MARY ELLEN GUFFEY AND CAROLYN M. SEEFER

BUSINESS ENGLISH

12e

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BUSINESS ENGLISH

12e

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Dear Students:

Many of you will be entering or returning to the world of work soon, and you want to improve your professional communication and language skills. ***Business English*** can help you refresh your knowledge of grammar and usage so that you will be professional, competent, and confident in today's workplace where communication skills are increasingly important. Within the textbook and its digital resources, you will find many language learning tools, a few of which are listed here:

- **MindTap** provides exceptional digital resources thoughtfully organized into a learning path to help you learn and study more effectively and, ultimately, improve your communication skills. MindTap includes exercises with thorough feedback, chapter quizzes, PowerPoint reviews, flashcards, and an interactive e-book all in one place to help you stay on your path to success.

- **Reinforcement Exercises with automatic feedback and answers** have been written by the authors so that you know immediately *whether* you have the right answer and also *why* it was correct or incorrect.

- **A three-level approach** presents grammar guidelines in segments proceeding from easier, more frequently used concepts to more complex, less frequently used concepts. These small learning chunks help you understand and remember.

- **Pretests, posttests, and unit reviews** keep you informed about your needs and your progress.

- **Want More Practice? activities** deliver even more opportunities to improve your skills through practice.

- **FAQs About Business English** present everyday language queries and authoritative answers to the questions you're likely curious about right at the point when you need them.

- **Social Media Margin Notes** stress the importance of writing professionally and correctly when using social media, including Facebook and Twitter.

- **Spot the Blooper** features grammar goofs that have been made in the real world.

Mary Ellen Guffey

Carolyn Seefer

Business English reviews the grammar, punctuation, and usage guidelines necessary for you to succeed in your business or professional career. The textbook is not only a friendly teaching and learning tool but also an excellent reference for you to keep handy on the job. One student remarked, "*Business English* is a gift to any student who really wants to learn how to use the English language proficiently."

Cordially,

Mary Ellen Guffey   *Carolyn M. Seefer*

PREFACE

*B*usiness English, 12e, creates confident, professional communicators as it helps you develop the language and grammar skills you need to thrive in today's digital workplace. The perennial leader in grammar and mechanics textbooks, *Business English* uses a three-level approach to break topics into manageable units, helping you hone your grammar, punctuation, and usage skills. Packed with insights from more than 60 years of combined classroom teaching experience in business communication, *Business English*, 12e, now presents complete feedback with answers and explanations so that you know immediately whether you have answered all exercise items correctly.

Popular Three-Level Approach

Beginning with Chapter 3, language concepts appear in levels. These levels progress from fundamental, frequently used concepts in Level 1 to more complex concepts in Level 3. This approach has two distinct advantages for you. First, the overall organization of the complex subject of English is immediately recognizable. Second, the three-level approach facilitates comprehension and helps you build confidence by providing small, easily mastered learning segments.

LEVEL 1

3-1 Common and Proper Nouns

As the "namers" in our language, **nouns** perform an important function. They often serve as sentence subjects. In addition, nouns can serve as objects of verbs and objects of prepositions. Although nouns can be grouped into many categories, this chapter focuses on two classes that are important to business writers: common and proper nouns.

LEVEL 2

3-4 Showing Possession With Apostrophes

Possession occurs when one noun possesses another. Notice in the following phrases how possessive nouns show ownership, origin, authorship, or measurement:

Professor Harris's students (Ownership)   F. Scott Fitzgerald's novels (Authorship)

Florida's beaches (Origin)   two years' time (Measurement)

LEVEL 3

3-6 Challenging Noun Plurals

Selected nouns borrowed from foreign languages and other special nouns require your attention because their plural forms can be challenging and sometimes

Tools That Boost Your Learning

Real-World Editing. New to this edition, each chapter offers a business message that needs your editing. The message may be an e-mail, memo, letter, short report, blog entry, tweet, Facebook post, or other form of writing with errors in grammar, spelling, word use, punctuation, and other areas you are studying.

Ample Reinforcement Exercises. The authors know that you learn by doing. That's why each chapter includes a variety of try-out sentences and fill-in exercises that provide opportunities to apply the chapter concepts.

Unit Reviews. At the conclusion of each unit, a 50-point review enables you to consolidate your knowledge and check your responses for immediate feedback. The authors recognize that constant review and application of concepts are essential to understanding and long-term retention.

Writing Workshops. You can hone your skills with new writing assignments that summarize composition tips and techniques in six workshops. Starting with proofreading, you will then progress to writing sentences, paragraphs, e-mail messages, memos, letters, and short reports.

Frequently Asked Questions

One of the most popular features of *Business English* is its questions and answers patterned on those received at grammar hotline services across the country. These questions—and suggested answers from Dr. Guffey and Professor Seefer—illustrate everyday communication problems encountered in the contemporary work world.

FAQS

About Business English

Dr. Guffey   Professor Seefer

Businesspeople and professionals are very concerned about appropriate and professional English usage, grammar, and style. This concern is evident in the number and kinds of questions posted to discussion boards, websites, blogs, Twitter feeds, and Facebook pages devoted to proper English usage. Among the users of these Web and social media sites are business supervisors, managers, executives, professionals, secretaries, clerks, administrative assistants, and word processing specialists. Writers, teachers, librarians, students, and other community members also seek answers to language questions. The questions that are asked online are often referred to as **Frequently Asked Questions**, or **FAQs** (pronounced "facks").

