

***Business Communication - Process & Product 11th
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Chapter 01 Business Communication in the Digital Age

1. Today's new communication technologies have made writing skills less important than in the past.
- a. True
 - b. False

ANSWER: False

2. *E-commerce* refers to mobile technology businesses.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

3. Your comments on LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook can help you build your professional brand.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

4. *Fake news* refers to misinformation that comes from both accidental untruth and intentional untruth.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

5. Flattened management hierarchies allow companies to react more quickly to market changes.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

6. Diverse workforces are more likely to create the products that consumers demand.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

7. *Sharing economy* refers to full-time positions being divided over two employees working part-time.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

8. E-mail is rapidly becoming the preferred communication channel for online customer service.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

9. Backchannel communication refers to the conversations that occur prior to a meeting or presentation to aid in its planning.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

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10. Internal communication includes sharing ideas and messages with superiors, coworkers, and subordinates.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

11. Akila is sending an e-mail message to the Securities and Exchange Commission to ask about a specific Sarbanes-Oxley regulation. This is an example of internal communication.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

12. According to media richness theory, face-to-face conversations are the richest because they provide more helpful cues and allow for immediate feedback.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

13. Social presence is greater in asynchronous communication (e-mail, forum post) than in synchronous communication (live chat, IM).

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

14. Information flows through formal communication channels in three directions: downward, upward, and spiral.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

15. Shreya, a company department manager, frequently communicates via text messages with other department managers within the company. This is an example of an upward flow of communication.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

16. Mia, a payroll clerk, came up with an idea for processing payroll more efficiently and presented it to the Human Resources Department manager. This is an example of an upward flow of communication.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

17. A company's CEO has developed a five-year strategic plan and will share it with all employees. This is an example of downward communication.

- a. True
- b. False

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ANSWER: True

18. To improve information flow, many of today's companies have decreased the number of operating units and managers, thereby shortening lines of communication.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

19. Managers can use the grapevine productively by sharing bad news as well as good news.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

20. Ethical standards usually consist of convenience, personal goals, and company profits.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

21. E-mail is considered a leaner medium than face-to-face communication.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

22. Social media apps are considered *disruptive* technologies because they hinder our workplace productivity.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

23. Communicators who intentionally obscure meaning with long sentences and difficult words are being unethical.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

24. Items found on the Internet, such as news articles, photos, and music, are in the public domain and free to be used or shared.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

25. The term *information worker* refers to an employee who is responsible for creating and maintaining company databases.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

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26. One challenge posed by flatter organizations is that every employee must be a skilled communicator.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

27. Project-based teams are becoming a thing of the past as workers are dispersed in various locations.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

28. External communication for routine purposes is likely to be handled via e-mail.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

29. *Digital nomads* refer to workers who are unable to travel because they must be on site to troubleshoot company technology issues.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

30. Which of the following statements about communicating in today's workplace is *most* accurate?

- a. Today's emphasis on teams means more face-to-face communication and less writing.
- b. Communication typically flows one way: from businesses to consumers.
- c. Writing skills are more important today than ever because online media requires more writing, not less.
- d. Increasing numbers of workers are enjoying more defined working hours.

ANSWER: c

31. Which of the following statements about writing skills is *most* accurate?

- a. Writing skills in today's workplace are an advantage, but they are not a necessity.
- b. Only the very top level of salaried employees need good writing skills.
- c. Having good writing skills can improve your chances for promotion and can result in higher earnings.
- d. Today's communication technologies have made writing obsolete.

ANSWER: c

32. In an era of *fake news*, you must develop the ability to accurately evaluate new information. An untruth that has been knowingly and intentionally shared as such is considered _____.

- a. misinformation
- b. disinformation
- c. information literacy
- d. decision information

ANSWER: b

33. Thinking critically means _____.

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- a. finding flaws in others' ideas
- b. going with your gut instinct
- c. being able to make decisions quickly
- d. having opinions that are backed by reason and evidence

ANSWER: d

34. Today's employees should plan for lifelong learning and constant training, actively plan their own career paths, and _____.

- a. limit their use of technology
- b. count on employers to provide clearly defined working hours
- c. expect to receive predictable pay increases
- d. be willing to continually learn new skills

ANSWER: d

35. The most significant trends in today's dynamic workplace include global competition, team-based projects, flattened management hierarchies, disruptive technologies, and _____.

