



# Choosing the Right Communication Approach



# Situations and Recommendations

- **Think Fast!**
  - Consider what you need to communicate before you blast off that e-mail or dive into that long phone lecture.
- **Good News! Bad News!**
  - Good news and bad news should be delivered with as much confidentiality and respect as possible. If phone is the most intimate tool available, then it'll do. However, face-to-face is always best in a business setting. Even when the news is good, people can have unpredictable reactions to surprises, like crying, fainting or other embarrassing behaviors that can distract from the actual achievement. Therefore, it's best to allow the message recipient to process the information before going public with any announcements.
- **A Question of Style!**
  - Some people simply communicate better verbally by speaking and listening. Verbal learners will accommodate more information on the phone or in person, because these tools cater to their learning style. It's no accident that many sales people are verbal learners. Visual learners may remember and process information better through e-mail or presentations. Tactile and kinesthetic learners like to learn by doing. Mobile technology allows these learners to satisfy their styles with wireless Internet and telecommunications technology through manipulating information on their laptops. Try to discover your coworkers' learning styles to help accommodate their strengths.

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- **Preferential Treatment!**
  - When communicating with coworkers, cater to their preferences. If someone is a slow typist, they may prefer phone or face-to-face communication. Also, colleagues may spend much of their time away from computer access, so reaching them by phone is a must. If you're not sure what someone's preference is, start noticing how they communicate with you, or just ask them how they prefer to receive information.
- **I fought the law and the law won!**
  - If a message is part of something legal - or potentially legal, write it. That's why it's called a "paper trail." Some situations demand documentation like contracts or other legal proceedings. On the other hand, if you don't want the information seen by anyone - don't write it - even on e-mail. Anything written can be taken out of context, warped, repackaged or just plain exposed for all to see.
- **Know your customer!**
  - It seems simple, but many businesses ignore basic facts about their customers. For example, if your market consists of baby-boomers, they may not be as computer savvy. Communicating only by e-mail will miss your target market. While you're building the perfect website portal, they're waiting for the phone to ring or their catalog to arrive. In contrast, if your market is teens and twenties, you may need to step up your electronic marketing efforts to encompass pod casts, interactive e-marketing, video, live chat or whatever the latest technology affords to support and sell your products and services.



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- **Close the Gaps!**
  - Sometimes companies rush to automate their communications. This can save lots of money and time. However, in the rush to bring everyone online, all the related policies must also adjust. Let's say 80% of a company's front-line employees don't have Internet access during the work day. If all employee benefit enrollment takes place online, how will that 80% of the workforce sign up for insurance? Not only will this communication gap affect HR Benefits, it will eventually affect any future online "rollout" the company implements until all employees have access to the proper communication tools.
- **Choose Wisely!**
  - Choosing the right communication approach demands careful consideration to effectively reach coworkers and customers. It may seem simple, but the choices you make now may reap lasting consequences or rewards. If you need help assessing communication in your organization, contact Write Wise Communications today!