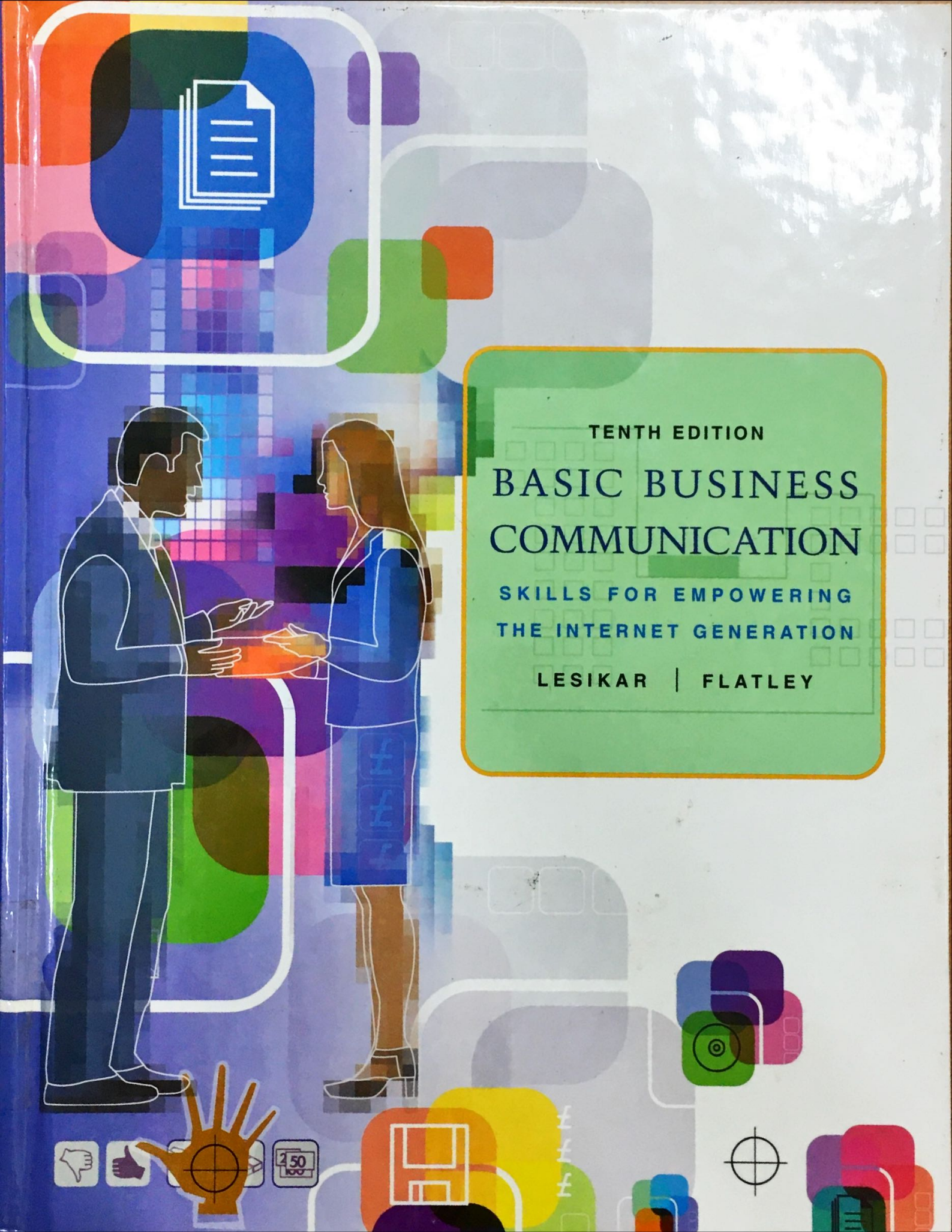

TENTH EDITION

# BASIC BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

## SKILLS FOR EMPOWERING THE INTERNET GENERATION

LESIKAR | FLATLEY

INTRODUCING. . .

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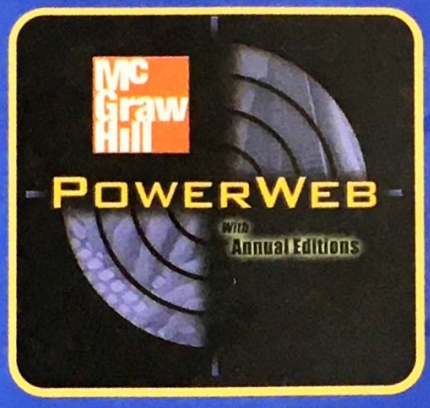


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# Basic Business Communication

## SKILLS FOR EMPOWERING THE INTERNET GENERATION

TENTH EDITION

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BASIC BUSINESS COMMUNICATION:
SKILLS FOR EMPOWERING THE INTERNET GENERATION

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This book is printed on acid-free paper.