- a. fewer written messages
- b. more homogeneous workforces
- c. expectations of around-the-clock availability
- d. stricter dress codes

ANSWER: c

36. Our current *sharing economy* refers to _____.

- a. the division of one full-time position over two or more part-time employees
- b. businesses conducting marketing via both traditional and new media
- c. the rise of app-based platforms allowing consumers to share services such as rides and lodging
- d. employees working primarily remotely instead of reporting to an office

ANSWER: c

37. Which of the following statements about diversity in today's workplaces is *most* accurate?

- a. U.S. workplaces are becoming less diverse as baby boomers are retiring.
- b. More diverse teams are more likely to create the products that consumers demand.
- c. The gender gap is lowest in the science and engineering fields.
- d. Workplace diversity is less necessary because the economy has already become global.

ANSWER: b

38. Hilda has recently begun working with a new group of people in her company to create new procedures for storing data. Once the new procedures are in place, the team will disband and members will be assigned to various other projects within the organization. This type of temporary formation is also known as _____.

- a. gigging
- b. contracting
- c. teaming
- d. sharing

ANSWER: c

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39. Kendra works largely from home but must occasionally go to her office for certain projects. There, she shares a communal office space rather than having her own desk and equipment. This trend is called _____.

- a. job sharing
- b. contracting
- c. coworking
- d. conferencing

ANSWER: c

40. Adding new capabilities to enable workers to move into different roles in an organization is known as _____.

- a. upskilling
- b. reskilling
- c. coworking
- d. quiet quitting

ANSWER: b

41. Expected changes in globalization are most likely to result in _____.

- a. a reverse in globalization as trade barriers increase and economies shift back to being more localized
- b. increased global competition for highly educated workers
- c. decreased cross-border communication and connectivity
- d. fewer struggles over intellectual property

ANSWER: b

42. The silent refusal of going above and beyond for a company that doesn't seem to reward great effort is known as _____.

- a. quiet quitting
- b. coworking
- c. upskilling
- d. reskilling

ANSWER: a

43. Which of the following statements about team-based management is *least* accurate?

- a. Many companies use cross-functional teams to empower employees and boost their involvement in decision making.
- b. When individuals on teams don't share the same background or training, working relationships can become strained.
- c. Some organizations form ad-hoc teams that solve particular problems and then disband once they have accomplished their objectives.
- d. Companies that use team-based management prefer to train employees in teamwork skills rather than hire new workers who already possess these skills.

ANSWER: d

44. The record job turnover that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic was known as _____.

- a. the Great Resignation
- b. coworking

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- c. quiet quitting
- d. the Fourth Industrial Revolution

ANSWER: a

45. Which statement accurately characterizes experts' expected impact of automation via AI?
- a. It will create more jobs than it will displace, and it will generate more wealth than the Internet did.
 - b. It will create more jobs than it will displace, but it will generate less wealth than the Internet did.
 - c. It will displace more jobs than it will create, but it will generate more wealth than the Internet did.
 - d. It will displace more jobs than it will create, and it will generate less wealth than the Internet did.

ANSWER: a

46. Which of the following statements about today's work environments is *most* accurate?
- a. The "anytime, anywhere" office means that employees work fewer hours.
 - b. "Co-working" requires employees having to be in the office at the same time.
 - c. Traditional offices do not contain flexible workspaces.
 - d. Working from home or on the road makes communication skills even more important.

ANSWER: d

47. The three basic functions of business communication are to _____.
- a. inform, entertain, and impress
 - b. inform, persuade, and promote goodwill
 - c. inform, persuade, and explain
 - d. inform, instruct, and entertain

ANSWER: b

48. Slack, Google Workspace, and Microsoft Teams are examples of _____.
- a. openly accessible social networks
 - b. blogging platforms
 - c. collaboration platforms
 - d. tablet computers

ANSWER: c

49. The synchronous digital interactions that run parallel to a meeting or presentation are called _____ communication.
- a. backchannel
 - b. real-time
 - c. disruptive
 - d. presence

ANSWER: a

50. Which of the following statements comparing oral and written communication is *most* accurate?
- a. Written communication provides a permanent record only if it is sent as a hard copy, printed message.
 - b. Written messages do not require as much thought as oral messages.
 - c. One advantage of oral communication such as a face-to-face meeting is that it allows for immediate feedback.
 - d. Oral communication is preferred when presenting formal or complex ideas.

