

AI-Ready Audits for Real-World Business Communication

Business Communication Today, 16th Edition

Templates for analyzing business documents using *Business Communication Today's* frameworks and checklists.

Introduction

Learning Objectives

- Apply the 3-step writing process to real communications
- Identify effective and ineffective strategies
- Critique clarity, tone, and audience adaptation
- Evaluate AI use, inclusivity, and accessibility
- Develop recommendations for improvement

Finding Documents

- Company websites: press releases, About pages
- Social media: LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram
- SEC filings: annual reports, 10-K forms
- News outlets: crisis statements, announcements

Ethical Guidelines

- Use only publicly available documents
- Focus on critique, not mockery
- Frame analysis as learning

ENHANCED FEATURES IN ALL TEMPLATES:

- AI Indicators: Evaluate potential AI use
- Inclusivity Checklist: Cultural sensitivity
- Brand Alignment: Organizational values
- Accessibility: Features for diverse audiences

Template 1: Email Audit

Part A: Document Info

Student: _____

Company: _____

Email Type: ☐ Customer Service ☐ Sales ☐ Marketing ☐ Internal

Source: _____

Part B: Strategic Analysis

Step 1: Planning

Purpose: _____

☐ Clear ☐ Unclear ☐ Conflicting

Audience: _____

☐ Well-defined ☐ Vague ☐ Multiple

Approach: ☐ Direct ☐ Indirect

☐ Appropriate ☐ Inappropriate

Step 2: Writing

Element	Strengths	Weaknesses
Subject Line	_____	_____
Opening	_____	_____
Body	_____	_____
Closing	_____	_____

Step 3: Completing

Conciseness: ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Wordy ☐ Too brief

Tone: ☐ Professional ☐ Too casual ☐ Too formal ☐ Inconsistent

You-Attitude: ☐ Strong ☐ Moderate ☐ Weak ☐ Absent

Grammar: ☐ Error-free ☐ Minor errors ☐ Major errors

AI INDICATORS

Was AI likely used? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unclear

If yes, signs of AI weakness?

☐ Generic tone ☐ Lack of personalization ☐ Robotic language
☐ Missing context ☐ None

Human revision suggestions: _____

INCLUSIVITY CULTURAL AWARENESS

Inclusive language? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Mostly

Examples: _____

Culturally sensitive? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Avoids stereotypes and bias? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Concerns

Notes: _____

BRAND ALIGNMENT

Aligned with organizational values? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unclear

Discrepancies: _____

Part C: Specific Critique

One effective sentence: _____

Why effective? _____

One sentence needing improvement: _____

Problem: _____

Revision: _____

Part D: Assessment

If you received this email:

☐ Clear and actionable ☐ Somewhat confusing ☐ Need clarification
☐ Frustrated

Score: _____ / 10

Top 3 Recommendations:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Template 2: Social Media Audit

Part A: Info

Student: _____

Company: _____

Platform: ☐ LinkedIn ☐ Twitter ☐ Instagram ☐ Facebook ☐ TikTok

Post Type: ☐ Announcement ☐ Thought Leadership ☐ Product Launch
☐ Engagement

URL: _____

Date: _____

Part B: Strategic Analysis

Audience: _____ ☐ Well-targeted
☐ Too broad ☐ Unclear

Goal: _____ ☐ Clear ☐ Vague ☐ Multiple

Brand Voice: _____ ☐ Consistent
☐ Inconsistent ☐ Off-brand

Part C: Content Evaluation

Hook: ☐ Attention-grabbing ☐ Adequate ☐ Weak

Clarity: ☐ Crystal clear ☐ Somewhat clear ☐ Confusing

Value: ☐ Strong ☐ Moderate ☐ Weak ☐ Absent

CTA: ☐ Clear ☐ Implied ☐ None

Length: ☐ Appropriate ☐ Too long ☐ Too short

Tone: ☐ Engaging ☐ Professional ☐ Boring

Part D: Visual and Accessibility

Visual type: ☐ Image ☐ Video ☐ Infographic ☐ Carousel ☐ Text only

Supports message? ☐ Yes ☐ No

ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES

Alt text for images? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Captions for videos? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Inclusive representation? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Concerns

Notes: _____

Hashtags: Number: _____ ☐ Relevant ☐ Trending ☐ Excessive ☐ Missing

Engagement: Likes: _____ Comments: _____ Shares: _____

AI INDICATORS

Was AI used? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unclear

Quality: ☐ Enhanced creativity ☐ Generic ☐ Misused

Suggestions: _____

INCLUSIVITY CHECK

Inclusive language? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Mostly

Avoids stereotypes? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Concerns

Part E: Recommendations

What works: _____

Needs improvement: _____

Rewrite opening:

Original: _____

Revised: _____

Score: _____ / 10

Template 3: Investor Communication Audit

Part A: Info

Student: _____

Company: _____

Type: ☐ Annual Report ☐ Shareholder Letter ☐ Earnings ☐ 10-K

Period: _____

Section: _____

Part B: Audience and Purpose

Primary Audience: ☐ Investors ☐ Analysts ☐ Public ☐ Regulators
☐ Employees

Purpose: _____

Key Message: _____

Part C: Content Analysis

Transparency: ☐ High ☐ Somewhat ☐ Evasive

Data: ☐ Clear ☐ Complex but OK ☐ Confusing

Balance: ☐ Balanced ☐ Too optimistic ☐ Too pessimistic

Jargon: ☐ Accessible ☐ Some ☐ Heavy

Visuals: ☐ Effective ☐ Adequate ☐ Missing ☐ Misleading

ACCESSIBILITY

Plain-language summaries? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Data visualizations accessible? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Alternative formats? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

Part D: Ethics

Acknowledges challenges? ☐ Yes ☐ Partially ☐ No

Explain:

