tion pedagogy. Still, Raskin and Weiser have done us a service by surveying a good deal of material in both fields, suggesting ways that linguistics can be useful to composition and asking how linguistics can be applied to composition teaching. And if more linguists and rhetoricians follow their example of interdisciplinary partnership, perhaps even more useful applications will be developed.


Reviewed by Michael B. Goodman, Fairleigh Dickinson University

A welcome departure from the textbooks of a decade or more ago which treated business communication as a set of forms and formulas, Guide to Managerial Communication and Managing Business Communications: An Applied Process Approach are examples of the new trend in business communication texts: they rely on the process approach to managerial communication. Both books also employ traditional rhetorical approaches to conventional business products such as letters, reports, and presentations. In other words, both books attempt to place equal emphasis on the process and products of managerial communication. Nevertheless, both books have shortcomings.

I have used the first edition of Munter's Guide to Managerial Communication successfully in graduate communication courses. The second edition, however, is a bit disappointing. I expected to find a substantial revision of the excellent first edition, a revision reflecting changes that have recently swept the workplace. However, the changes in the book are mostly cosmetic, except for the revised section on speaking. To be fair, these cosmetic changes have helped the book better emphasize document design, a subject new to the composition classroom but part of business writing for more than twenty years. And the discussions of using white space, typography, headings, and subheadings have been improved.

Since Munter's Guide has no textual apparatus and its treatment of managerial communications is more an outline than a comprehensive treatment, it is not, strictly speaking, a textbook. The text assumes an audience with a fairly good grasp of the business environment and the goals of management. It is most appropriate for working managers enrolled in advanced courses in management or organizational communication, managers who need a concise reference guide to the most efficient and effective ways to inform, lead, motivate, or persuade. The book does that well. However, discussions of the impact of change on the communication process of contemporary managers is missing from the second edition.

Overall, the Guide remains a useful, easy-to-read reference source for working professionals. It could also serve as supplementary reading for corporate seminars in communication. The streamlined discussion, lack of exercises, and limited reading list will suit working professionals whose time, resources, and energy are limited.

Managing Business Communications: An Applied Process Approach assumes the same audience as Munter's Guide, and it adopts a similar approach. The authors quote Harold Geneen, former chief executive of ITT: "Managers cannot run companies according to set formulas, charts, and theories, simply because businesses are complex and fluid entities which defy pigeonholing" (ix). In contrast to Munter's "guide," this is a true textbook, complete with examples, illustrations, chapter summaries, and exercises.

But the title misleads. For example, a book on "managing business communications"
should concern itself with major issues in communication management: determining communication policy, constructing emergency communication plans, organizing internal responses through written and oral messages, developing budgets and schedules for printed projects and presentations, managing vendors, meeting the media, developing proposals. Yet, Managing Business Communications does not address these concerns. Take "managing" from the title and you have a better description of the book.

The "process" in the title is also misleading. Since business people often have difficulty finding time to write and even to get started, I expected a book devoted to the applied process of managerial communication to devote considerable space to invention and brainstorming. Neither term appears in the index. The book does devote a few paragraphs and a figure to these subjects in an appendix, but in a book claiming to apply the process of writing to the work world, invention should occupy more than a few pages appended to a 434-page book.

Additionally, the discussion on problem-solving is a traditional and cursory treatment of information gathering: creating surveys and finding published and unpublished information. For example, while Arthur Van Gundy (Techniques of Structured Problem-Solving) offers over seventy common problem-solving methods, only three are mentioned in Bogert and Worley's text and only in the context of group dynamics. However, the book does integrate the principles of organizational communication in an excellent reflection of the interdisciplinary nature of managerial communication.

Given its use of composition terminology, the text seems written more for teachers of business writing than for students. But the kind of material it presents makes it even more appropriate for a less advanced course in business communication, except for the excellent situational case exercises at the end of each chapter. These exercises are actually quite a challenge even for advanced writers. In fact, taken separately from the text, the exercises are on target for an advanced course in managerial communications.

While Munter's Guide and Bogert and Worley's Managing Business Communications both emphasize a process approach to communication, their shortcomings indicate that many improvements are needed in future process-oriented texts for business writing.


Reviewed by Ron Strahl, California State University at Long Beach

Essay anthologies designed specifically for use in composition classes come and go. It seems that as soon as one anthology is laid to rest, another takes its place, a clone of several hundred past anthologies. Predictably, its publisher and editors herald it as better, more contemporary in its selections, and more professional in its apparatus. Furthermore, these new anthologies seem to grow larger each year, perhaps trying to overcome distant criticism through sheer bulk. They grow bold in unsupported and unrealized claims that promise to lift students to new levels of excellence and literacy. Most of these texts cannot be distinguished from one another; even their titles remain fuzzy, for they all share the buzz words that have come to make most readers the notorious pretenders they are—"guides," "reading critically," "models," "thinking," "strategies for reading," "reading in order to write," "readings for college students," and the like. Nothing, it seems, can stop the interminable production of the composition reader.

But the prose anthology is here to stay, remaining unaffected except in superficial ways by reading and writing research. Kathleen Welch lamented recently in CCC (Oct. 1987) that publishers have not kept up with the emergence of knowledge in our field: