

*Our mission is to be the school of choice for business education in the state of New Jersey and to be known nationally as among the best business schools within a Catholic university.*

# **Competency Assessment for Undergraduate Business Students**

and

## **Key Vocabulary Terms For the Competencies**

February 1999

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Dear Stillman Student,

One of the key components to your undergraduate education at the Stillman School of Business is the assessment process. The assessment requirement was implemented in September of 1998, to ensure that you, our students, are being provided with the best business education possible. Our goal is to continue to prepare you for the business world as well as challenge you in your courses and professional development.

The five professional competencies that have been integrated into the core curriculum, across all concentrations are: ***Change Management, Communications, Critical Thinking, Teamwork and Technology***. Our faculty help develop your skills in these competencies primarily in the core courses of the undergraduate curriculum.

As a Stillman student, you are required to participate in the assessment process in order to graduate. There are several phases of Assessment throughout your business curriculum. This book is meant to provide an overview of the process and to serve as a reference manual for you throughout the process. In Section 1, "The Assessment Process -- An Overview," you will read about the various phases of assessment, how the process works and your responsibilities throughout the assessment process. The remaining sections (sections 2-6) focus on the vocabulary terms associated with four of the five competencies as well as important business communication terms. You will be tested as a freshman and again as a senior.

I will continue to be in contact with you to keep you fully aware of your requirements as well as to provide you with the support and guidance you may need in this process. If you have any questions, please feel free to stop by my office in Kozlowski Hall, Room 553, or contact me via e-mail at [onimusle@shu.edu](mailto:onimusle@shu.edu).

I look forward to working with each of you!

Best regards,

Leigh M. Onimus, J.D.  
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## SECTION 1: THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS—AN OVERVIEW

### The Objectives of Assessment

The objectives of the Stillman School undergraduate assessment are:

- (1) To ensure that students are developing their mastery of the five competencies as well as their skills in the functional disciplines of business, and
- (2) To improve the core curriculum continuously on the basis of feedback from the assessment process.

The assessment process consists of four phases:

1. Pre-Assessment
2. Sophomore Assessment Panels
3. Senior Assessment Panels
4. Final Assessment

As a requirement for graduation, students will participate in the pre-assessment and the final assessment, and also one of the two assessment panels.

#### 1. Pre-Assessment

All incoming freshmen students complete a pre-assessment vocabulary test in which they are required to define key terms in four of the five competencies: change management, communications, teamwork, and technology. In addition, students will be asked to define key terms related to business communication. The key vocabulary terms were selected from the textbooks used in our undergraduate core courses. In addition, students take English and Math placement tests. These tests are administered during Freshmen Orientation.

#### 2. The Sophomore Assessment Panel

Each academic year, approximately half of the sophomore class of business students are randomly selected to participate in the assessment panels. We notify the students who are selected in *October*. In *November*, they receive official notices of the specific dates and times of their panels. **The students selected MUST participate in the assessment panels. Their participation is MANDATORY, not optional, and is also a requirement for graduation.**

**During the 2005-2006 academic year the SOPHOMORES selected will be assigned to assessment panels that will be held either on the evening of Friday, February 17, 2006 or during the day on Saturday, February 18, 2006.**

Approximately two months before the panels, students will receive the names and e-mail addresses of fellow students who were assigned to be on their team (each team will consist of 4 to 6 students). Students also receive the materials for the assessment session, including the cases(s) that the teams will be required to present, case questions, and information on the individual exercises that they will perform. On assessment day, each team presents answers to the case questions before several business practitioners who evaluate its work. During the presentations, students are required to use technology to enhance the delivery of the material presented.

In addition to the team presentation, each student will also complete **individual assignments**. One assignment will require the student to write a short essay and the other assignment will require the student to demonstrate proficiency in a selected business skill via the utilization of technology. Students also prepare a self-evaluation of their individual performances in the teams and evaluate the contributions of fellow team members. The assessment panels last approximately two and a half hours. About six weeks later, students receive feedback about their performances. **Students must pass all three components of assessment to complete the requirement.**

### **3. The Senior Assessment Panel**

Each year, all Stillman School Seniors who did not participate in the Sophomore Assessment Panels when they were sophomores, are **required** to participate in the Senior Assessment Panels. Like the Sophomore Assessment Panels, these panels include both teamwork and individual assignments.

The seniors required to participate in the Senior Assessment receive notices of the specific dates and times of their assessment panels during the **summer** prior to the start of their senior year. **Because full participation in the process is a requirement for graduation, students who fail to participate in their scheduled Senior Assessment Panels will be unable to graduate on time.**

<p><b>During the 2005-2006 academic year the SENIORS selected will be assigned to assessment panels that will be held either on the evening of Friday, November 18, 2005 or during the day on Saturday, November 19, 2005.</b></p>
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Approximately two months before the panels, students receive the names and e-mail addresses of fellow students who were assigned to be their team members on the panel (each team will consist of 4 to 6 students). Students also receive the materials for the assessment session, including the case(s) that the teams will be required to present, case questions, and information on the individual exercises they will perform. On assessment day, each team presents analysis of to the case questions before several business practitioners who evaluate its work. During the presentations, students are required to use technology to enhance the delivery of the material presented.