3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 VNH/VNH 0 9 8 7 6 5

ISBN 0-07-288002-3

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Cover and interior design: *Kiera Pohl*
Typeface: *10.5/12 Times Roman*
Compositor: *ElectraGraphics, Inc.*
Printer: *Von Hoffmann Corporation*

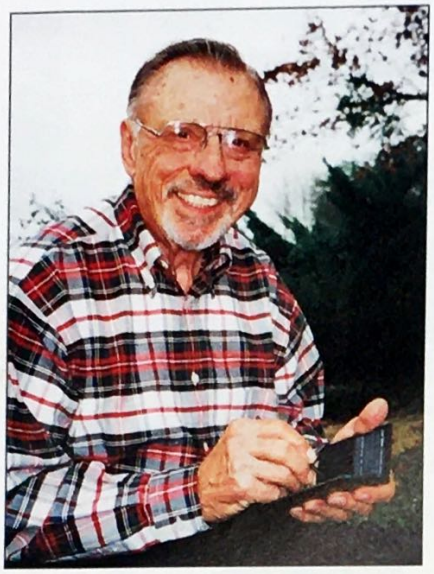
**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Lesikar, Raymond Vincent.
Basic business communication : skills for empowering the internet generation / Raymond V. Lesikar, Marie E. Flatley.—10th ed.
p, cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-07-288002-3 (alk. paper) — ISBN 0-07-111152-2 (international : alk. paper)
1. Commercial correspondence. 2. English language—Business English. 3. Business communication. I. Flatley, Marie Elizabeth. II. Title.
HF5271.L37 2005
651.7'4—dc22

2003068612

www.mhhe.com

# ABOUT THE AUTHORS



## Raymond V. Lesikar

Dr. Raymond V. Lesikar has served on the faculties of the University of North Texas, Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge, The University of Texas at Austin, and Texas Christian University. He served also as a visiting professor at the University of International Business and Economics, Beijing, China. His contributions to the literature include six books and numerous articles.

Dr. Lesikar has been active in consulting, serving over 80 companies and organizations. He is a Fellow, Distinguished Member, and former president of the Association for Business Communication. In addition, he has served ABC in many capacities over the years. He also holds membership in the Federation of Administrative Disciplines and is a former president of the Southwest Social Science Association. His distinguished teaching career was highlighted by his service as major professor for 23 recipients of the doctoral degree.

## Marie E. Flatley

Dr. Marie E. Flatley is a Professor of Information and Decision Systems at San Diego State University, where she teaches various courses in business communication. Additionally, she has served as a Fellow at the university's Center for Teaching and Learning. Dr. Flatley received her B. B. A., M. A., and Ph.D. from the University of Iowa. In addition, she has done postgraduate study in AACSB-sponsored programs at the University of Minnesota and Indiana University.

Dr. Flatley is active in numerous professional organizations, including the Association for Business Communication, the California Business Education Association, Delta Pi Epsilon, and the National Business Education Association. She has served as president of the Association for Business Communication and is a distinguished member of the Association. Additionally, she has served as associate editor for the *Journal of Business Communication* and editor the *NABTE Review.* Currently, she is a member of the editorial board for the *Delta Pi Epsilon Journal.*

Her current research interests involve using technology to assist with the communication process. Her current research spans the investigation of the effectiveness of video email to wireless communication technologies.

# PREFACE

Our overall objective in this revision was to produce the most technologically current and pedagogically effective book in the field. We modestly believe we have succeeded. Because in a sense business communication is technology in today's business world, to thoroughly emphasize technology wherever it applies was a logical first goal in our efforts. In working to produce the most pedagogically effective book possible, we continued to pursue the goals that enabled preceding editions to enjoy wide acceptance. These goals were to produce the most authoritative, thorough, learnable, and teachable book possible. Our specific efforts in pursuing all these goals are summarized as follows.

## TECHNOLOGICALLY CURRENT

Because the computer and the Internet have affected business communication in so many ways, we worked this subject into the book wherever applicable. Where technology is integral to the way business communicates today, we integrated it into the text discussion. In those cases where technology helps students perform special tasks, we presented it in boxes. Additionally, both the textbook cases and the web cases use technology in ways typical of today's businesspeople. We believe these efforts will enable students to leverage the power of the computer to save time and improve work quality.

## AUTHORITATIVE

Our efforts to present the subject matter authoritatively involved a thorough review of the field. The information presented and procedures recommended are not just our ideas and preferences, though we support them. They represent the mainstream of business communication thought developed by researchers, teachers, and practitioners over the years.

