

Objection Handling Guide for

Business Communication Today, 16th Edition, by Bovee and Thill

OBJECTION 1: "AI is changing too fast; this book will be outdated in a year." Why they say this: Fear of investing in something that becomes obsolete quickly.

How to respond (Feel-Felt-Found method): "I understand that concern—many instructors have felt exactly the same way. What they've found is that our approach focuses on timeless principles of AI collaboration rather than specific tools.

Here's what makes this different: We don't teach students to use ChatGPT 5.0—we teach them how to collaborate effectively with AI, regardless of which platform emerges. The communication principles—how to prompt effectively, how to maintain ethical standards, how to blend human creativity with AI efficiency—these skills transfer to any AI tool.

Think of it like teaching students to drive. We don't teach them to operate a 2026 Honda; we teach them traffic laws, spatial awareness, and decision-making that work with any vehicle. That's exactly our approach with AI."

Evidence to share: "Instructors using our previous editions tell us students are successfully applying these principles to new AI tools that didn't even exist when they learned the concepts."

OBJECTION 2: "I need to focus on the fundamentals of writing, not tech." Why they say this: Belief that AI detracts from core communication skills.

How to respond (Reframe technique):

"That's exactly why this approach works so well. You're absolutely right that fundamentals matter most—and that's precisely what we strengthen.

Let me ask you this: When your students spend an hour researching and formatting a routine email, how much time do they have left to focus on persuasive messaging, audience analysis, and tone?

Our integrated approach actually amplifies fundamental skills. When AI handles research and initial drafting, students spend more time on what you want them to master—critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and strategic communication. They're not learning less about writing; they're learning to write at a higher level.

Think of AI as a powerful research assistant and writing partner, not a replacement for thinking. Students still need to understand audience, purpose, structure, and style—they just have better tools to execute their vision."

OBJECTION 3: "Students will just use AI to cheat and not learn to write." Why they say this: Fear of academic dishonesty and skill degradation.

How to respond (Acknowledge and redirect): "That's a legitimate concern that many educators share. The reality is, students are already using AI—often poorly and unethically. The question isn't whether they'll use it, but whether we'll teach them to use it responsibly.

Our approach actually reduces cheating because students learn to cite AI assistance, understand when human input is essential, and develop original thinking skills that AI can't replicate. They learn the difference between AI as a collaborator versus AI as a crutch.

Think about computers in math class. We don't ban them—we teach students how to use them. Students still need to understand mathematical concepts; they just have tools to execute complex calculations.

The same principle applies here. Students still need to develop ideas, analyze audiences, and make strategic communication decisions. AI just helps them execute more efficiently."

Evidence: "Instructors using our approach report higher-quality work, not lower, because students focus more on critical thinking and less on mechanical tasks."

OBJECTION 4: "I don't know enough about AI to teach this effectively." Why they say this: Instructor confidence and competence concerns.

How to respond (Support and empowerment): "You know what? You're ahead of most instructors just by recognizing this need. And here's the good news—you don't need to become an AI expert to use this text successfully.

Our instructor resources include everything you need: lesson plans, discussion guides, sample exercises, and even suggested responses to student questions. You're teaching communication principles you already know; we just show you how AI enhances those lessons.

Plus, this actually positions you as a forward-thinking educator. Your students will respect that you're helping them prepare for the real world, even if you're learning alongside them.

Confidence builder: "Remember, your students don't need you to be the AI expert—they need you to be the communication expert who helps them use AI wisely. That's exactly what you already are."

OBJECTION 5: "Our curriculum is already packed. We don't have time to add AI content." Why they say this: Time and curriculum constraints.

How to respond (Integration, not addition): "I completely understand—curriculum time is precious. The beauty of our approach is that you're not adding content; you're enhancing what you already teach.

Instead of spending a week on research methods, you spend that same week teaching research methods with AI tools. Instead of three assignments on email writing, you do three assignments where students learn email writing while collaborating with AI. Same learning objectives, enhanced execution.

Actually, many instructors find they save time because students complete certain tasks more efficiently, leaving more class time for discussion, peer review, and higher-order thinking activities.

You're not teaching "AI and communication"—you're teaching communication in the modern workplace. It's evolution, not addition."

Time-saving benefit: "Students handle routine formatting and research faster, so you can spend more time on the analysis and strategy work you love teaching."

OBJECTION 6: "I'm comfortable with our current textbook. Why change what's working?" Why they say this: Status quo bias, inertia, and change resistance. **How to respond** (Future-focused challenge):

"I respect that you've built a successful program with your current approach. Let me ask you this: How will you feel in two years when employers start asking why your graduates can't collaborate with AI tools that are standard in their industry?"

The job market is shifting faster than ever. Companies are already asking about AI skills in interviews. Your current textbook might be working for today's classroom, but is it preparing students for tomorrow's workplace?

You've built something good—this helps you build something great. You keep all the communication fundamentals that work, and you add the modern skills that ensure your students stay competitive.

Early adopters always have the advantage. Your students could be the ones getting the best jobs because they have skills other programs aren't teaching yet."

Positioning: "You're not changing because something's broken—you're changing because you want to stay ahead of the curve."

OBJECTION 7: "What if the AI features are just a gimmick and don't really help students learn?" Why they say this: Skepticism about educational value. **How to respond** (Evidence-based approach): "That's a smart question—you want to see real educational value, not flashy features. Let me share what we're seeing in classrooms already using this approach."

Students demonstrate measurably better performance on key skills: audience analysis improves because they can quickly research target demographics; persuasive writing scores increase because they iterate through more drafts; presentation skills improve because they have more time to practice delivery instead of creating slides from scratch.

The AI isn't doing the thinking—it's removing barriers that prevent students from thinking deeply. Instead of getting stuck on citation formatting, they focus on argument development. Instead of writer's block on the first draft, they spend time refining and personalizing their messages.

This isn't about making things easier—it's about making learning more effective."

Quick Reference: Objection Handling Techniques

Feel-Felt-Found: "I understand how you feel. Other instructors have felt the same way. Here's what they found..."

Question Redirect: Answer their objection with a thought-provoking question that reframes the issue.

Evidence-Based Response: Share specific data, testimonials, or success stories.

Acknowledge and Redirect: Validate their concern, then show a different perspective.

Future-Focus: Help them see the consequences of not acting.

Support Assurance: Emphasize the resources and help available to ensure their success, including MyLab.