In addition to the team presentations, each student completes two **individual assignments**. One assignment requires the student to write a short essay and the other assignment requires the student to demonstrate proficiency in a selected business skill via the utilization of technology. Students also prepare a self-evaluation of their individual performance in the teams and evaluate the contributions of fellow team members. The assessment panels last approximately two and a half hours. About six weeks later, students receive feedback about their performances. Students must pass all three components of assessment to complete the requirement.

#### **4. The Final Assessment**

This phase consists of the students' work in two capstone courses – Business Policy and the Global Business Colloquium – where, among other tests, students retake the competency vocabulary test.

#### **Guidelines for Integrity and Professionalism at Assessment**

The assessment process is a key component of the undergraduate program at the Stillman School. We expect our students to excel in both the team and individual components of the assessment process and also follow the following guidelines:

- Work hard to contribute to the work of their teams and master the teamwork competency.
- Recognize and fulfill their obligations and assigned roles within their teams.
- On assessment day, put forth clear presentations using concepts learned in class.
- When making their presentations before business professionals, students must dress, communicate and conduct themselves professionally and in a business-like manner.
- Observe the highest standards of integrity and honesty in both their teamwork and individual work. That is, not share the team's work with students outside the team, work individually with no outside assistance when required, and list clearly and accurately the references for any material used.

#### **Assessment Web Site**

For more information about Assessment, please visit [www.business.shu.edu/academic\\_programs/undergraduate\\_assessment\\_index.html](http://www.business.shu.edu/academic_programs/undergraduate_assessment_index.html). This site is a great resource for all Stillman students. It contains prior case questions, assessors' comments, assessor panel instructions and more information about the two individual assignments.

## **The Definitions of the Five Competencies**

### **Critical Thinking**

This competency refers to the ability to identify relevant issues or variables, analyze their interrelationships and conceptualize solutions for specific problems. Inherent to this competency are proficient thinking in abstract terms, being able to see the “big picture,” and understanding how the various parts of an organization or an idea fit and function together.

### **Communication**

This competency refers to the ability to communicate effectively, in writing and orally, with people of diverse business and professional backgrounds, both within and outside the organization.

### **Teamwork**

This competency refers to the ability to work with others as part of a team. The focus here is on developing an understanding of the principles of teamwork: working toward a common goal, sharing leadership responsibilities and authority, sharing power, sharing information to utilize resources fully, demonstrating loyalty and collegiality, and building and maintaining personal and professional relationships.

### **Technology**

This competency refers to expertise in utilizing technology to improve productivity. The focus is to develop both computer literacy (that is, how to use computers) and information literacy. Specifically, mastery of this competency involves knowing how to find and gather relevant data from various sources, organize, summarize and analyze it, and create meaningful and effective information for making business decisions.

### **Change Management**

This competency refers to the ability to respond to and/or initiate change. The management of change competency is focused on the students’ skills in four areas: managing change within oneself – as one matures and grows professionally, managing change within organizations, understanding and responding to the dynamic domestic and global business environment, and solving creatively business problems generated by a changing environment.

## **SECTION 2: CHANGE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY- Key Terms**

### **Accommodation -**

Playing down differences among conflicting parties, and highlighting similarities and areas of agreement.

### **Action Research-**

A process of systematically collecting data on an organization, feeding it back for action planning, and evaluating results by collecting and reflecting on more data after the planned actions have been taken.

### **Anger-**

A feeling of being trespassed upon that aims for revenge and restitution. Usually accompanied by a bodily reaction in which muscles tense up, blood pressure rises, and the brain goes into attack mode. Consider the cost vs. benefits of anger.

### **Arbitration-**

The process by which parties to a labor-management dispute agree to abide by the decision of a neutral and independent third party called an arbitrator.

### **Assertiveness-**

Confidently expressing what you think, feel, and believe (values), and standing up for your rights while respecting the rights of others.

### **Authoritative command-**

When formal authority dictates a conflict solution and specifies what is gained or lost and by whom.

### **Avoidance-**

Pretending that a conflict doesn't really exist; hoping that a conflict will simply go away.

### **Bargaining zone-**

The area between one party's minimum reservation point and the other party's maximum reservation point.

### **BATNA-**

The best alternative to a negotiated agreement, or what can be done if an agreement cannot be reached.

### **Benchmarking-**

The measurement and evaluation of the quality of an organization's goods, services, or processes as compared with the best-performing companies in the industry.

**Business Analysis-**

An analysis of the competitive marketplace that provides a tentative sketch of a product's compatibility in the marketplace, including its probable profitability.

**Change agent-**

A person or group taking responsibility for changing the existing pattern of behavior of another person or social system.

**Change management-**

Change that comes about as a result of specific efforts in its behalf by a change agent.

**Changing-**

The central phase after unfreezing and before refreezing – in which the manager actually implements the change.

**Collaboration-**

Seeking true satisfaction of everyone's concerns; working through differences and solving problems so everyone wins as a result.

**Competition-**

When a conflict victory is achieved through force, superior skill, or domination of one party by another.

**Competitive advantage-**

An advantage over competitors that an organization gains through its superior capabilities and unique product benefits. Such benefits are perceived by consumers as providing better values than other products.

**Compromise-**

When accommodations are made such that each party to the conflict gives up something of value to the other.

**Conflict-**

A disagreement in a social situation over issues of substance and/or emotional antagonism.

**Conflict resolution-**

The removal of the reasons – substantial and/or emotional – for a conflict.

**Constructive conflict-**

Conflict that results in benefits instead of disadvantages for the individual(s) and/or organization(s) involved.