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ANSWER: c

51. _____ is rapidly becoming the preferred communication channel for online customer service.

- a. E-mail
- b. Live chat
- c. Texting
- d. Blogging

ANSWER: b

52. Which of the following is an example of an internal organizational communication?

- a. A social media post sent to a customer about a private sale that will take place tomorrow
- b. A Facebook page advertising a company's products
- c. A meeting of all department managers
- d. An annual report sent to company stockholders

ANSWER: c

53. Which of the following is an example of external organizational communication?

- a. An employee performance appraisal
- b. A brochure sent to a prospective customer
- c. A report recommending a change in company procedure
- d. An e-mail message to employees about an upcoming training seminar

ANSWER: b

54. Of the following media channels, which would be best for reducing ambiguity and decreasing the risk of miscommunication?

- a. A written report
- b. An e-mail message
- c. A face-to-face meeting
- d. A telephone call

ANSWER: c

55. Ayman must handle a complex organizational issue. Which of the following media would be least effective for this purpose?

- a. Videoconference
- b. E-mail message
- c. Telephone conversation
- d. Face-to-face meeting

ANSWER: b

56. *Social presence* is defined as

- a. how extroverted a person is.
- b. how well a company uses social media for communication.
- c. the degree of “salience” (being there) between a sender and receiver using a communication medium.
- d. a person’s ability to get along with others.

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ANSWER: c

57. Mina wants to use the communication medium with the highest social presence. Which of the following should they choose?

- a. E-mail
- b. Blog posting
- c. Discussion forum posting
- d. Live chat

ANSWER: d

58. Which of the following is an example of horizontal communication in an organization?

- a. Six marketing reps meet to discuss ideas for targeting new customers.
- b. An accounting clerk submits a progress report about a current project to her supervisor.
- c. An employee suggests to her supervisor a way to improve customer service.
- d. A supervisor sends an e-mail message to all division employees detailing the newest procedure for submitting expense claims.

ANSWER: a

59. Which of the following is an example of upward communication in an organization?

- a. Three administrative assistants meet to discuss possible software upgrades.
- b. A department manager sends a text message to his employees about a new overtime policy.
- c. A warehouse worker suggests to his boss a way to improve employee morale.
- d. The CEO sends an e-mail message to all employees inviting them to a company picnic.

ANSWER: c

60. Which of the following is an example of downward communication in an organization?

- a. A business professor submits a conference report to her dean.
- b. Four accountants meet to discuss the quarterly financial reports.
- c. Members of a task force submit a progress report to the CEO.
- d. The CFO sends information about a new accounting regulation to employees in the accounting department.

ANSWER: d

61. To improve communication and to compete more effectively, many of today's companies have _____.

- a. eliminated the grapevine
- b. restructured and reengineered themselves into smaller operating units and work teams
- c. discouraged free-flowing communication
- d. increased the number of levels in the communication chain

ANSWER: b

62. Which of the following is an example of an informal organizational communication channel?

- a. A supervisor gives a performance appraisal to her subordinate.
- b. An employee suggests to his supervisor a way to increase productivity in his department.
- c. Research and development team members hold a virtual meeting to discuss ideas for future products.
- d. An employee starts a blog to share her personal work experiences, opinions, and observations.

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ANSWER: d

63. Which of the following statements about formal and informal communication channels is *most* accurate?
- a. All relevant organizational information should flow through formal communication channels.
 - b. A free exchange of information within organizations should be avoided because it can lead to chaos.
 - c. Managers should do everything possible to avoid grapevine communication within an organization.
 - d. Companies should monitor social media sites to see what customers and others are saying about the company.

ANSWER: d

64. Covering up incidents, abusing sick days, lying to a supervisor, taking credit for a colleague's ideas, and inflating grades on a résumé are examples of _____.
- a. breaking the law
 - b. protecting your professional brand
 - c. unethical actions
 - d. workplace distrust

ANSWER: c

65. Making illegal copies of copyrighted music, games, software, e-books, and films is known as _____.
- a. backchannel communication
 - b. digital piracy
 - c. digital nomadism
 - d. quiet quitting

ANSWER: b

66. Ethical business communicators strive to tell the truth, label opinions so that they are not confused with facts, are objective, communicate clearly, use inclusive language, and _____.
- a. ensure that communication flows upward, downward, and horizontally
 - b. give credit when using the ideas of others
 - c. encourage feedback
 - d. choose appropriate channels of communication

ANSWER: b

67. When faced with an ethical dilemma, what is the *first* question you should ask?
- a. What would my family, friends, and coworkers think?
 - b. Would I take this action if I were on the opposite side?
 - c. Is the action I am considering legal?
 - d. Would a trusted advisor agree with this action?

