. Assist students in locating people to interview. If students are currently employed they could use their current job site.
3. Provide resources for researching good communication practices in the workplace.