**Constructive stress-**

Stress that acts in a positive or energizing way to increase effort, stimulate creativity, and encourage diligence in one's work.

**Cooperativeness-**

The degree to which a person seeks to satisfy the concerns of another.

**Corporate strategy-**

Decisions and actions designed to achieve the organization's goals (goals are broadly defined outcomes an organization hopes to achieve within a specific time frame). These decisions determine the utilization of corporate resources in the areas of production, finance, research and development, human resources, and marketing.

**Corporation-**

A legal business entity created under state laws that has an identity separate from its owners.

**Creativity-**

An application of ingenuity and imagination that results in a novel approach or unique solution to a problem.

**Crises management-**

Dealing effectively with an unpredictable event.

**Cutting edge-**

A term used to describe behavior that is new or innovative.

**Demographic forces-**

Individual, measurable characteristics of a population, including age, income, occupation, education, ethnicity, and family structure.

**Distress (or Destructive Stress)-**

Stress that is dysfunctional for the individual and/or organization.

**Distributive negotiation-**

Negotiations that focus on claims made by each party for certain preferred outcomes.

**Economic Forces-**

Forces that determine the size and strength of demand for a company's products/services and significantly affect the strength of a firm's competitive atmosphere and the impact of its marketing activities.

**Effective negotiation-**

When issues of substance and working relationships among the negotiating parties are maintained.

**Emotional conflict-**

Conflict resulting from feeling of anger, distrust, dislike, fear, and resentment, as well as from personality clashes.

**Entrepreneur-**

A person who displays entrepreneurship and is willing to take action to pursue opportunities in situations others view as problems or threats.

**Entrepreneurship-**

Behavior that is dynamic, risk-taking, creative, and growth-orientated; the mobilization of resources to take advantage of an opportunity to provide customers with new or improved goods and services.

**Environmental analysis (or Environmental scanning)-**

The process of collecting data about the forces in the organization's competitive environment, and assessing and interpreting this information.

**Eustress-**

Stress that acts in a positive or energizing way to increase effort, stimulate creativity, and encourage diligence in one's work.

**Facilitator-**

A helper usually from outside the group or organization. Example: third party facilitator who helps the two parties of a negotiation to identify and resolve their differences.

**Force-coercion strategy-**

A change strategy where the change agent acts unilaterally to try to command change through the formal authority of his or her position, to induce change via an offer of special rewards, or to bring about change via threats of punishment.

**Globalization-**

The movement of businesses into the global marketplace by tapping resources, producing in many parts of the world, or competing globally.

**Haroshi-**

Japanese for "death by overwork".

**Innovation-**

The process of taking a new idea and putting it into practice as part of the organization's normal operating routines.

**Integrative negotiation-**

A negotiation process that seeks a way for all claims to be satisfied if at all possible; also called principled negotiation.

**Intrapreneur-**

An internal entrepreneur; an individual who exhibits entrepreneur behavior within the confines of a large organization.

**Intrapreneurship-**

Entrepreneurial behavior displayed by people or sub-units within large organizations; internal entrepreneurship.

**Lifestyles-**

A way of life characterized by creature comforts, clothes, and leisure time activities.

**Lose-Lose conflict-**

When no one achieves his/her true desires, and the underlying reasons for conflict remain unaffected.

**Marketing Environment-**

The competitive, economic, political, legal and regulatory, technological, and socio-cultural forces that surround present and potential customers and affect the organization's business and marketing activities.

**Marketing Management-**

The process of planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling an organization's marketing activities; the objectives of marketing activities is to facilitate exchanges between the company and its customers effectively and efficiently.

**Mediation-**

A process in which a neutral party engages in substantive discussions with union and management negotiators in separate meetings and in joint sessions in the hope that concession and compromise will curtail a labor-management dispute.

**Negotiation-**

The process of making joint decisions when the parties involved have different preferences.

**Normative-reeducative strategy-**

A change strategy where the change agent attempts to identify or establish values and assumptions from which a proposed change naturally emerges.

**OD interventions-**

Activities initiated by consultants or managers that directly assist in a comprehensive organization development (OD) program.

**Organizational change-**

Change involving some modification in the goals, structure, tasks, people, and technology that constitute the essence of the organization.

**Organizational Development (OD)-**

The application of behavioral science knowledge in a long-range effort to improve an organization's ability to cope with change in its external environment and increase its internal problem-solving capabilities.

**Partnership-**

A for-profit business entity owned by two or more persons.

**Performance Gap-**

A discrepancy between the desired and actual status of performance affairs.

**Personal wellness-**

The pursuit of one's physical and mental potential through a personal-health promotion program.

**Planned change-**

Change that occurs as a result of specific efforts in its behalf by a change agent.

**Principled negotiation-**

A negotiation process that seeks a way for all claims to be satisfied of at all possible; also called integrative negotiation.

**Process innovation-**

An innovation that results in a new or improved way of doing things.

**Product innovation-**

An innovation that results in the creation of a new or improved good or service.

**Rational persuasion strategy-**

A planned-change strategy that attempts to bring about change through persuasion backed by special knowledge, empirical data, and rational argument.

**Reason strategy-**

A managerial influence strategy that relies on personal power and persuasion based on data, needs, and/or values.

**Reciprocity strategy-**

A managerial influence that involves the mutual exchange of values and a search for shared positive outcomes.