## THOROUGH

We worked diligently to cover the subject thoroughly. The content of the earlier editions was based on the results of two extensive surveys of business communication teachers. In this edition we supplemented the results of those surveys with suggestions from the highly competent professionals who reviewed the book. And we implemented the research findings and suggestions we heard from colleagues at professional meetings. The result is a book whose content has been developed and approved by experts in the field. As well as we can determine, this edition covers every topic that today's business communication leaders say it should have.

## LEARNABLE

As in earlier editions, we worked hard to make the book serve the student in every practical way. Our goal was to make the learning experience easy and interesting. Our efforts led us to implement the following features, all of which have proved to be highly successful in preceding editions:

*Readable writing.* The writing is in plain, everyday English—the kind the book instructs the students to use.

*Chapter objectives.* Placed at the beginning of all chapters, clearly worded objectives emphasize the learning goals and are tied in to the chapter summaries.

*Introductory situations.* A realistic description of a business scenario introduces the student to each topic, providing context for discussion and examples.

*Outlines of messages.* To simplify and clarify the instructions for writing the basic message types, outlines of message plans follow the discussions.

*Margin notes.* Summaries of content appear in the margins to help students emphasize main points and to review text highlights.

*Specialized report topics.* List of research topics by major business discipline is available for teachers who prefer to assign reports in the students' area of specialization.

*Communications in brief.* Boxes containing anecdotal and authoritative communication messages add interest and make points throughout the book.

*Abundant real business illustrations.* Both good and bad examples with explanatory criticisms show the student how to apply the text instructions.

*Cartoons.* Carefully selected cartoons emphasize key points and add interest.

*Photographs.* Full-color photographs throughout the text emphasize key points and add interest to content. Teaching captions enhance the textual material.

*Computer and Internet applications.* Computer and Internet applications have been integrated throughout the book wherever appropriate—into topics such as readability analysis, graphics, research methods, and formatting.

*Computer use suggestions.* For students who want to know more about how useful computers can be in business communication, pertinent suggestions appear in boxes and on the text website.

*Chapter summaries by chapter objectives.* Ending summaries in fast reading outline form and by chapter objectives enable students to recall text highlights.

*Critical thinking problems.* Fresh, contemporary, in-depth business cases are included for all message and report types—more than in any competing text.

*Critical thinking exercises.* Challenging exercises test the student's understanding of text content.

*Critical thinking questions.* End-of-chapter questions emphasize text concepts and provide material for classroom discussion.

*New cases.* As in past editions, the realistic and thorough case problems are new.

With this edition, we have up-to-date learning tools:

*CD-ROM.* (Free with every new text) This supplement is designed to reinforce the text instruction in the student's mind by providing interactive exercises and grammar exercises. It includes a free *one-year* subscription to Merriam-Webster Collegiate website <www.merriam-webstercollegiate.com> and the Bullfighter jargon fighter software tool.

*Student Resource portion of the Online Learning Center* <www.mhhe.com/lesikar05>. Additional resources are provided on a comprehensive, up-to-date website. Included are online quizzes, PowerPoint slides, web cases, video cases, an extensive collection of annotated links to relevant websites organized by topic, and more.

## TEACHABLE

Perhaps more than anything we can do to help the teacher teach is to help the student learn. The features designed to provide such help are listed above. But there are additional things we can do to help the teacher teach. We worked very hard to develop these teaching tools; and we think we were successful. We sincerely believe the following list of features created for this edition are the most useful and effective ever assembled for a business communication textbook.

*Instructor's Resource Manual.* The following support material is available for easy use with each lecture:

Sample syllabi and grading systems.

Summary teaching notes.

Teaching suggestions with notes for each kind of message.

Illustrated discussion guides for the slides/transparencies.

Answers to end-of-chapter critical thought questions.

Answers to end-of-chapter critical thinking exercises.

Sample solutions to cases.

Case problems from the previous edition (online).

*Transparency package.* Available on demand.

*PowerPoint slides.* Complete full-chapter slide shows are available for the entire text. These colorful slides provide summaries of key points, additional examples, and examples to critique. Several new ones are presented as voiceover slides.

*Grading checklists and software.* (Part of the Online Learning Center) Lists of likely errors keyed to marking symbols are available for messages and reports. Similarly, symbols for marking errors of grammatical and punctuation correctness are available. They help the teacher in the grading process and provide the students with explanations of their errors. Similarly, a software tool coordinated with the text grading symbols is available. It's particularly helpful with students documents received digitally.

*The McGraw-Hill/Irwin Business Communication Video Series.* This series consists of self-contained, informative segments covering such topics as writing correctly and the power of listening. Presented in a clear and engaging style, every segment holds students' interest while presenting the techniques for sharpening their communication skills. (Contact your McGraw-Hill/Irwin representative for more information.)