Selected questions and answers from Dr. Guffey and Professor Seefer will be presented at the end of each chapter. In this way, you, as a student of the language, will understand the kinds of everyday communication problems encountered in business and professional environments.

Representative questions come from a variety of reputable grammar-related websites and social media sites. You can locate sites that present these FAQs by using the search phrase *grammar FAQs* in Google.

Q: **We're having a big argument in our office. What's correct?** *On-line* **or** *online***?** *E-mail***,** *e-mail***,** *email***, or** *Email***?**

A: In the early days of computing, people hyphenated *on-line* and capitalized *E-mail*. With increased use, however, both of these forms have been simplified to *online* and *e-mail*. The letter *e* in *e-mail* should be capitalized only if the word is first in a sentence. Similarly, other e-words are also hyphenated (*e-commerce*, *e-book*, *e-business*). However, we may see this change. *The Associated Press Stylebook*, which is used by most of the news media, recently changed its recommended spelling from *e-mail* to *email*. Others may follow. For now, you should check your company's in-house style manual for its preferred style for these words.

Q: **I see people write this word so many ways:** *Website***,** *Web site***,** *web site***,** *web-site***, or** *website***. Which of these is correct?**

A: We recommend the lowercase one-word form (*website*). Use this same format for other related compound words (*webmaster*, *webcast*, *webcam*), but capitalize *Web* when it is used on its own to refer to the World Wide Web.

Chat About It

To encourage classroom discussion and build online rapport among distance learners, the 12th Edition provides **Chat About It.** Each chapter offers five questions that encourage you to discuss chapter concepts and express your ideas orally in your face-to-face classroom or in writing in your online classroom.

Chat About It

At the end of each chapter in this textbook, you will find five discussion questions related to the chapter material. Your instructor may assign these topics to you to discuss in class, in an online chat room, or on an online discussion board. Some of the discussion topics may require outside research. You may also be asked to read and respond to postings made by your classmates.

Discussion Topic 1: Prepare an introduction to deliver to your classmates so they can get to know you. Include the following in your introduction: your name, where you live, where you work, information about your family and friends, why you are taking the class, what you hope to learn in the class, your major, your career goals, and anything else of interest.

Discussion Topic 2: Why do you think excellent communication skills are in such demand in today's workplace? How will these skills help you succeed on the job? How will understanding the fundamentals of business English help you communicate more effectively?
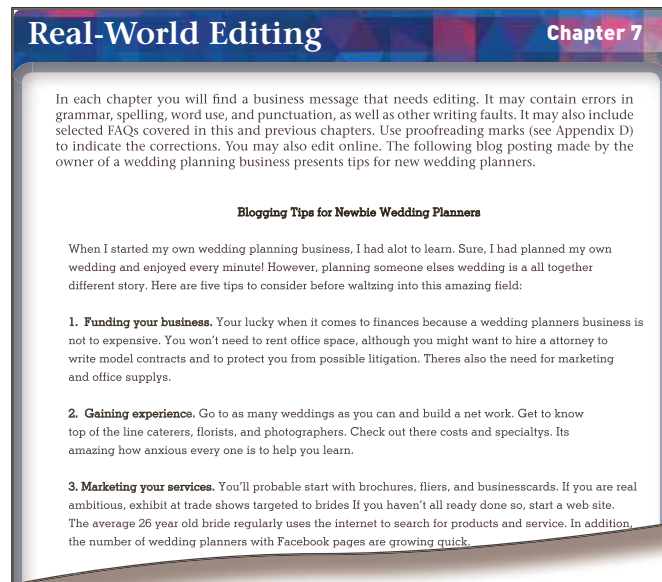
Discussion Topic 3: For this discussion assignment, you will be sharing your favorite acronyms and abbreviations with the class. Select five acronyms and five abbreviations. Label them clearly as acronyms or abbreviations and provide the following information: what they represent, the phonetic pronunciation (if necessary), and a brief description. All acronyms and abbreviations must be written in the correct format, including proper use of lowercase letters, capital letters, and periods. Consult your dictionary or reference manual if needed.

Discussion Topic 4: As mentioned in Chapter 1, a palindrome is a word, phrase, or sentence that reads the same backward and forward, such as *civic*, *mom*, *dad*, and *level*. Palindromes can be single words, phrases, complete sentences, poems, names, or long blocks of text; and palindromes exist in almost every language. Do a Web search to find an interesting palindrome, and then share it with your classmates. If you are creative, you could even try writing your own!

Discussion Topic 5: One of the goals of your education is to know where to find answers. You should also know how to interpret the information you find. Experts do not know all the answers. Attorneys refer to casebooks. Doctors consult their medical libraries. And you, as a student of language, must develop skill and confidence in using reference materials such as dictionaries, thesauruses, and office reference manuals. Many references are now available online. Find one online reference that would be helpful for business English students. It could be a website, a Facebook page, a Twitter feed, a YouTube video, a blog, or an online article. Share the following information about the reference with the class: the complete title of the reference, the website address (URL), a brief description of the reference and why you chose it, and an explanation of how you would use it on the job and/or why business English students would find it beneficial.