**Refreezing (in the planned-change process)-**

The final stage during which a manager is concerned about stabilizing the change and creating the conditions for its long-term continuity.

**Regulatory forces-**

Forces arising from legislation by regulatory units at all levels of government (federal, state and local). Most regulatory bodies create and enforce regulations that affect business and marketing decisions.

**Retribution strategy-**A managerial influence strategy that relies on position power and results in feelings of coercion or intimidation.

**Shared power strategy-**

A participated change strategy that relies on involving others to examine values, needs, and goals in relationship to an issue at hand.

**Skunkworks-**

Small sub-units within a large organization designed to help large organizations perform intrapreneurially like small businesses.

**Small business-**

A business with fewer than 500 employees; a business that is independently owned and operated that does not dominate its industry.

**Smoothing-**

Playing down differences among conflicting parties, and highlighting similarities and areas of agreement.

**Sociocultural forces-**

The influences of a society's culture on people's attitudes, beliefs, norms, customs, and lifestyles, including their buying preferences and habits.

**Sole proprietorship-**

A for-profit business entity owned by one person.

**Stress-**

A condition that individuals experience when they face important opportunities or threats and are uncertain about their ability to handle or deal with them effectively.

**Stressors-**

Things that cause stress.

**Substantive conflict-**

Disagreement over such things as goals, the allocation of resources, distribution of rewards, policies, and procedures, and job assignments.

**Survivor syndrome-**

The stress experienced by people who fear for their jobs after having survived large layoffs and staff cutbacks in an organization.

**Technological forces-**

Technological trends and innovations that significantly affect people's lifestyles and standards of living, influence their desires for products and their reactions to marketing strategies. Such trends have a direct impact on the organization's business strategies, including marketing activities.

**Transactional leaders-**

Leaders who inspire commitment to achieve objectives in exchange for something of value.

**Transformational leaders-**

Leaders who radically change follower's thinking so that they unite for a common purpose; raising employees' aspirations to achieve more than they would otherwise.

**Type A personality-**

A person oriented toward extreme achievement, impatience, and perfectionism; a person who may find stress in circumstances others find relatively stress-free.

**Type B personality-**

A person who tends to be easygoing and relaxed.

**Unfreezing** (in the planned-change process)-

The initial phase during which the manager prepares a situation for change – for example, establishing good relationships with the people involved and helping them develop a felt need for change.

**Unplanned change-**

Change that occurs spontaneously or at random and without agents direction.

**Win-lose conflict-**

When one party achieves its desires at the expense and exclusion of the other party's desires.

**Win-win conflict-**

When conflict is resolved to the mutual benefit of all concerned parties.

### SECTION 3: COMMUNICATION COMPETENCY – Key Terms

**Active listening-**

Taking action to help the source of a message say what he or she really means.

**Attending-**

Focusing on the communication process at the moment.

**Brainstorming-**

A group interaction technique for generating ideas that seeks to take advantage of the pooled resources and stimulative synergies of group dynamics. Articulation of ideas is encouraged in the absence of criticism.

**Coding and decoding processes-**

Terms associated with the communication process. Encoding puts information (thoughts) into a message form of symbols (words). Decoding translates or interprets sent symbols (words) into messages (information).

**Communication-**

An interpersonal process of sending and receiving symbols with meanings attached to them.

**Communication channel-**

The medium through which a message is conveyed from sender to receiver.

**Communications model-**

A model describing the flow of communications involving a sender, a message, a receiver, and a feedback.

**Damage control-**

Limiting the damaging consequences that can result from a business or organizational failure.

**Devil's advocate-**

A person who takes a position that is in opposition to the group consensus. One way to inoculate a group from "groupthink" is to institutionalize a role of devil's advocate.

**Downward communication-**

Communication flowing from higher to lower levels in an organization's hierarchy of authority.

**Echoing-**

Restating the other person's message.

**Effective communication-**

When the intended meaning of the source and the perceived meaning of the receiver are identical.

**Efficient Communication-**

Communication that occurs at minimum cost in terms of resources expended.

**Ethnocentrism-**

The tendency to consider one's own culture superior to any and all others.

**Feedback-**

The process of telling someone else how you feel about something that person said or did, or about the situation in general.

**Filtering-**

The intentional distortion of information to make it appear most favorable to the recipient.

**Formal communication channels-**

The communication channels that follow the chain of command established by an organization's hierarchy of authority.

**Grapevine-**

A common informal communication network.

**Halo effect-**

When one attribute is used to develop an overall impression of a person or situation.

**Hearing-**

The perceptible stimuli.

**Impression management-**

An attempt to manipulate or control the impressions that others form about oneself.

**Informal communication channels-**

Communication channels that exist outside the formal channels and do not adhere to the organization's hierarchy of authority.

**Lateral communication-**

Communication among persons working at the same level in the hierarchy of authority, but typically representing different departments or work units.

**Libel-**

A written printed, pictorial statement that defames one's character or reputation or exposes one to public ridicule.

**Listening-**

Understanding the message.

**Management by wandering around (MBWA)-**

Dealing directly with subordinates by regularly walking around and talking with them about a variety of work-related matters.

**Mixed message (or crossed communication) -**

When a person's words communicate one message while actions, body language, or appearance communicate something else.

**News Release-**

A short piece of written copy publicizing an event or a product. Generally sent from the organization's public relations function to the media.

