

# Checklist: Teaching Controversial Issues in Business Communication

## Create a safe and inclusive learning environment

- ☐ Establish clear ground rules for respectful communication at the beginning of the course.
- ☐ Encourage students to use inclusive language and respect different perspectives.
- ☐ Model vulnerability and openness in class discussions to build trust.
- ☐ Design icebreaker activities that promote empathy and personal connection.

## Encourage critical thinking and evidence-based arguments

- ☐ Assign readings that present multiple sides of an issue.
- ☐ Require students to support their viewpoints with credible sources.
- ☐ Use debate or pro/con discussion formats to explore issues thoroughly.
- ☐ Teach students how to distinguish between opinion, fact, and bias.

## Use real-world examples and case studies

- ☐ Incorporate recent news stories related to communication controversies.
- ☐ Create assignments based on real company scenarios involving ethical dilemmas.
- ☐ Discuss how specific companies handled controversial internal or public communication.
- ☐ Invite guest speakers to share firsthand experiences navigating these issues.

## Address the role of cultural differences

- ☐ Introduce frameworks like Hofstede's cultural dimensions or high/low context cultures.
- ☐ Use international business scenarios to explore misunderstandings caused by cultural differences.
- ☐ Discuss examples of culturally insensitive messaging and how they could be improved.
- ☐ Have students reflect on how their own cultural background affects communication preferences.

### **Emphasize the importance of context**

- ☐ Teach students to consider audience, medium, timing, and purpose before crafting a message.
- ☐ Compare how different industries or job levels may approach the same issue differently.
- ☐ Use simulations or role-plays to explore how changing context shifts communication tone.
- ☐ Encourage adaptive thinking by having students rewrite messages for different scenarios.

### **Explore the ethical dimensions of communication**

- ☐ Introduce ethical frameworks like utilitarianism, virtue ethics, and stakeholder theory.
- ☐ Analyze famous cases of unethical business communication (e.g., misleading ads, cover-ups).
- ☐ Use dilemma-based discussions to debate possible ethical responses.
- ☐ Have students draft a personal code of ethics for workplace communication.

### **Foster open and respectful dialogue**

- ☐ Hold structured discussion rounds where each student contributes without interruption.
- ☐ Teach active listening skills such as summarizing and paraphrasing classmates' points.
- ☐ Use anonymous response tools to allow shy students to participate.
- ☐ Debrief emotionally charged discussions to reinforce mutual respect and reflection.

### **Emphasize the importance of continuous learning**

- ☐ Assign a communication trends tracker or journal where students follow emerging issues.
- ☐ Encourage students to subscribe to newsletters or LinkedIn groups on communication ethics.
- ☐ Host end-of-term reflections where students identify how their views evolved.
- ☐ Promote workshops and webinars related to intercultural and ethical communication.

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## What Students Really Need



- Clear explanations without jargon
- Real-world applications of AI in business
- Step-by-step learning, not information overload

Students don't need everything—just the right things.

## Why Most AI Content Fails



- Too technical for non-CS majors
- Lacks structure or relevance
- Overwhelms with complexity

More content ≠ more understanding.

## What Sets This Book Apart



- First to integrate AI into every chapter
- Built with business students in mind
- Uses plain language and examples

The only book that gets AI right for business communication.

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- Curated lessons and activities
- Instructor-friendly structure
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