Real-World Editing Applies Skills

In each chapter you will find a business message that needs editing. It may contain errors in grammar, spelling, word use, and punctuation, as well as other writing faults. It may also include selected FAQs covered in this and previous chapters. Use proofreading marks (see Appendix D) to indicate the corrections. You may also edit online. The following blog posting made by the owner of a wedding planning business presents tips for new wedding planners.
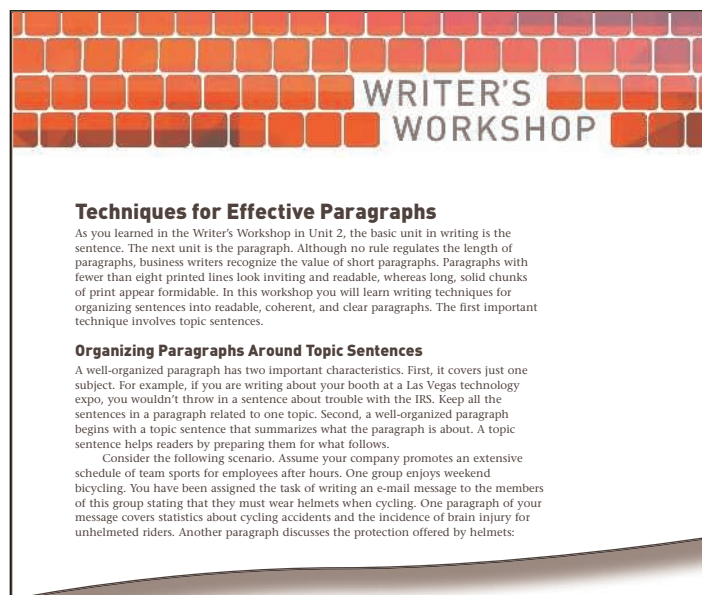
Blogging Tips for Newbie Wedding Planners

When I started my own wedding planning business, I had alot to learn. Sure, I had planned my own wedding and enjoyed every minute! However, planning someone elses wedding is a all together different story. Here are five tips to consider before waltzing into this amazing field:

1. **Funding your business.** Your lucky when it comes to finances because a wedding planners business is not to expensive. You won't need to rent office space, although you might want to hire a attorney to write model contracts and to protect you from possible litigation. Theres also the need for marketing and office supplys.

2. **Gaining experience.** Go to as many weddings as you can and build a net work. Get to know top of the line caterers, florists, and photographers. Check out there costs and specialtys. Its amazing how anxious every one is to help you learn.

3. **Marketing your services.** You'll probable start with brochures, fliers, and businesscards. If you are real ambitious, exhibit at trade shows targeted to brides If you haven't all ready done so, start a web site. The average 26 year old bride regularly uses the internet to search for products and service. In addition, the number of wedding planners with Facebook pages are growing quick.

Test your ability to edit documents in a personal or business setting through the **Real-World Editing** feature. Using sample email messages, letters, social media messages, and more, refine the skills you have acquired through each chapter and adapt them to the standards in the business world today. Each chapter's exercises will build on what you learned in that chapter as well as enforce previous chapters to help keep your skills sharp.

Writer's Workshop Expands Skills

WRITER'S WORKSHOP

Techniques for Effective Paragraphs

As you learned in the Writer's Workshop in Unit 2, the basic unit in writing is the sentence. The next unit is the paragraph. Although no rule regulates the length of paragraphs, business writers recognize the value of short paragraphs. Paragraphs with fewer than eight printed lines look inviting and readable, whereas long, solid chunks of print appear formidable. In this workshop you will learn writing techniques for organizing sentences into readable, coherent, and clear paragraphs. The first important technique involves topic sentences.

Organizing Paragraphs Around Topic Sentences

A well-organized paragraph has two important characteristics. First, it covers just one subject. For example, if you are writing about your booth at a Las Vegas technology expo, you wouldn't throw in a sentence about trouble with the IRS. Keep all the sentences in a paragraph related to one topic. Second, a well-organized paragraph begins with a topic sentence that summarizes what the paragraph is about. A topic sentence helps readers by preparing them for what follows.

Consider the following scenario. Assume your company promotes an extensive schedule of team sports for employees after hours. One group enjoys weekend bicycling. You have been assigned the task of writing an e-mail message to the members of this group stating that they must wear helmets when cycling. One paragraph of your message covers statistics about cycling accidents and the incidence of brain injury for unhelmeted riders. Another paragraph discusses the protection offered by helmets:

Six in-text **Writer's Workshops** with new writing assignments summarize composition tips and techniques so that you are quickly introduced to business-related writing skills, starting with proofreading and progressing to writing sentences, paragraphs, e-mail messages, memos, letters, and short reports.

Margin Notes Enliven Text
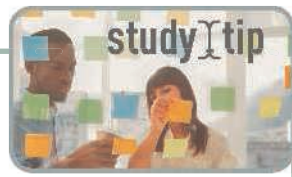
study tip

Many linking verbs also serve as helping verbs. Note that a verb phrase is *linking* only when the final verb is a linking verb, such as in the phrase *might have been*.

Are you having trouble remembering specific grammar rules and uses? **Study Tips** can help you by offering various ways to learn certain rules and simple suggestions to improve your writing and keep it at a professional level.

trivia tidbit

The English language has about three times as many words as any other language on earth. English is estimated to include approximately 600,000 words. German has about 185,000; Russian, 130,000; and French, 100,000.

Need a break from studying? Give your brain a treat with **Trivia Tidbits.** From TV programs to variances in languages, learn how grammar is used differently across the world and how it has evolved over time.

career tip

You may be worth an additional $5,000 or more to your employer (and to yourself) if you have writing skills, says one communications expert. Because many companies can no longer afford expensive on-site training, employees with already developed skills are much more valuable to employers.