**Noise-**

Anything that interferes with the effectiveness of the communication process.

**Nonverbal communication-**

Communication that takes place through channels such as body language and the use of interpersonal space.

**Organizational communication-**

The process through which information is exchanged through interactions among people inside an organization.

**Organizational ecology-**

The study of how building design may influence communication and productivity.

**Perception-**

The process through which people receive, organize, and interpret information from the environment.

**Projection-**

The assignment of personal attributes to other individuals.

**Promotion-**

The organization's communication with individuals, groups, or other organizations to facilitate exchanges by influencing audience members to accept an organization's products, services, or ideas.

**Propaganda-**

Methodical propagation of a particular doctrine or of allegations reflecting its views an interest.

**Proxemics -**

The use of interpersonal space, such as in the process of interpersonal communication.

**Publicity-**

Activities to promote a company or its products by planting news about it in the media not paid by the sponsor; unpaid communication in the mass media regarding a company, product or event.

**Public Relations -**

The use of communications media and related activities to create a favorable overall impression of the organization.

**Reflecting -**

Thinking about the message received before responding.

**Role -**

A set of activities expected of a person in a particular job or position within the organization.

**Role ambiguity -**

When the person in a role is uncertain about what others expect in terms of his or her behavior.

**Role conflict -**

When the person in a role is unable to respond to the expectations held by one or more others.

**Role overload -**

When too many role expectations are being communicated to a person at a given time.

**Role underload -**

When someone is underutilized; when one is asked to do too little, and/or to do things that fail to challenge his or her talents and capabilities.

**Selective perception -**

People's tendency to define problems from their own points of view; the tendency to single out for attention those aspects of a situation or attributes of a person that reinforce or appear consistent with one's existing beliefs, values, or needs. Not necessarily a conscious process.

**Semantic -**

The study of relationships between signs and symbols and what they represent to their interpreters.

**Semantic barriers -**

Verbal and nonverbal symbols that are poorly chosen and expressed, which create barriers to successful communication.

**Slander -**

Utterance of defamatory statements injurious to the reputation or well being of a person.

**Stereotype-**

When an individual is assigned to a group or category, and then the attributed commonly associated with the group or category are assigned to the individual in question.

**Upward communication-**

Communication that flows from lower to higher levels in an organization's hierarchy of authority.

## SECTION 4: TEAMWORK COMTETENCY - Key Terms

### **Autonomous work groups-**

Self-managed work teams responsible for accomplishing defined performance objectives, and with discretion to decide how tasks will be distributed among individuals and at what pace work will progress in order to meet these objectives.

### **Committee-**

An organizational group that usually operates with an ongoing purpose; a formal group delegated to consider, investigate and report on organizational matters.

### **Computer network group-**

A group of people who interact through computer-based interaction rather than face-to-face; also called an electronic group network.

### **Consensus-**

Group member agreement. Groups that put a high premium on consensus work to achieve close to 100% agreement before acting.

### **Effective group-**

A group that achieves and maintains high levels of both task performance and membership satisfaction over time.

### **Electronic meeting room-**

A facility where group members sit at computer terminals and - guided by software and/or specially trained group facilitators - address problems.

### **Employee involvement groups-**

Groups of workers who meet on a regular basis, outside their functional groups, with a goal of applying their expertise and attention to important work place matters and continuous improvement.

### **Empowerment-**

Creating conditions in which employees see themselves as competent and in control of meaningful tasks.

### **Formal group -**

A group created by the formal authority within the organization to help transform resource inputs into product or service outputs.

### **Free riders -**

A team member who obtains benefits from membership but does not bear a proportional share of the responsibility for generating-the benefit.

### **Functional group -**

A formal work unit consisting of a manager and subordinates; such groups are often called departments or divisions.

**Group -**

Two or more people who interact with each other to accomplish certain goals or meet certain needs.

**Group cohesiveness -**

The degree to which members are attracted to and motivated to remain part of a group.

**Group dynamics -**

Forces operating in groups that affect task performance and membership satisfaction.

**Group norm -**

A behavior, rule, or standard expected to be followed by group members.

**Group process -**

The means through which multiple and varied resource inputs are combined and transformed into group outputs.

**Groupthink -**

A tendency for highly cohesive groups to lose their critical evaluative capabilities.

**Human Resource maintenance -**

A group's ability to maintain its social fabric and capabilities of its members to work well together over time.

**Informal group -**

A group that emerges within an organization and exists for a performance purpose without being formally specified by someone in authority.

**Liaison -**

A person who acts as a go-between for two or more groups. Group leaders often act as liaisons, connecting their group to others or to the larger organization.

**Maintenance activities -**

Actions by group members that support the emotional life of the group as an ongoing social system.

**Mechanistic Design -**

A highly bureaucratic design with centralized authority, many rules and procedures, a clear-cut division of labor, narrow spans of control, and formal coordination.

**Organic Design -**

A decentralized business structure with fewer rules and procedures, more open divisions of labor, wider spans of control, and more personal means of coordination.

**Performance norm -**

A key characteristic of work groups; it can have positive or negative implications for group and organizational productivity.

**Psychological group -**

A group whose members are aware of one another's needs and potential resource contributions, and achieve high levels of interaction and mutual identification in pursuit of a common purpose.

**Quality circle -**

A group of employees who meet periodically to discuss ways of improving the quality of their products or services.

**Reference group -**

A group to which another group compares itself.

