

Guest Speaker Coordination Kit for Adopters of *Business Communication Today*, 16th Edition

A Resource for *Business Communication Today*, 16th Edition

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1. Planning Timeline

When	Action
6-8 weeks before	Identify and invite speaker

4-5 weeks before	Confirm details; send briefing
2 weeks before	Prepare students; share bio
1 week before	Final confirmation; tech check
Day of	Welcome speaker; facilitate
Within 48 hours	Send thank you
Within 1 week	Student reflections due

Key Decisions

- **Format:** In-person, virtual, or hybrid
 - **Length:** 30-50 minutes
 - **Structure:** Presentation + Q&A or discussion
 - **Topic:** Chapter alignment
 - **Preparation:** Student research required
 - **Technology:** Equipment needs
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2. Initial Invitation Email

Subject: Invitation to Speak to Business Communication Students

Dear [Name],

I hope this finds you well. My name is [Your Name], and I teach Business Communication at [University]. I am reaching out to invite you to be a guest speaker for my [course] class this [semester].

Your expertise in [area] would provide valuable real-world context for our students. I believe your insights on [topic] would help bridge classroom theory and workplace practice.

Details:

- **When:** [Dates/times] - flexible to your schedule
- **Where:** [Location] or virtual
- **Duration:** 30-50 minutes including Q&A
- **Audience:** [Number] students

Possible Topics:

- [Topic 1]
- [Topic 2]
- [Topic 3]

No formal slides required unless you prefer. Students engage most with authentic stories and practical advice.

Would you be available and interested? I am happy to work around your schedule.

Best regards,
[Your Name]
[Title, Department, University]
[Contact info]

3. Confirmation Email

Subject: Confirmed: Guest Speaking Details for [Date]

Dear [Name],

Thank you for agreeing to speak with my students! We are thrilled to have you.

Confirmed Details:

- **Date:** [Day, Date]
- **Time:** [Start-End]
- **Location:** [Building, Room] or [Zoom link]
- **Duration:** [Minutes]

Topic: [Confirmed topic]

Student Context: Students have covered [concepts]. Your insights will help them see real-world applications.

Logistics:

- Arrive 10-15 minutes early for setup
- Parking/visitor info: [Details]
- We will reserve time for Q&A

What Students Love:

- Real examples from your work
- Practical advice
- Career insights
- Interactive elements

Attached is a Speaker Briefing Document with course context and suggestions.

Need from You:

- Short bio for introduction
- Headshot (optional)
- Technology requests

Looking forward to your visit!

Best,
[Your Name]

4. Speaker Briefing Document

Course Overview

Course: [Name and Number]

Description: [What students learn]

Current Unit: [Topic/Chapter]

Learning Objectives:

- Understand how [concept] applies professionally
- Identify strategies for [skill]
- Connect theory to practice

Student Audience

Number: [Approximate]

Level: [Year and majors]

Background: [Experience level and interests]

Suggested Topics

1. **Your Journey:** How you developed communication skills
2. **Real Challenge:** Specific example you faced
3. **Tools:** Technology and platforms you use
4. **Skills:** What matters most in your field
5. **Advice:** What you wish you had known

Session Structure

Time	Activity
0-5 min	Introduction and welcome
5-30 min	Your remarks and stories
30-50 min	Student Q&A

Student Preparation

Students will:

- Research your company
- Review relevant concepts
- Prepare questions
- Complete reflection after visit

Logistics

Location: [Building and room]

Parking: [Instructions]

Technology: Projector, HDMI, microphone, whiteboard

Contact: [Your cell for day-of questions]

What Students Value

- Authentic, unscripted stories
- Honesty about failures
- Specific, actionable advice

- Interactive elements
 - Career insights
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5. Student Preparation Guide

Subject: Guest Speaker: [Name] from [Company] - [Date]

Dear Class,

I am excited to announce that **[Name], [Title] at [Company]**, will join us on **[Date]** to discuss [topic].

About Our Guest: [Bio]

Why This Matters: This connects to [Chapter] and shows how [concept] works in business.

Your Preparation (Required):

1. Research [Company website]
2. Review [Chapter or notes]
3. Submit ONE question by [date]

Question Ideas:

- How do you handle [challenge]?
- What skills have been most important?
- Can you share an example of [concept]?
- How has technology changed communication?
- What advice for students entering [field]?

Professional Expectations:

- Arrive on time
- Listen actively
- Ask thoughtful questions
- Thank the speaker
- Complete reflection assignment

See you on [Date],
[Your Name]

Question Submission Form

Name:

Speaker: [Name, Company]

Question 1: _____

Why relevant: _____

Question 2 (Optional): _____

What you hope to learn: _____

6. Day-of-Visit Checklist

Pre-Session (30 min before)

- ☐ Test technology
- ☐ Set up materials
- ☐ Prepare water for speaker
- ☐ Print bio for introduction
- ☐ Review student questions
- ☐ Set up recording if planned

Speaker Arrival (15 min before)

- ☐ Greet warmly

- ☐ Offer restroom/coffee
- ☐ Review structure and timing
- ☐ Confirm Q&A preferences
- ☐ Discuss any adjustments

Opening (5 min)

- ☐ Welcome students
- ☐ Introduce speaker with bio
- ☐ Explain format
- ☐ Remind of Q&A etiquette
- ☐ Turn floor to speaker