Throughout the chapters appear **Career Tips** with advice about searching for jobs and performing well on the job.

Your Companion Website

At your companion website, many resources are available to engage interest and enhance learning.

Chapter Review Quizzes. You can review chapter concepts and test your mastery by completing these interactive quizzes. After answering the multiple-choice questions, you may quickly check your answers to see how well you did. Some of these questions come from the test banks.

PowerPoint Lecture Review. Slides with chapter outlines can help you organize the chapter concepts and put them into categories that make you remember parts of speech and how they operate.

Flashcards. Every chapter provides a list of terms and definitions to aid you in expanding and mastering your grammar vocabulary. You have the option of seeing the definition first or the word. You choose!

Spot the Blooper Key. So that you can understand every blooper in the text and see how to correct it, we provide a key. What's more, you now have a huge set of Bonus Bloopers that further challenge you to recognize and correct language mishaps.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No successful textbook reaches a No. 1 position without a great deal of help. We are exceedingly grateful to the reviewers and other experts who contributed their pedagogic and academic expertise in shaping ***Business English.***

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CONTENTS

Pretest

In the following sentences, you will find faulty grammar, punctuation, capitalization, or number expression. For each sentence, identify any error. Then write a corrected form in the space provided. If you must add punctuation, also show the word that appears immediately before the necessary punctuation mark. Each sentence contains one error.

Example: Manufacturers know that the size and design of a product like the
iPhone <u>is</u> critical to its success.   **are**

LEVEL 1

1. Businesspeople are sending more messages than ever before, that's why writing skills are increasingly important. _____

2. A network security workshop next month in Seattle, Washington will help our firm learn techniques for keeping our network safe. _____

3. In it's latest online announcement, our Information Technology Department said that even the best-protected information sometimes is lost, erased, or corrupted. _____

4. Louis and I certainly appreciate your taking our calls for us when him and I are away from the office. _____

5. A summary of all of our customers' comments for the past month were given to the manager and her last week. _____

6. Every field employee, as well as every manager and department head, are eligible for tuition reimbursement. _____

7. For you Mr. Johnson, we have a one-year subscription to *The Wall Street Journal*. _____

8. I plan to go to law school after i complete my undergraduate degree. _____

9. We couldn't barely believe that our colleagues and they agreed to the plan. _____

10. In the spring Kathy took courses in history, english, and management. _____

LEVEL 2

11. Please collect all of the graduates names and e-mail addresses so that we can keep them informed of job opportunities. _____

12. Either Max or she will be working overtime on the next two Friday's. _____

13. Of the forty-six orders placed by customers last week, only 9 were filled on time. _____

14. If you expect a three-week vacation, you must speak to the Manager immediately. _____

15. You should have saw the warehouse before its contents were moved to 39th Street. _____

16. Your job interview with the manager and her will last for a hour. _____

17. Before her trip to the East last summer, my mother bought an Olympus Camera. _____

18. We need only 20 49-cent postage stamps to finish the mailing. _____

19. Your account is now 90 days overdue, therefore, we are submitting it to an agency for collection. _____

20. We feel badly about your missing the deadline, but the application has been lying on your desk for 15 days. _____

LEVEL 3

21. Under the circumstances, we can give you only 90 days time in which to sell the house and its contents. _____

22. The cost of the coast-to-coast flight should be billed to whomever made the airline reservation. _____

23. Los Angeles is larger than any city on the West Coast. _____

24. The number of suggestions made by employees are increasing each month as employees become more involved. _____

25. Our school's alumni are certainly different than its currently enrolled students. _____

26. Courtney is one of those efficient, competent managers who is able to give sincere praise for work done well. _____

27. Because she looks like her sister, Kayla is often taken to be her. _____

28. If I were her, I would call the Lopezes' attorney at once. _____

29. Three employees will be honored, namely, Lucy Lee, Tony Waters, and Jamie Craig. _____

30. If you drive a little further, you'll come to the library on the right side of the street. _____

MindTap™

Tap into **engagement**

MindTap empowers you to produce your best work—consistently.

MindTap is designed to help you master the material. Interactive videos, animations, and activities create a learning path designed by your instructor to guide you through the course and focus on what's important.

MindTap delivers real-world activities and assignments

that will help you in your academic life as well as your career.

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READSPEAKER
PROGRESS APP
MYNOTES & HIGHLIGHTS
SELF QUIZZING & PRACTICE
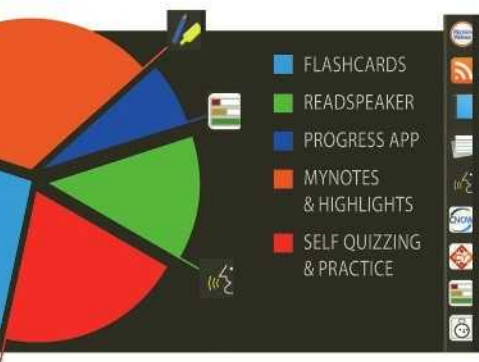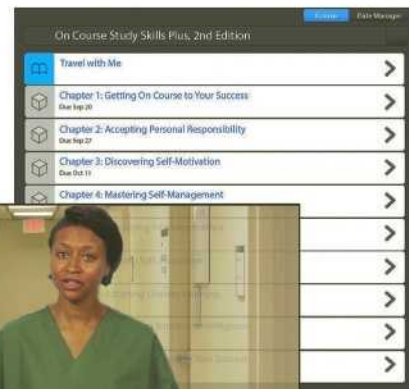
MindTap helps you stay organized and efficient

by giving you the study tools to master the material.

