BUSI 4200 Assessments

Presenting
Communication is about creating powerful stories with memorable imagery to drive people to action. The BUSI 4200 Assessment form focuses on your communicative actions and their impacts in creating relationships. Two primary questions underlie an assessment: 1) Who is the target audience? and 2) What is your argument? The answer to the first question is sometimes as simple as “the professor.” In business the target audience is the person or group who influences or drives decisions. For instance, in a presentation to the board of directors, decisions may be driven by a few influential people. Your messages may be compelling, but if they do not target the decision makers, they will have little impact. The second question starts a process to discover the primary arguments. Because we do not think in words, this question guides the conversation to the images that make the words powerful. Although these two questions are not written on the BUSI 4200 Assessment Form, they are interwoven throughout the evaluation of the three key components: Strategy, Organization, and Engagement. These three components are evaluated on a 4.0 scale from “Unprofessional” to “Professional.”

An example of a nonverbal assessment should help you understand the assessment form. You may have noticed that the eye gaze of the two images on the left below are not synchronized. The different directions of the head and gaze in the first image create visual and interactional tension. The second image is a close up of the eye itself to illustrate the significance of the offset’s angle. While looking askance a few times will not become a distraction, a persistent pattern throughout a presentation will undermine the engagement resulting in a “Developing” score of 1.7 to 2.3 (depending on the frequency and other eye gaze actions). Powerful eye engagement becomes part of the imagery business communicators want others to value. A professional level of communication demands that your eye gaze captivate and heighten the impact of the arguments.

For more insights into effective communication skills, please review the BCC’s website.
Writing

Powerful business writing develops from learning writing skills that work for you. Like a presentation, effective writing requires learning actions that help you engage others. Powerful communicators focus on the images they want others to value and remember. It's all about storytelling; the imagery is the power. What story do your written documents tell about your professionalism? The BUSI 4200 Assessment form uses the same four scale (0-4 or F-A) measurement of the three action components of a document: Strategy, Literacy, and Engagement. The two primary questions described above are also interwoven throughout the Business Writing Form.

Every written document has a target audience. Ask yourself, "Who is truly making the decision and how can I influence them?" This person may not be the person who initially reads the document. But, if you create a powerful story, the document begins its flow through the organization's social network. You will notice that "Document maximizes social networking" is a communicative action being assessed in Engagement. If the writer’s story is not being told to a target audience, this score will not be above 2.0.

The foundation for designing a compelling story is in-depth research. A written document can be undermined by a lack of research. Poor research skills are reflected in the Strategy assessments. You should research both how the target makes decisions and the data related to the decision. Research the alternatives and the counter-positions to be thorough. Recent neuroscience research indicates that our decisions are guided more by emotion than logic so understand that values underpin decision making. It's the impacts that turn the "blahs" into powerful words.

To learn more about developing a writing strategy, please review the BCC’s website.
### ASSESSMENT: BUSINESS WRITING

#### STRATEGY

**Unprofessional**
- Demonstrates no understanding of writing assignment
- Misidentifies target audience or writes document to target no one
- Denies purpose of document; Mismeasures or ignores audience's values
- Uses weak language; Imparts little or no knowledge
- Conveys little knowledge of topic; Uses ineffective analysis

**Developing**
- Demonstrates some understanding of writing assignment
- Targets reader as belonging to generic group
- Purpose unclear; Misjudges audience's values/interests
- Incorporates both relevant and non-relevant messages
- Conveys some knowledge of topic; Uses incomplete analysis

**Proficient**
- Demonstrates thorough understanding of assignment and objectives
- Identifies target audience and motivates them to act
- Creates effective narratives; Understands audience's values/interests
- Incorporates business concepts and to advance writing task
- Conveys knowledge; Uses effective analysis to gain reader's attention

**Professional**
- Demonstrates thorough understanding of assignment and objectives
- Identifies target audience and motivates them to act
- Creates powerful narratives using audience's values and interests
- Incorporates powerful language and examples to advance message
- Conveys knowledge, triggers reader to take action

#### LITERACY

**Unprofessional**
- Sentence structure awkward; Ideas and messages lack cohesiveness
- Uses ineffective grammar, spelling, and punctuation; Damaging credibility
- Language usage reflects limited vocabulary and topic knowledge
- Document is organized or coherent

**Developing**
- Sentence structure is not clear; Significant distractions
- Proofreads but misses numerous errors
- Language usage detracts from tasks and undermines outcomes
- Document attempts to model format, but contains design errors

**Proficient**
- Sentence structure promotes narrative and provides variety
- Proofreads to eliminate most errors; Enhances overall credibility
- Language usage conveys knowledge of business concepts
- Document follows expected written business format for task

**Professional**
- Sentence structure creates powerful messages
- Makes few grammatical errors; Uses business concepts to improve credibility
- Language usage reflects thorough knowledge of business concepts
- Document's format adds to impact of arguments

#### ENGAGEMENT

**Unprofessional**
- Writing shows little or no awareness of reader's needs
- Design undermines writer's ability to build relationship with reader
- Writing reduces credibility with reader and/or impairs branding
- Design prevents circulation to others
- Document undermines networking

**Developing**
- Writing shows awareness of reader's needs
- Design develops reader's understanding; Promotes task
- Writing builds some credibility and/or promotes branding
- Design limits circulation to others
- Document constrains networking

**Proficient**
- Writing shows awareness of reader's needs to motivate the reader to action
- Design provides stronger interconnection with target audience
- Writing enhances credibility and impact of branding
- Design prevents circulation to others
- Document promotes networking

**Professional**
- Writing uses an awareness of reader's needs to motivate the reader to action
- Design provides strongest interconnection with target audience
- Writing increases credibility and impact of branding
- Design maximizes social networking

### KEY
- N - No action component of a document
- L - Level of writing skill
- C - Communicative action - Effect

### ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT FORM
- This form evaluates your writing by examining the document's strategy, literacy, and engagement.

### ECU COLLEGE OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION CENTER
- ASSESSMENT FORM: WRITING