

Cheat Sheet Module 3

Summary

Communication Methods

Business communication has undergone significant evolution with the rise of digital technologies like email, instant messaging, and social media. Effective modern business messages should be concise, clear, and tailored to the audience and communication channel. Common best practices include using a clear subject line, structuring the message logically, and proofreading carefully. Proper etiquette is also important, such as using a professional tone, responding promptly, and avoiding overly casual language. However, communicators must carefully consider how the message will be received, as digital communication can lack the nuance of in-person interactions.

Digital communication channels like email, instant messaging, and video conferencing offer speed, convenience, and the ability to reach a wide audience. In contrast, traditional in-person and paper-based communication can be better for building relationships, conveying complex information, and ensuring privacy. The choice of communication channel should depend on the purpose, audience, and context of the message. Effective communicators need to understand the strengths and limitations of both digital and traditional modes to choose the most appropriate approach. Organizations must also develop clear policies and guidelines to ensure consistent and appropriate use of digital communication tools.

Internal Written Communication

Internal business communication is essential for the efficient operation of any organization. This includes various forms of written communication such as emails, memos, and multimedia content, which play pivotal roles in ensuring clear and effective exchange of information among employees. Internal emails serve as a quick and reliable method for sharing information, making inquiries, and confirming conversations within an organization. They should be concise, direct, and include all necessary details to facilitate clear understanding.

Memos, another critical tool in business communication, are used for internal communication concerning procedures, official business, and brief reports. They are more formal than emails and provide a permanent record of the messages conveyed.

External Written Communication

In business communication, external emails play a crucial role and can take various forms, including requests, claims, complaints, and adjustments. These emails replace traditional letters due to their speed and efficiency. For example, a request email should be clear and concise with a direct subject line, detailed body, and a closing call to action. Similarly, emails should quickly state their purpose in the subject and provide necessary details and justifications right at the beginning, followed by a courteous closing. Overall, each type of email aims to maintain professionalism and foster positive customer relations by being direct, detailed, and courteous.

Furthermore, personalizing emails, appreciating customer interaction, and organizing content effectively enhance the customer experience. When delivering bad news, companies face a choice between direct and indirect approaches, each with its merits depending on the situation and the desired tactfulness. Regardless of the type of message, prompt responses and clear communication are essential to maintaining trust and satisfaction in business relationships.

Written Communication Channels

Email chains and listservs help in managing communications within a group by maintaining a thread of ongoing discussions, which is crucial for keeping everyone on the same page. On the other hand, instant messaging and texts are informal, real-time communication methods that enhance immediacy and accessibility among team members, though they may lack the formality and permanence of emails or memos.

Multimedia platforms and social media are increasingly becoming integral to internal business communications. These platforms support a diverse range of content types like video, infographics, and live presentations, which can be particularly effective for engaging employees and fostering a collaborative work environment. The use of these tools varies depending on the organization's culture, the nature of the information shared, and the intended audience. It's vital that all communication, regardless of the medium, is crafted with attention to clarity, coherence, and audience understanding, ensuring that all internal communications are appropriately aligned with the company's objectives and professional standards.

Key Terms

backchannel chat

individuals use networked computers (often via instant messaging) to maintain a real-time online conversation separate from the primary group conversation

blog

a website with journal-style entries on topics designed to inform and invite comments

carbon copy

abbreviated CC, refers to sending an email to additional recipients beyond the primary recipient, making them aware of the correspondence without being the main focus of the message

deductive writing

a method where the writer begins with a general assertion or thesis and then presents specific evidence or examples to support that assertion, leading to a conclusion that logically follows from the presented information

email chain

also called an email thread, a series of emails sent and received that contain the same subject line and include the original message along with all the replies and forwards related to it

greeting

the opening line of an email that addresses the recipient, typically using a polite and formal or friendly salutation such as "Dear [Name]"

inductive writing

a method where the writer begins with specific observations or data points and gradually builds towards a general conclusion or thesis, drawing broader insights from the detailed evidence provided

instant messaging

messages transmitted by internet-based services, sometimes enhanced with features like file sharing, video calls, and group chat capabilities

listserv

an automated mailing list system that allows users to send an email to all of the subscribers on the list

memo

short for memorandum, a brief written document used within an organization to communicate information such as updates, policy changes, or directives to employees or colleagues

multimedia

any content that uses a combination of different content forms such as text, audio, images, animations, video, and interactive content

podcast

a digital audio or video file series that a user can download and listen to

professionalism

the combination of skills, behavior, and attitudes that are expected in a professional setting, demonstrating competence, ethical behavior, reliability, and respect towards others; varies based on context and the organization's culture

social media network

an online platform that allows users to create and share content or participate in social networking

subject line

a brief summary at the top of an email that indicates the content or purpose of the message to the recipient

text messages

also called SMS, brief messages sent via mobile phone networks between mobile devices to one or more people

traditional communication methods

paper-based messages such as formal letters, brochures, reports, proposals, and notes

wiki

a web-based platform, usually serving as a knowledge base, composed of combined knowledge from an online community of contributors