MindTap empowers and motivates

with information that shows where you stand at all times—both individually and compared to the highest performers in class.

"MindTap was very useful – it was easy to follow and everything was right there."
— Student, San Jose State University

"I'm definitely more engaged because of MindTap."
— Student, University of Central Florida

"MindTap puts practice questions in a format that works well for me."
— Student, Franciscan University of Steubenville

Tap into more info at: **www.cengage.com/mindtap**

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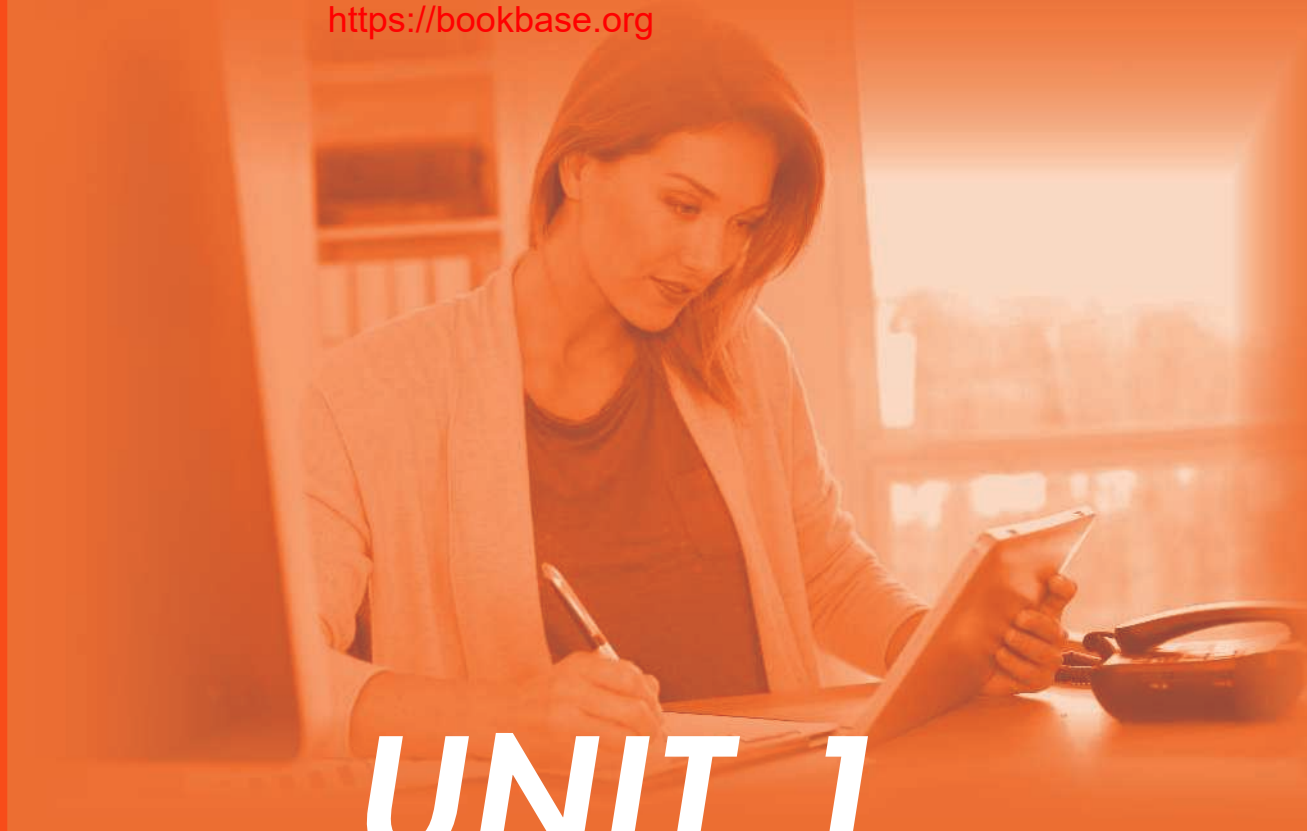
UNIT 1

LAYING A FOUNDATION

1 Parts of Speech

2 Sentenes : Elements, Varieties, Patterns, Types, Faults

Good English, well spoken and well written, will open more doors than a college degree. Bad English will slam doors you didn't even know existed.

—WILLIAM RASPBERRY

1

Parts of Speech

Goodluz/Shutterstock.com

LEARNING OUTCOMES

When you have completed the materials in this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

1. Understand the content of business English and its relevance to you and your career.

2. Define the eight parts of speech.

3. Recognize how parts of speech function in sentences.

4. Use words in a variety of grammatical roles.

Pretest

Study the following sentence and identify the selected parts of speech. For each word listed, choose the correct answer. Compare your answers with those at the bottom of the page.

The controller and I carefully checked the **data on** the **company** tax **forms.**

1. **The**	a. preposition	b. pronoun	c. conjunction	d. adjective	_____
2. **controller**	a. noun	b. pronoun	c. verb	d. adjective	_____
3. **and**	a. preposition	b. conjunction	c. adjective	d. adverb	_____
4. **I**	a. noun	b. pronoun	c. interjection	d. adjective	_____
5. **carefully**	a. adjective	b. conjunction	c. preposition	d. adverb	_____
6. **checked**	a. adverb	b. noun	c. verb	d. adverb	_____
7. **data**	a. pronoun	b. adjective	c. verb	d. noun	_____
8. **on**	a. preposition	b. conjunction	c. adjective	d. adverb	_____
9. **company**	a. noun	b. adverb	c. pronoun	d. adjective	_____
10. **forms**	a. pronoun	b. noun	c. adjective	d. verb	_____

Business English is the study of the language fundamentals needed to communicate effectively in today's workplace. These fundamentals include grammar, usage, punctuation, capitalization, number style, and spelling. Because businesspeople must express their ideas clearly and correctly, language fundamentals are critical.