**Self-managing work team -**

Sometimes called autonomous work groups, these are groups or workers whose jobs have been redesigned to create a high degree of task interdependence and who have been given authority to make many decisions about how they go about the required work.

**Social loafing -**

The tendency of some people to avoid or engage in "free riding" in groups.

**Sociometry -**

A method for measuring the frequency and direction (power, leadership) of interaction and influence among members of a group.

**Synergy -**

The creation of a whole that is greater than the sum of its individual parts.

**Task activities -**

Actions by group members and contribute directly to the group's performance purpose.

**Task force -**

A formal group convened to accomplish a specific purpose and which is expected to disband when that purpose is achieved.

**Team -**

A group whose members work intensely with each other to achieve a specific, common goal or objective.

**Team building -**

A sequence of planned activities to gather and analyze data on the functioning of a group and implement constructive changes to increase its operating effectiveness.

**Teamwork -**

The process of people working together in groups to accomplish common goals.

**Three-sixty evaluation-**

An evaluation technique that calls for evaluations from supervisors (downward), subordinates (upward), and peers (lateral) as well as self-assessment.

**Trust -**

Confidence that others will perform up to expectations and agreements.

## SECTION 5: TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCY - Key Terms

### PART 5.1: INFORMATION

#### **ASCH Codes (American Standard Code for Information Interchange)**

The most widely used coding system to represent data, primarily on personal computers and many mini- computers.

#### **Binary Number System -**

It is a base 2 number system that uses only two symbols, namely, 0 and 1.

#### **Business Technology Literacy Information Systems -**

Elements required for information processing, including software, hardware, data, users, procedures, and information systems personnel; provides support for the organization.

#### **Computer Ethics -**

The moral guidelines that govern the use of computers and information systems.

#### **Computer Literacy -**

Knowing how to use a computer.

#### **Computer Security Risk -**

An event or action that could cause a loss of or damage to computer equipment, software, data and information, or processing capability.

#### **Computer Virus -**

A potentially damaging computer program designed to infect other software or files by attaching itself to the software or files with which it comes in contact.

#### **Database -**

Collection of data that is stored in related files.

#### **EBCDIC Codes (Extended Binary Coded Decimal Interchange Code) -**

A coding system used to represent data, primarily on mainframes.

#### **Encryption -**

Process of converting readable data into unreadable characters.

#### **File Compression -**

Reduction in the size of a file.

#### **Information -**

Data that has been processed by computer into a form that has meaning and is useful.

#### **Information Literacy -**

Knowing how to find, analyze, and use information.

**Information Privacy -**

The right of individuals and organizations to deny or restrict the collection and use of information about them.

**Information Processing Cycle -**

Input process, output, and storage operations. Collectively, these operations describe the procedures that a computer performs to process data into information and store it for future use.

**Information Technology -**

Technology that transforms data into information and that improves the collection, storage, distribution, or utilization of information.

**Input -**

First step in information processing cycle; the process of entering data (including numbers, words, images, and sounds), programs, commands, and user responses into memory of computer for processing. Input can also refer to the media (such as disks, tapes, and documents) that contain input data.

**Output -**

The data that has been processed into a useful form called information that can be used by a person or machine.

**Processing -**

Part of the information processing cycle; the procedures a computer performs to process data into information.

**Raw Data (Data) -**

The raw facts, including numbers, words, images, and sounds, given to a computer during the input operation, that is processed to produce information.

**Secondary Storage, or Auxiliary -**

Part of the information processing cycle in which data and programs are stored when not being processed.

## TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCY - Key Terms

### PART 5.2: HARDWARE

#### **Analog Computers -**

Computers designed to process continuously variable data, such as electrical voltage.

#### **Bits, Bytes -**

A Bit is an element of a byte that can present one of two values, on or off. There are 8 bits in a byte.

**Kilobyte (KB)** - A measure of memory equal to roughly one thousand bytes

**Megabyte (MB)**-A measure of memory equal to roughly one million bytes.

**Gigabyte (GB)** - A measure of memory equal to roughly one billion bytes.

#### **Computer -**

An electronic device, operating under the control of instructions stored in its own memory unit that can accept data (input), process data arithmetically and logically, produce results (output) from the processing, and store the results for future use.

#### **CPU (Central Processing Unit) -**

Processing unit located on motherboard; contains a control unit that executes instructions that guide the computer through a task, and an arithmetic/logic unit that performs math and logic functions. These two components work together using the program and data stored in memory to perform the processing operations.

#### **Digital Computers -**

Computers that process data, including text, sound, graphics, or video into a digital (numeric) value; describes most computers

#### **Floppy Disks -**

Type of small, removable magnetic disk storage consisting of a circular piece of thin Mylar plastic, which is coated with an oxide material that is recorded on, storing data as magnetic areas. The plastic disk is enclosed in a rigid plastic shell for protection from debris; most widely used portable storage medium.

#### **Hard Disks -**

Storage devices containing high-capacity disk or disks, providing faster access time and greater storage capacity than floppy disks.

#### **Mainframe computers -**

Large computers that can handle hundreds of users connected at the same time, process transactions at a very high rate, and store large amounts of data; range in price from several hundred thousand to several million dollars.

**Megahertz (MHz) -**

A measurement used to describe the speed of the system clock; it is equal to one million cycles (or pulses) per second.