*Test bank.* This comprehensive collection of objective questions covers all chapters.

*Computerized testing software.* This advanced test generator enables the teacher to build and restructure tests to meet specific preferences.

*Instructor Resources portion of the Online Learning Center.* <www.mhhe.com/lesikar05>. A new website fully supports the text. It includes a database of cases, new web cases that entail using web resources to write solutions, an author-selected collection on annotated links to relevant websites organized by topic, enhanced links for technology chapter, and other active learning material.

*Blackboard/WebCT plug-ins* for testing and review.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

Because the reviewers and adopters generally approve of the organization of the book we made no major organization changes. Thus the plan of presentation that has characterized this book through nine successful editions remains as follows:

Part I begins with an introductory summary of the role of communication in the organization, including a description of the process of human communication.

Part II is a review of the basic techniques of writing and an introduction to messages and the writing process. Here the emphasis is on clear writing, the effect of words, and applications to messages, especially to email.

Part III covers the patterns of business messages—the most common direct and indirect ones.

Part IV concentrates on report writing. Although the emphasis is on the shorter report forms, the long, analytical reports also receive complete coverage.

Part V reviews the other forms of business communication. Included here are communication activities such as participating in meetings, telephoning, dictating, and listening as well as giving presentations.

Part VI comprises a four-chapter group of special communication topics—cross-cultural communication, correctness, technology-assisted communication, and business-research methods. Because teachers use these topics in different ways and in different sequences, they are placed in this final part so that they can be used in the sequence and way that best fit each teacher's needs.

## ADDITIONS TO CONTENT

As with previous editions, we thoroughly updated this edition. We expanded coverage wherever we and our reviewers thought it would improve content. Although not an addition in the true sense, we continued to use the word *message* in place of *letter* in most places. Our purpose was to use a word more consistent with the additional means of communication (fax, email, text messaging) brought about by technology. Our most significant additions or expansions are the following:

As a result of the recent scandals concerning corporate behavior, ethics was emphasized in this revision wherever appropriate. For added effect, a special icon appears at each discussion involving this topic.

The related ethics problem of plagiarism has been thoroughly addressed with all its ramifications and moral implications.

Email writing has been expanded and made current.

The Communication in Brief boxes have been expanded to include supporting words from leading scholars in business communication.

Text messaging has been added to content.

Coverage of research has been expanded to emphasize web-based information gathering and evaluation of websites.

The job-search chapter has been updated with new résumé models and portfolios.

The number of challenging and proven problems for student assignment has been increased.

DOI (digital object identification) has been added to the documentation coverage.

Finally, the website has updated online quizzes and new web-based and video cases. The web-based cases include ones for PDA devices, where students can sync using Avantgo.com to get the cases from a simulated in-box. The all-new video cases are delivered by real businesspeople presenting real business problems.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Any comprehensive work such as this must owe credit to a multitude of people. Certainly, we should acknowledge the contributions of the pioneers in the business communication field, especially those whose teachings have become a part of our thinking. We are especially indebted to those business communication scholars who served as reviewers for this edition. They truly deserve much of the credit for improvements in this book. It is with a sincere expression of gratitude that we recognize them:

Melinda Knight, *University of Rochester*

Diana Green, *Weber State University*

Kathryn Rentz, *University of Cincinnati*

Robert Insley, *University of North Texas*

Lecia Barker, *University of Colorado*

Karen Schneiter Williams, *San Diego Mesa College*

Zane Quible, *Oklahoma State University*

Without exception, their work was good and helpful. Because this tenth edition has evolved from all the previous editions, we also acknowledge those who contributed to those editions. These reviewers and the schools with which they were affiliated at the time of the reviews are as follows:

Bertee Adkins, *Eastern Kentucky University*

Barbara Alpern, *Walsh College*

Frank Andera, *Central Michigan University*

J. Douglas Andrews, *University of Southern California*

Dan Armstrong, *Oregon State University*

Joan Beam, *Ferris State University*

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Sandy Thomas, *Kansas City Kansas Community College*
Ruth Walsh, *University of South Florida*
George Walters, *Emporia State University*
Kathy Wessel, *South Suburban College*
James J. Weston, *California State University–Sacramento*
Michael Wunsch, *Northern Arizona University*

In addition, over the life of this book many of our professional colleagues have made a variety of inputs. Most of these were made orally at professional meetings. Our memories will not permit us to acknowledge these colleagues individually. Nevertheless, we are grateful to all of them. Finally, on our respective home fronts, we acknowledge the support of our loved ones. Marie acknowledges husband Len Deftos and her immediate family. Ray acknowledges all his family members, both present and departed, who have provided love and inspiration over the years. Without the support of all these dear people this book would not exist.

**Raymond V. Lesikar**
**Marie E. Flatley**