1-1 Why Study Business English?

What you learn in this class will help you communicate more professionally when you write and when you speak. These skills will help you get the job you want, succeed in the job you have, or prepare for promotion to a better position. Good communication skills can also help you succeed in the classroom and in your personal life, but we will be most concerned with workplace applications.

1-1a Increasing Emphasis on Workplace Communication

In today's workplace you can expect to be doing more communicating than ever before. You will be participating in meetings, writing business documents, and using technology such as e-mail, text messaging, and social media to communicate with others. Communication skills are more important than ever before, and the emphasis on writing has increased dramatically. Businesspeople who never expected to be doing much writing on the job find that e-mail, text messaging, the Web, and social media force everyone to exchange written messages. As a result, businesspeople are increasingly aware of their communication skills. Misspelled words, poor grammar, sloppy punctuation—all of these faults stand

1.d 2.a 3.b 4.b 5.d 6.c 7.d 8.a 9.d 10.b

out glaringly when they are in print or displayed online. Not only are people writing more, but their messages travel farther. Messages are seen by larger audiences than ever before. Because of the growing emphasis on exchanging information, your language skills are especially important in today's dynamic and often digital workplace.

Workplace communication is important for many reasons:

- When you write or speak on the job, you are representing your company. No company wants to send out messages that contain errors, nor does a company want its employees making errors when speaking with customers or giving business presentations. Such errors cause customers and others outside the company to question the organization's competence, credibility, and professionalism. No one wants to invest in or purchase products or services from a company that can't get it right.

- When you speak or write on the job, you are also representing yourself. Errors in your presentations, e-mail messages, text messages, social media postings, memos, and other documents will cause others to question your education, your competence, and your professionalism.

- Those who can write and speak well and accurately are the ones who are noticed in the workplace. They are the ones who are hired, promoted, and valued.

- When you know that your writing and expression are clear, professional, and accurate, you feel good about yourself and your abilities. Yes, it feels good to get it right!

1-1b What Does This Mean for You?

As a businessperson or professional, you want to feel confident about your writing and speaking skills. This textbook and this course can sharpen your skills and greatly increase your confidence in expressing ideas. Improving your language skills is the first step toward success in your education, your career, and your life. It may not be easy, but the payoffs will be enormous!

1-2 The Eight Parts of Speech

This book focuses on the study of the fundamentals of grammar, current usage, and appropriate business and professional style. Such a study logically begins with the eight parts of speech, the building blocks of our language. This chapter provides a brief overview of the parts of speech. In future chapters you will learn about each part of speech in greater detail.

Why is it important to learn to identify the eight parts of speech? Learning the eight parts of speech helps you develop the working vocabulary necessary to discuss and study the language. You especially need to recognize the parts of speech in the context of sentences. This recognition is important because many words function in more than one role. Only by analyzing the sentence at hand can you see how a given word functions. Your boss is unlikely to ask you to identify the parts of speech in a business document. Being able to do so, however, will help you punctuate correctly and choose precise words for clear, powerful writing. Using the parts of speech correctly will also help you sound more professional and intelligent on the job. In addition, understanding the roles different parts of speech play in written and oral communication will be helpful if you learn another language.

<div style="margin-left: 0;">
career tip

"Businesses are crying out—they need to have people who write better."
—Gaston Caperton, business executive and president, College Board

career tip

For use now and on the job, invest in a good reference manual, such as Clark and Clark's *HOW: A Handbook for Office Professionals* (Cengage Learning).
</div>

1-2a Nouns

In elementary school you probably learned that a **noun** refers to a person, place, or thing. In addition, nouns name qualities, feelings, concepts, activities, and measures. Nouns can be proper or common. **Proper nouns** are capitalized, and **common nouns** are not, as you can see in the following list. You will learn more about this concept in Chapter 3.

Persons:	Jennifer, Dr. Kern, manager, professor
Places:	Milwaukee, Empire State Building, university, ocean
Things:	iPad, Facebook, refrigerator, bicycle
Qualities:	impatience, honesty, initiative, enthusiasm
Feelings:	happiness, anger, disbelief, euphoria
Concepts:	knowledge, freedom, friendship, patriotism
Activities:	tweeting, investing, dancing, eating
Measures:	month, thousand, ounce, kilometer

Nouns are important words in our language. Sentences revolve around nouns because these words function both as **subjects of verbs** and as **objects of verbs**. To determine whether a word is really a noun, try using it with the verb *is* or *are*. Notice that all the nouns listed here would make sense if used in this way: *Jennifer is motivated*, *Milwaukee is in Wisconsin*, *iPads are popular*, *tweeting is fun*, and so on. In Chapter 3 you will learn about the rules for making nouns plural. You will also learn how to show that a noun possesses something.

1-2b Pronouns

Pronouns are words used in place of nouns. As noun substitutes, pronouns provide variety and efficiency to your writing. Compare these two versions of the same sentence:

Without Pronouns:	Devon sent the text message to Lynda so that Lynda could read the text message before making Lynda's decision.
With Pronouns:	Devon sent the text message to Lynda so that *she* could read *it* before making *her* decision.

