


The 7 C's of Communication in Business Correspondence

1. Clear

- When writing or speaking to someone, be clear about your goal or message. What is your purpose in communicating with this person? If you're not sure, then your audience won't be sure either.
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Hi John,

Good or Bad Example?

Why?

I wanted to write you a quick note about Daniel, who's working in your department. He's a great asset, and I'd like to talk to you more about him when you have time.

Best,
Skip

Hi John,

Good or Bad Example?

Why?


I wanted to write you a quick note about Daniel Kedar, who's working in your department. In recent weeks, he's helped the IT department through several pressing deadlines on his own time.

We've got a tough upgrade project due to run over the next three months, and his knowledge and skills would prove invaluable. Could we please have his help with this work?

I'd appreciate speaking with you about this. When is it best to call you to discuss this further?

Best wishes,
Skip

2. Concise

- When you're concise in your communication, you stick to the point and keep it brief.
 - Are there any adjectives or "filler words" that you can delete? You can often eliminate words like "for instance," "you see," "definitely," "kind of," "literally," "basically," or "I mean."
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Hi Matt,

Good or Bad Example?

Why?

I wanted to touch base with you about the email marketing campaign we kind of sketched out last Thursday. I really think that our target market is definitely going to want to see the company's philanthropic efforts. I think that could make a big impact, and it would stay in their minds longer than a sales pitch.

For instance, if we talk about the company's efforts to become sustainable, as well as the charity work we're doing in local schools, then the people that we want to attract are going to remember our message longer. The impact will just be greater.

What do you think?

Jessica

Hi Matt,

Good or Bad Example?

Why?

I wanted to quickly discuss the email marketing campaign that we analyzed last Thursday. Our target market will want to know about the company's philanthropic efforts, especially our goals to become sustainable and help local schools.

This would make a far greater impact, and it would stay in their minds longer than a traditional sales pitch.

What do you think?

Jessica

3. Concrete

- When your message is concrete, then your audience has a clear picture of what you're telling them. There are details (but not too many!) and vivid facts, and there's laser-like focus. Your message is solid.

Good or Bad Example?

Why?

The Lunchbox Wizard will save you time every day.

Good or Bad Example?

Why?

How much time do you spend every day packing your kids' lunches? No more! Just take a complete Lunchbox Wizard from your refrigerator each day to give your kids a healthy lunch and have more time to play or read with them!

4. Correct

- When your communication is correct, it fits your audience. And correct communication is also error-free communication.

Hi Daniel,

Good or Bad Example?

Why?

Thanks so much for meeting me at lunch today! I enjoyed our conversation, and I'm looking forward to moving ahead on our project. I'm sure that the two-week deadline won't be an issue.

Thanks again, and I'll speak to you soon!

Best,

Jack Miller



5. Coherent

- When your communication is coherent, it's logical. All points are connected and relevant to the main topic, and the tone and flow of the text is consistent.

Traci,

Good or Bad Example?

Why?

I wanted to write you a quick note about the report you finished last week. I gave it to Michelle to proof, and she wanted to make sure you knew about the department meeting we're having this Friday. We'll be creating an outline for the new employee handbook.

Thanks,
Michelle

Hi Traci,


Good or Bad Example?

Why?

I wanted to write you a quick note about the report you finished last week. I gave it to Michelle to proof, and she let me know that there are a few changes that you'll need to make. She'll email you her detailed comments later this afternoon.

Thanks,
Michelle

6. Complete

- In a complete message, the audience has everything they need to be informed and, if applicable, take action. Does your message include a "call to action," so that your audience clearly knows what you want them to do?
 - Have you included all relevant information – contact names, dates, times, locations, and so on?
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Hi everyone,

Good or Bad Example?

Why?

I just wanted to send you all a reminder about the meeting we're having tomorrow!

See you then,
Chris

Hi everyone,

Good or Bad Example?

Why?

I just wanted to remind you about tomorrow's meeting on the new telecommuting policies. The meeting will be at 10:00 a.m. in the second-level conference room. Please let me know if you can't attend.

See you then,
Chris

7. Courteous

- Courteous communication is friendly, open, and honest. There are no hidden insults or passive-aggressive tones. You keep your reader's viewpoint in mind, and you're empathetic to their needs.

Jeff,

Good or Bad Example?

Why?

- I wanted to let you know that I don't appreciate how your team always monopolizes the discussion at our weekly meetings. I have a lot of projects, and I really need time to get my team's progress discussed as well. So far, thanks to your department, I haven't been able to do that. Can you make sure they make time for me and my team next week?

Thanks,
Phil

Hi Jeff,

Good or Bad Example?

Why?

I wanted to write you a quick note to ask a favor. During our weekly meetings, your team does an excellent job of highlighting their progress. But this uses some of the time available for my team to highlight theirs. I'd really appreciate it if you could give my team a little extra time each week to fully cover their progress reports.

Thanks so much, and please let me know if there's anything I can do for you!

Best,
Phil