

# COMM1010: The Skills in Unit 3

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## WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn how productivity, technology, and self and social awareness can help you improve your written communication. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

## 1. Skills in This Unit

As you move on with this third unit, you will explore all aspects of written communication. Whether you are writing an email, developing your resume, or writing a report for school, the words you choose and how you organize them matter. By focusing on the 10 skills, you will begin to reflect on your current level of writing and take specific steps to improve.

Like it or not, writing happens every day all around us—texting a friend to meet, responding to an email from your professor, jotting down a quick reminder to a family member, or writing a letter to a community organization to take action.

If you are not careful about the terms you use and the tone you convey, you can easily be misunderstood.

➞ **EXAMPLE** Jargon and slang might be okay for an email to a friend, but would you use those same terms in an email to a coworker? What about grammatical errors? A few may be acceptable in a card you send to your brother for his birthday, but those same errors on your resume may be the difference between being hired and being passed over.

Just as these skills are important in oral communication, strong **productivity, technology, and self and social awareness skills** can help you craft a clear written message for any audience.

In particular, we will focus on the following:

### Productivity

- Being organized is key to communicating clearly and focusing on the purpose of your message.
- Choosing the most effective medium/format to deliver your written communication will ensure that your audience is more receptive to the message.

### Technology

- Being familiar with tools for written communication is key to ensuring you select the best one and use it optimally.

- Knowing what tools are available to review your written communication is important to ensure that you can make appropriate revisions to your message.

### **Self and Social Awareness**

- It is important to avoid jargon or slang, as they can often lead to miscommunication.
- Understanding your audience is key. This allows you to deliver the content they need in a way they will understand.
- Being aware of nonverbal communication and its meaning is critical to successful oral communication.

Throughout the course, be on the lookout for various call-outs to help you better see the connections between the skills and the course content.



#### **TERMS TO KNOW**

##### **Productivity Skill**

A skill that helps you organize your communication in the best way possible.

##### **Technology Skill**

A skill that helps you use digital tools to improve your communication no matter what career you pursue.

##### **Self and Social Awareness Skill**

A skill that helps you understand yourself and how you relate to others so you can modify your communication to any situation or audience.

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## **2. Top 10 Things to Consider Before you Hit Send on That Email**

Take a look at this tip list that can help you make sure you review what you've written *before* you hit send. Whether it's an email, a report, or a presentation, taking the time to look something over before you deliver it is a critical step to make sure your message is received as intended:

1. Make your point. Know the purpose of your email and be sure to get that message across.
2. Imagine your audience. Ask yourself whether your email's recipients will connect with what you've written.
3. Check your language. Use appropriate words for your audience: an email to your friend is different than one to your boss, coworker, or client.
4. Check your tone. Make sure your attitude is appropriate for your email. Avoid ALL CAPS, which can sound angry, and be careful of words that are overly emotional or judgmental of others.
5. Plan your structure. Organize your email so that the most important points come first, are easy to follow, and are clearly defined with bolded text or bullet points.
6. Avoid rambling. Be concise. An email should only discuss one subject. Reading long emails with irrelevant information is nobody's idea of a good time.
7. Be prompt. Don't leave them hanging; respond in a timely fashion.
8. Spell check. Show you care with a quick review. Spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors can compromise your credibility.

9. Include subject, salutation, and signature. Include a descriptive subject, an appropriate greeting, and a signature with your contact details.
10. Read it out loud. Reading your most important emails to yourself out loud will reveal anything that's not quite working.

You can download this list as a PDF below to keep for yourself as a reminder to practice good written communication.



## SUMMARY

In this lesson you learned that written communication has many aspects. Things like tone, word choice, and organization all matter, and all of these can be improved by strengthening your 10 skills. The **skills in this unit** include productivity, technology, and self and social awareness. Strong productivity skills can help you stay organized and focused, while strong technology skills can help you select the best tool for any job. Self and social awareness is critical to taking the right steps when it comes to word selection and avoiding any misunderstandings.

As you work through Unit 3, keep these skills in mind and consider how you can strengthen them to improve your written communication. Additionally, the list of the **top 10 things to consider before you hit send on that email** will help you practice your skills to ensure your written message is clear.

Best of luck in your learning!



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### Technology Skill

A skill that helps you use digital tools to improve your communication no matter what career you pursue.