Visuals accurate? ☐ Yes ☐ Concerns ☐ Misleading

Explain: _____

Strong credibility phrase: _____

Spin or evasive phrase: _____

BRAND ALIGNMENT

Aligned with company values? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unclear

Discrepancies: _____

Part E: Recommendations

Score: _____ / 10

Three improvements:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Template 4: Crisis Communication Audit

Part A: Crisis Context

Student: _____

Company: _____

Crisis: ☐ Product ☐ Data Breach ☐ Scandal ☐ Accident ☐ Other

Crisis Date: _____

Response Date: _____

Response Time: _____ hours/days

Format: ☐ Press Release ☐ Social ☐ Email ☐ Video

Part B: Evaluation

Timeliness: ☐ Immediate ☐ Prompt ☐ Delayed ☐ Too late

Acknowledgment: ☐ Full ownership ☐ Partial ☐ Deflection ☐ Denial

Empathy: ☐ Genuine ☐ Weak ☐ Absent ☐ Insincere

Explanation: ☐ Clear ☐ Vague ☐ Defensive ☐ Missing

Action Steps: ☐ Concrete ☐ Vague ☐ Promised ☐ None

Transparency: ☐ High ☐ Adequate ☐ Evasive

Part C: Five Components of Apology

Component	Present?	Evidence
1. Acknowledgment	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
2. Responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
3. Regret	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
4. Explanation	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
5. Commitment	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____

Part D: Language Analysis

Passive voice to avoid responsibility? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Example: _____

Strongest accountability phrase: _____

Defensive phrase: _____

Tone matches severity? ☐ Yes ☐ Too light ☐ Too heavy

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Considers diverse perspectives? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially

Avoids insensitive language? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Concerns

ACCESSIBILITY

Multiple formats or languages? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

Clear action steps? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Vague

Part E: Assessment

Would this communication:

☐ Restore trust ☐ Partially address concerns ☐ Leave unsatisfied
☐ Make more upset

Score: _____ / 10

Three improvements:

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
-

Template 5: Business Report Audit

Part A: Info

Student: _____

Company: _____

Title: _____

Type: ☐ White Paper ☐ Case Study ☐ Research ☐ Sustainability

Length: _____ pages

Part B: Structure

Element	Present?	Rating
Executive Summary	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Weak
Clear Headings	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Weak
Table of Contents	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Weak
Logical Flow	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Weak
Conclusions	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Weak

Part C: Content Quality

Research Quality: ☐ Rigorous ☐ Adequate ☐ Weak

Data Sources: ☐ Cited ☐ Partially cited ☐ Not cited

Objectivity: ☐ Objective ☐ Somewhat biased ☐ Biased

Readability: ☐ Clear ☐ Dense but OK ☐ Confusing

Part D: Visual Elements

Charts and Graphs: ☐ Effective ☐ Adequate ☐ Poor ☐ None

Tables: ☐ Clear ☐ Complex ☐ Confusing ☐ None

Images: ☐ Relevant ☐ Decorative ☐ Distracting ☐ None

AI USE

AI likely used? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unclear

Quality: ☐ Added value ☐ Generic ☐ Misused

Part E: Recommendations

Score: _____ / 10

Strongest section: _____

Weakest section: _____

Three improvements:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Template 6: Presentation Audit

Aligned with *Business Communication Today*, Chapters 16-17

Part A: Basic Information

Student: _____

Speaker or Company: _____

Title or Topic: _____

Occasion or Context: _____

Format: ☐ In-person ☐ Virtual ☐ Hybrid

Part B: Strategic Analysis

Purpose: _____ ☐ Clear ☐ Unclear ☐ Conflicting

Audience Profile: _____ ☐ Well-defined ☐
Vague ☐ Not addressed

Adaptation: ☐ Tailored to audience ☐ Generic ☐ Off-target

Part C: Content and Organization

Opening: ☐ Engaging ☐ Adequate ☐ Weak

Structure: ☐ Clear intro body close ☐ Wandering

Key Message:

Supporting Evidence: ☐ Strong ☐ Adequate ☐ Weak

Call-to-Action or Closing: ☐ Clear ☐ Implied ☐ Missing

Part D: Visuals and Slides

Slide Design: ☐ Clear ☐ Cluttered ☐ Distracting

Visuals: ☐ Supportive ☐ Misaligned ☐ Missing

Accessibility: ☐ Alt text captions ☐ Inclusive imagery ☐ None

Consistency: ☐ Professional fonts and colors ☐ Inconsistent

Part E: Delivery

Voice: ☐ Clear ☐ Monotone ☐ Distracting

Body Language: ☐ Confident ☐ Uneasy ☐ Closed

Timing: ☐ Appropriate ☐ Rushed ☐ Too long

Engagement: ☐ Interactive ☐ One-way ☐ Flat

AI AND INNOVATION CHECK

AI tools used? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unclear

If yes: ☐ Added value ☐ Generic output ☐ Misused

Suggestions: _____

Part F: Ethics and Professionalism

Respectful tone? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Credibility maintained? ☐ Strong ☐ Moderate ☐ Weak

Avoids manipulation or exaggeration? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Part G: Assessment

If you were in the audience, how would you rate this presentation?

☐ Inspiring and professional

☐ Adequate but forgettable

☐ Confusing or off-putting

Score: _____ / 10

Top 3 Recommendations:

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
-

Assignment Variations

Individual Assignment

Students select one document type, complete audit, write 2-3 page analysis

Group Project

Teams audit multiple communications from same company, present findings

Comparative Analysis

Compare how two competitors handle same situation

Before and After

Audit weak communication, rewrite it, explain improvements

Case Study

Deep dive into one company crisis response across multiple channels

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