During Session

- ☐ Monitor time
- ☐ Take notes
- ☐ Monitor engagement
- ☐ Prepare to moderate Q&A

Q&A Moderation

- ☐ Start with pre-submitted questions
- ☐ Call on raised hands
- ☐ Repeat questions clearly
- ☐ Keep focused and respectful
- ☐ Have backup questions ready

- ☐ Give time warnings

Closing (5 min)

- ☐ Summarize key takeaways
- ☐ Thank speaker
- ☐ Prompt applause
- ☐ Remind of reflection assignment
- ☐ Walk speaker out

Post-Session

- ☐ Exchange contact info
 - ☐ Take photo if permitted
 - ☐ Send thank you within 48 hours
 - ☐ Share promised resources
 - ☐ Collect student reflections
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7. Q&A Session Guide

Introduction

Thank you, [Name], for those insights. Now we have time for questions. Please raise your hand, state your name, and keep questions concise.

Backup Questions

1. Walk us through your career journey.
2. What does daily communication look like in your role?
3. What is your most difficult communication challenge?
4. What skills do you wish new hires had stronger?

5. How has AI changed communication in your industry?
6. What advice for students entering the workforce?
7. Share a time communication did not go as planned.
8. Where is business communication heading?

Managing Flow

If unclear: Let me rephrase to clarify...

If off-topic: Great question, but let us focus on [topic]

If too long: Let me capture the key part...

If time running out: Time for one or two final questions

Closing

Let us give [Name] a big round of applause for sharing their expertise. Thank you for helping us connect classroom learning to real-world practice.

8. Thank You Email

Subject: Thank You for Speaking to Our Class

Dear [Name],

Thank you for speaking with my students on [date]. Your insights on [topic] were incredibly valuable.

Student Impact: Students were engaged when you discussed [example]. Several mentioned your advice on [point] will influence how they approach [skill]. [Include student quotes if permitted]

Key Takeaways: Your session helped students understand:

- [Outcome 1]
- [Outcome 2]
- [Connection to course]

Your visit was a semester highlight. I would love to invite you back in future terms if you are open to it.

Please stay in touch.

With gratitude,
[Your Name]

9. Speaker Feedback Form

Speaker: _____

Logistics

Coordination and communication:

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Needs Improvement

Briefing document helpful?

☐ Very ☐ Somewhat ☐ Not really ☐ Did not receive

Technology and needs met?

☐ Yes ☐ Mostly ☐ No

Student Engagement

How engaged were students?

☐ Highly ☐ Engaged ☐ Somewhat ☐ Disengaged

Quality of questions:

☐ Thoughtful ☐ Adequate ☐ Needed preparation

Overall

How valuable was this?

☐ Very ☐ Valuable ☐ Somewhat ☐ Not valuable

Speak again in future?

☐ Yes definitely ☐ Yes possibly ☐ Unsure ☐ No

What worked well: _____

What to improve: _____

Other comments: _____

10. Student Reflection Assignment

Due: [Date within one week]

Points: [Your scale]

Format: 1-2 pages, 300-500 words

Purpose

Process what you learned and connect insights to course concepts and career goals.

Instructions

Part 1: Summary (1 paragraph)

Briefly summarize key points. What were main messages about professional communication?

Part 2: Course Connection (1-2 paragraphs)

Identify TWO concepts from class that the speaker illustrated. Explain connections with specific examples from the presentation.

Part 3: Personal Application (1 paragraph)

What specific advice will you apply? How will this influence your communication or career preparation?

Part 4: Questions (1 paragraph)

What questions remain? What would you like to learn more about?

Grading Rubric

Criterion	Points
Summary of key points	___/25
Connection to course concepts	___/30
Personal application	___/25
Critical thinking and depth	___/15
Writing quality	___/5
Total	___/100

11. Finding and Vetting Speakers

Where to Find Speakers

- **Alumni Network:** Contact alumni office for database
- **Professional Network:** LinkedIn connections, colleagues
- **Industry Partners:** Companies with university relationships
- **Professional Associations:** Local chapters (PRSA, IABC, etc.)
- **Advisory Boards:** Department or college advisors

- **Student Connections:** Parents, internship supervisors
- **Previous Speakers:** Ask for referrals
- **Local Business:** Chamber of Commerce members

Vetting Potential Speakers

Check for:

- Relevant professional experience
- Strong communication skills
- Willingness to be authentic and vulnerable
- Availability and reliability
- Enthusiasm for teaching/mentoring
- Diverse perspectives and backgrounds

Ideal Speaker Qualities

- Can tell compelling stories
- Willing to share failures and lessons
- Gives actionable advice
- Engages with student questions
- Professional but approachable
- Respects student time and preparation

Topics That Work Well

- Crisis communication and reputation management
- Digital communication and social media strategy
- Presentations and public speaking
- Intercultural communication
- Team collaboration and leadership
- Career development and networking
- Ethics and difficult conversations
- AI and technology in communication

Red Flags to Avoid

- Speaker wants to do sales pitch
- Unreliable communication before visit
- Unwilling to tailor to student needs
- Insists on controversial topics
- No relevant experience to share

Building a Speaker Pool

- Maintain database with contact info
 - Note which topics each speaker covers
 - Track student feedback on each speaker
 - Rotate speakers across semesters
 - Nurture relationships year-round
 - Thank speakers publicly (social media, newsletter)
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Guest Speaker Coordination Kit

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