In sentences pronouns may function as **subjects of verbs** (such as *I*, *we*, *they*) or as **objects of verbs** (*me*, *us*, *them*). They may act as **connectors** (*that*, *which*, *who*), and they may show **possession** (*mine*, *ours*, *hers*, *theirs*). Only a few examples are given here. More examples, along with the functions and classifications of pronouns, will be presented in Chapter 4, where you will also learn to use pronouns properly.

Please note that words such as *his, my, her*, and *its* are classified as adjectives when they describe nouns (*his car, my desk, its engine*). This concept will be explained more thoroughly in Chapters 4 and 7.

1-2c Verbs

A **verb** expresses an action, an occurrence, or a state of being.

Aaron *created* a compelling business Facebook page. (Action)

It *contains* valuable information. (Occurrence)

He *is* proud of it. (State of being)

An **action verb** shows the physical or mental action of the subject of a sentence. Some action verbs are *run*, *study*, *work,* and *dream*. **Linking verbs**

study tip
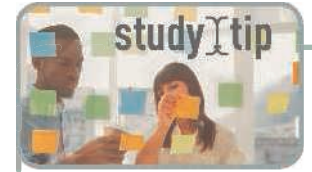
Many words in the English language can function as different parts of speech. For example, in the sentence *She made an important new contact at the networking event*, the word *contact* functions as a noun. But in the sentence *He will contact his supervisor immediately*, the word *contact* functions as a verb.

social media

How a company communicates and interacts online is a direct reflection of the company itself. Therefore, companies must strive to use proper grammar, punctuation, and mechanics in all of their social media communication.

study tip

To test whether a word is truly a verb, try using it with a noun or pronoun, such as *Mark studies, he seems*, or *it is. He food* doesn't make sense because *food* is not a verb.

express a state of being and generally link to the subject words that describe or rename them. Some linking verbs are *am*, *is*, *are*, *was*, *were*, *be*, *being*, and *been*. Other linking verbs express the senses: *feels*, *appears*, *tastes*, *sounds*, *seems*, *looks*.
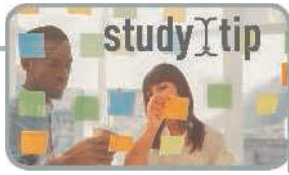
Verbs will be discussed more fully in Chapters 5 and 6. At this point it is important that you be able to recognize verbs so that you can determine whether sentences are complete. All complete sentences must have at least one verb; many sentences will have more than one verb. Verbs may appear singly or in phrases. When verbs are used in verb phrases, **helping verbs** are added.

> Deborah *submitted* her application to become a legal secretary. (Action verb)
>
> Her résumé *is* just one page long. (Linking verb)
>
> She *has been training* to become a legal secretary. (Verb phrase; helping verbs *has* and *been* are added.)
>
> Deborah *feels* bad that she *will be leaving* her current colleagues. (Linking verb and verb phrase; helping verbs *will* and *be* are added.)

1-2d Adjectives

Words that describe nouns and pronouns are **adjectives**. They often answer the questions *What kind?*, *How many?*, and *Which one?* The adjectives in the following sentences are italicized. Observe that the adjectives all answer questions about the nouns they describe.

> *Small*, *independent* credit unions are becoming *popular*. (What kinds of credit unions?)
>
> We have *six* franchises in *four* states. (How many franchises? How many states?)
>
> *That* chain of cupcake shops started as a *small* operation. (Which chain? What kind of operation?)
>
> He is *personable* and *outgoing*, while she is *energetic* and *confident*. (What pronouns do these adjectives describe?)

Adjectives usually precede the nouns they describe. They may, however, follow the words they describe, especially when used with linking verbs, as shown in the first and last of the preceding examples. Here is a brief list of words used as adjectives:

efficient	humorous	mature
forceful	intelligent	responsive
purple	pessimistic	successful

Three words (*a*, *an*, and *the*) form a special group of adjectives called **articles**. Adjectives will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 7.

1-2e Adverbs

Words that modify (describe or limit) verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs are **adverbs**. Adverbs often answer the questions *When?*, *How?*, *Where?*, and *To what extent?*

> *Tomorrow* we must discuss our stock offering. (Must discuss the stock offering *when*?)
>
> Rudy began his presentation *enthusiastically*. (Began *how*?)
>
> She seems *especially* competent. (*How* competent?)
>
> Did you see the schedule *there*? (*Where*?)
>
> The prosecutor did not question him *further*. (Questioned him *to what extent*?)

Following are examples of commonly used adverbs:

absolutely	now	today
carefully	only	too
greatly	really	very

Many, but not all, words ending in *ly* are adverbs. Exceptions are *friendly*, *costly*, and *ugly*, all of which are adjectives. Adverbs will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7.

1-2f Prepositions

Prepositions join nouns and pronouns to other words in a sentence. As the word itself suggests (*pre* meaning "before"), a preposition is a word in a position *before* its object. The **object of a preposition** is a noun or pronoun. Prepositions are used in phrases to show a relationship between the object of the preposition and another word in the sentence. In the following sentence, notice how the preposition changes the relation of the object (*Ms. Lopez*) to the verb (*talked*):

Austin often talks *with* Ms. Lopez

Austin often talked *about* Ms. Lopez.

Austin often talks *to* Ms. Lopez.