**Microprocessors -**

The smallest processor, which is a single integrated circuit that contains the CPU, located on the motherboard.

**Mouse -**

Small, palm-sized input device that is moved across a flat surface, such as a desktop, to control the movement of the pointer on a screen.

**Personal Computers -**

(Microcomputer or Micro) - a small computer designed to be used by one person at a time.

**RAM (Random Access Memory) -**

Contained in the processor unit of the computer; temporarily stores data and program instructions when they are being processed. Also called main memory,

**ROM (read only memory) -**

Describes chips that store data or instructions that do not change. This data is permanently recorded in the memory when it is manufactured. ROM memory retains its contents even when the power is turned off.

**Supercomputers -**

The most powerful category of computers, and the most expensive; can process hundreds of millions of instructions per second, and cost several million dollars.

**System Clock -**

A chip used by the control unit to synchronize, or control the timing of all computer operation. It generates electronic pulses at a fixed rate.

**System Unit -**

Part of the computer containing the electronic circuits that cause the execution of program instructions and manipulation of data to occur; includes the central processing unit, memory, and other electronic components.

## TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCY - Key Terms

### PART 5.3: TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**Bridges -**

A combination of hardware and software that is used to connect similar networks.

**Bulletin Boards -**

A computer system that maintains a centralized collection of information in the form of electronic messages accessed using a personal computer and communications equipment.

**Coaxial Cable -**

A high-quality communications line consisting of a copper wire conductor surrounded by a nonconducting insulator that is in turn surrounded by a woven metal outer conductor, and finally a plastic outer coating.

**Communication Protocols -**

A protocol is a set of rules and procedure for exchanging information between computers. Protocols define how a link is established, how information is transmitted, and how errors are detected and corrected. By using the same protocols, different types and makes of computers can communicate. The two most widely used protocols for networks are **Ethernet** and **token ring**.

**Communication Software -**

Programs that perform data communications tasks such as dialing, file transfer, terminal emulation, and Internet access, allowing data to be transmitted from one computer to another.

**Fiber Optics -**

High-speed transmission media for communications channel that uses smooth hair-thin strands of glass or plastic to transmit data as pulses of light.

**File Transfer Protocol (FTP) -**

Internet standard that allows the exchange of files with other computers on the Internet.

**Gateway -**

A combination of hardware and software that allows users on one network to access the resources on a different type of network.

**Host Computer -**

In a data communications system, a main computer that is connected to several devices, such as terminals or personal computers.

**Hypertext Markup Language (HTAM) -**

Set of special instructions used to create Web pages; the special instructions are called tags, or markups, that specify links to other documents and how the page is displayed.

**Internet-**

Worldwide group of connected networks that allows the public access to information on thousands of subjects, gives users the ability to send messages, and obtain products and services.

**Intranet-**

Internal networks that use Internet and Web technology.

**Local Area Network (LAN) -**

A communications network that covers a limited geographic area; consists of a communications channel connecting a series of computer terminals connected to a central computer, or connects a group of personal computers to one another.

**Modem -**

Communications device that converts digital signals of a computer to analog signals, and converts analog signals back into digital signals that can be used by a computer; used to connect computers over telephone lines.

**Networks-**

Collection of terminals, computers, and other equipment that uses communications channels to share data, information, hardware, and software.

**Router -**

An intelligent network-connecting device that sends (routes) communication traffic directly to the appropriate network; used when several networks are connected together.

**Server-**

Computers designed to support a computer network that allows users to share **files**, application software, and hardware.

**Telnet -**

An Internet protocol that enables user to log onto a remote computer on the Internet, and use the remote computer as if it were a direct, local connection.

**Twisted Pair -**

Communications cable consisting of pairs of plastic-coated copper wires that are twisted together.

**Uniform Resource Locator (URL) -**

Address that points to a specific resource on the Internet; can indicate an Internet site, a specific document at a site; and a location within a document at a site.

**Web Browsers-**

Software running on Internet connected computers that interpret and display Web pages, enabling users to access Web sites that have text, graphics, video, and sound and have hypertext links to other information and Web sites.

**Wide Area Network (WAN) -**

Communications network that covers a large geographical area, and uses telephone cables, microwaves, satellites, or a combination of communications channels.

**World Wide Web -**

Portion of the Internet containing Web sites, where information can be accessed electronically; the collection of hyperlinked documents accessible on the Internet.

## TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCY - Key Terms

### PART 5.4: SYSTEM SOFTWARE

#### **Application Generators -**

Program that allows an application to be built without writing extensive code in the programming language.

#### **Graphical user interface (GUI) -**

A user interface that provides visual clues, such as symbols called icons, to help the user when entering data or running programs.

#### **Icons -**

In a graphical user interface, on screen pictures that represent an application software program or file where data is stored.

#### **Java-**

Object-oriented scripting language used to develop multimedia on the Web.

#### **Language Translators -**

Special-purpose systems software used to convert the programming instructions written by programmers into the binary code that a computer can understand.

#### **Menu -**

A screen display that provides a list of processing options for the user and allows the user to make a selection.

#### **Operating Systems -**

Set of programs containing instructions that manage the operations of a computer such as loading, storing, and executing a program, and transferring data among the system devices and memory.

#### **Programming Languages -**

Sets of words, symbols, and codes used to create instructions a computer can understand or recognize.

#### **Rapid Applications Development -**

The process of developing software with prototypes.

#### **System Software -**

All the programs including the operating system that are related to controlling the operations of the computer hardware.

#### **Visual Basic -**

A programming environment that assists programmers in developing event driven Windows applications.

## TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCY - Key Terms

### PART 5.5: APPLICATIONS SOFTWARE

**Applications Software -**

Programs that tell a computer how to produce information, and reside permanently in storage, such as a disk.

**Computer Aided Design (CAD) -**

Design method that uses software to aid in product and structure design.

**Computer Based Teaching (CBT) -**

The use of computer-aided instruction to teach specific skills.

**Database Management Systems -**

The software that allows the user to create, maintain, and report data and **file** relationships.

**Electronic Spreadsheets -**

Software that allows the user to tabulate data in table form.

**E-mail -**

Electronic exchange of messages to and from other computer users.

**Executive Information Systems -**

Management information system that has been designed for the information needs of senior management

**Expert Systems -**

Computerized systems that simulate a human expert's reasoning and decision-making processes; also called knowledge systems.

**Groupware -**

Software that helps multiple users work together by sharing information.

**Information Systems -**

Elements required for information processing, including software, hardware, data, users, procedures, and information systems personnel; provides support for the organization.

**Integrated Software Systems -**

Software that combines applications such as word processing, spreadsheet, database, and communications into a single, easy-to-use package.

**Interactive Links -**

Links that allow user to interact with multimedia application.

**Management Information Systems (MIS) -**

Any computer based system that provides the timely and accurate information needed for managing an organization.

**Multimedia Applications -**

Applications of multimedia technology for business, education, and entertainment.

**Presentation Graphics -**

The software that allows the user to create documents called slides that are used in making presentations before a group.

**Query Languages -**

A simple English-like language that allows users and programmers to specify the data from a database for a report or screen display.

**Report Generators -**

Database Management Systems feature that allows access and display of data, and allows user to format query results professionally for output.

**Software Suites -**

Individual applications are packaged in the same box and sold for a price that is significantly less than buying the applications individually.

**Transaction Processing Systems (TPS) -**

Information system that processes data generated by day-to-day transactions of an organization.

**Virtual Reality (VR) -**

Creation of an artificial environment that can be experienced by the user as 3-D images that can be explored and manipulated interactively, using a pointing device.

**What-if Analysis -**

The capability of a spreadsheet to recalculate when data is changed.

**Wordprocessors -**

The most widely used computer application; involves the use of a computer to produce or modify documents that consist primarily of text.

## SECTION 6: BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS - Key Terms

**Active listening –**

Feeding back the literal meaning or the emotional content or both so that the speaker knows that the listener has heard and understood.

**Bar chart –**

A visual consisting of parallel bars or rectangles that represent specific sets of data.

**Behavioral interviews –**

Job interviews that ask candidates to describe actual behaviors that they have used in the past in specific situations.

**Boilerplate –**

Language from a previous document that a writer includes in a new document. Writers use boilerplates both to save time and energy and to use language that has already been approved by the organization's legal staff.

**Business plan –**

A document written to raise capital for a new business venture.

**Citation –**

Attributing a quotation or other idea to a source in the body of the report.

**Complimentary close –**

The words after the body of the letter and before the signature.

*Sincerely* and *Cordially* are the most commonly used complimentary closes in business letters.

**Connotations –**

The emotional colorings or associations that accompany a word.

**Executive summary –**

Summary of a report, specifying the recommendations and the reasons for them.

**Form letter –**

A prewritten, fill-in-the-blank letter designed to fit standard situations.

**Formal report –**

A report containing formal elements such as a title page, a transmittal, a table of contents, and an abstract.

**Gantt charts –**

Bar charts used to show schedules. Gantt charts are most commonly used in proposals.

**Jargon –**

There are two kinds of jargon. The first kind is the specialized terminology of a technical field. The second is *businessese*, outdated words that do not have technical meanings and are not used in other forms of English.

**Memo –**

Document using memo format to send to readers in your organization.

**Opinion –**

A statement that can never be verified, since it includes terms that cannot be measured objectively. Also a judgment.

**Paraphrase –**

To repeat in your own words the verbal content of what the previous speaker said.

**Primary search –**

Research that gathers new information.

**Proofreading –**

Checking the final copy to see that it's free from typographical errors.

**Purpose statement –**

The statement in a proposal or a report specifying the organizational problem, the technical questions that must be answered to solve the problem, and the rhetorical purpose of the report (to explain, to recommend, to request, to propose).

**Resume –**

A persuasive summary of your qualification for employment.

**Revising –**

Making changes in the draft: adding, deleting, substituting, or rearranging. Revisions can be changes in single words, but more often it means major additions, deletions, or substitutions, as the writer measures the draft against purpose and audience and reshapes the document to make it more effective.

**Run-on-sentence –**

A sentence containing several main clauses strung together with *and*, *but*, *or*, *so*, or *for*.

**Salutation –**

The greeting in a letter: "Dear Ms. Smith."

**Secondary research –**

Research retrieving data someone else gathered.

**Stress interviews –**

A job interview that deliberately puts the applicant under stress, physical or psychological. Here it's important to change the conditions that create physical stress and to meet psychological stress by rephrasing questions in less inflammatory terms and treating them as requests for information.

**Tone –**

The implied attitude of the author toward the reader and the subject.

**Transitions –**

Words, phrases, or sentences that show the connections between ideas.

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