Some of the most frequently used prepositions are *at, by, for, from, in, of, to*, and *with*. A more complete list of prepositions can be found in Chapter 8. You should learn to recognize objects of prepositions so that you won't confuse them with sentence subjects. You will learn more about the difference between verb subjects and objects in Chapter 6.

1-2g Conjunctions

Words that connect other words or groups of words are **conjunctions**. The most common conjunctions are *and*, *but*, *or*, and *nor*. These are called **coordinating conjunctions** because they join equal (coordinate) parts of sentences. Other kinds of conjunctions will be presented in Chapter 9. Study the examples of coordinating conjunctions shown here:

Danielle, Mark, *and* Huong are all looking for jobs. (The conjunction *and* joins equal words.)

You may be interviewed by an HR officer *or* by a supervisor. (The conjunction *or* joins equal groups of words.)

1-2h Interjections

Words that express strong feelings but are usually unconnected grammatically to the sentence are **interjections**. Interjections standing alone are followed by exclamation marks. When woven into a sentence, they are usually followed by commas.

Wow! Did you see her most recent Facebook status update? (Interjection standing alone)

Oh, I should have known this would happen. (Interjection woven into a sentence)
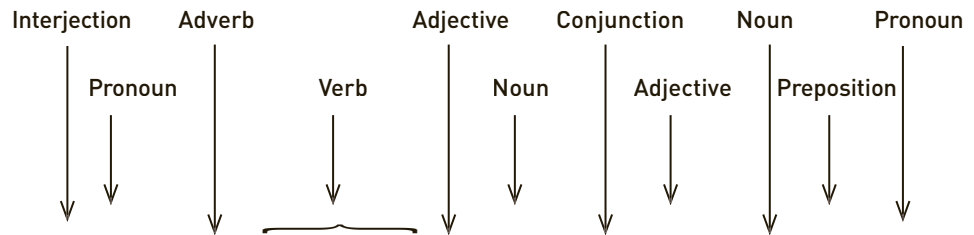
career tip

To sound professional, credible, and objective, most business writers avoid interjections and exclamation marks in business and professional messages.

1-3 Summary

The following sentence illustrates all eight parts of speech.

Interjection	Adverb		Adjective	Conjunction	Noun	Pronoun
Pronoun		Verb	Noun	Adjective	Preposition	

Oh, I certainly will submit a résumé and cover letter to them.

You need to know the functions of these eight parts of speech in order to understand the rest of this textbook and to benefit from your study of language basics. The explanation of the parts of speech has been kept simple so far. This chapter is meant to serve as an introduction to later, more fully developed chapters about the various parts of speech. At this stage you should not expect to be able to identify the functions of *all* words in *all* sentences.

A word of caution: English is a wonderfully flexible language. As noted earlier, many words in our language serve as more than one part of speech. Notice how flexible the word *mail* is in these sentences:

Our *mail* is late today. (Noun—serves as subject of sentence.)

This pile of *mail* must be delivered today. (Noun—serves as object of preposition.)

Please read your *mail* soon. (Noun—serves as object of verb.)

Mail the letter today. (Verb—serves as action word in sentence.)

The *mail* system in the United States is efficient. (Adjective—used to describe *system*, which serves as subject of sentence.)

FAQS

About Business English

Dr. Guffey   Professor Seefer

Businesspeople and professionals are very concerned about appropriate and professional English usage, grammar, and style. This concern is evident in the number and kinds of questions posted to discussion boards, websites, blogs, Twitter feeds, and Facebook pages devoted to proper English usage. Among the users of these Web and social media sites are business supervisors, managers, executives, professionals, secretaries, clerks, administrative assistants, and word processing specialists. Writers, teachers, librarians, students, and other community members also seek answers to language questions. The questions that are asked online are often referred to as **Frequently Asked Questions**, or **FAQs** (pronounced "facks").

Selected questions and answers from Dr. Guffey and Professor Seefer will be presented at the end of each chapter. In this way, you, as a student of the language, will understand the kinds of everyday communication problems encountered in business and professional environments.

Representative questions come from a variety of reputable grammar-related websites and social media sites. You can locate sites that present these FAQs by using the search phrase *grammar FAQs* in Google.

Q: We're having a big argument in our office. What's correct? *On-line* or *online*? *E-mail*, *e-mail*, *email*, or *Email*?

A: In the early days of computing, people hyphenated *on-line* and capitalized *E-mail*. With increased use, however, both of these forms have been simplified to *online* and *e-mail*. The letter *e* in *e-mail* should be capitalized only if the word is first in a sentence. Similarly, other e-words are also hyphenated (*e-commerce*, *e-book*, *e-business*). However, we may see this change. *The Associated Press Stylebook*, which is used by most of the news media, recently changed its recommended spelling from *e-mail* to *email*. Others may follow. For now, you should check your company's in-house style manual for its preferred style for these words.

Q: I see people write this word so many ways: *Website*, *Web site*, *web site*, *web-site*, or *website*. Which of these is correct?

A: We recommend the lowercase one-word form (*website*). Use this same format for other related compound words (*webmaster*, *webcast*, *webcam*), but capitalize *Web* when it is used on its own to refer to the World Wide Web.

Q: Should I capitalize the word *Internet*? I see it written both ways and am confused.

A: We recommend writing the word with a capital *I* (*Internet*). However, we are in a time of change with regard to the proper spelling and writing of Web-related words. For example, *Wired News* was the first to spell *Internet* using lowercase letters, and others have followed. For now, though, you should continue to capitalize *Internet* because that is the format many style manuals and dictionaries recommend.