ANSWER: c

68. Because your department has not reached its sales quota, your boss has asked you to change figures to show that sales were higher than they actually were. Which of the following questions is *not* important as you decide what to do?
- a. Is the action you are considering legal?
 - b. Are there better alternatives?
 - c. Would family, friends, or coworkers approve?

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d. What is the best channel of communication to use in responding to your boss?

ANSWER: d

69. Achieving literacy in the digital age requires using multimedia applications, staying connected to people and knowledge via technology, using technology thoughtfully and professionally, and _____.

- a. ensuring that you have the latest-model phone or tablet
- b. facilitating more face-to-face meetings
- c. learning various computer programming languages
- d. thinking critically about new media

ANSWER: d

70. Which of the following is the first step in solving business problems competently?

- a. Gathering the necessary people together for a face-to-face meeting
- b. Generating feasible ideas for a solution
- c. Understanding the problem clearly
- d. Determining a deadline for implementing the solution

ANSWER: c

71. How you present yourself in the virtual world is a reflection of how well you protect your _____.

- a. communication
- b. brand
- c. resume
- d. style

ANSWER: b

72. The impact of mobile technology and globalization on today's workplace includes the need for communication skills to be adapted to various cultures, workers expected to be accessible 24/7, multinational companies adjusting their products to meet cultural tastes and practices, and _____.

- a. writing skills becoming less important
- b. an increasingly blurred line between work and leisure
- c. more employees working part time
- d. less frequent communication among coworkers

ANSWER: b

73. "Flattening" of management hierarchies most directly refers to _____.

- a. fewer layers of managers separating decision makers from line workers
- b. employees being promoted to supervisory positions more quickly
- c. more managers overseeing decision making
- d. hiring freezes implemented to save money

ANSWER: a

74. *Virtual office* refers to _____.

- a. a smartphone app that aids in completion of administrative tasks
- b. a workspace that is mobile and decentralized

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- c. a brick-and-mortar building to which employees report to work
- d. a workplace environment requiring little to no interaction among employees

ANSWER: b

75. The “grapevine” is most accurately described as _____.
- a. frowned-upon water cooler discussions that impede productivity
 - b. an informal channel of communication that carries organizationally relevant gossip
 - c. an e-mail chain involving multiple people to make a decision
 - d. an organizational newsletter detailing recent accomplishments

ANSWER: b

76. Managers can use the grapevine productively by respecting employees' desire to know, acting promptly to correct misinformation, and _____.
- a. sharing only good news to keep employee morale high
 - b. sharing both good and bad news
 - c. decreasing the amount of information delivered through formal channels
 - d. becoming an active part of the grapevine to spy on employees

ANSWER: b

77. *Media richness* most directly refers to _____.
- a. the cost of the communication channel
 - b. the length of a written message
 - c. the amount of helpful cues and immediate feedback a medium provides
 - d. the level of the person who sends the message

ANSWER: c

78. Media with high *social presence* _____.
- a. involve written communication
 - b. are personal and convey warmth
 - c. are sent via Twitter/X or Facebook
 - d. must have a large audience

ANSWER: b

79. Language is discriminatory when it _____.
- a. stereotypes, insults, or excludes people
 - b. contains grammatical or mechanical errors
 - c. lacks clarity and conciseness
 - d. is not written in the reader's first language

ANSWER: a

80. Uber, Lyft, and Airbnb are considered disruptive technologies that are part of the _____ economy.
- a. smartphone
 - b. rogue
 - c. rental

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d. sharing

ANSWER: d

81. Though globalization of our economy has been positive in many ways, one negative outcome has been _____.

- a. for many companies, higher profits abroad than at home
- b. the devastation of industries and regions manufacturing low-tech products
- c. the necessity of flexibility, cultural awareness, and patience
- d. advances in cross-border communication

ANSWER: b

82. The radical transformation of today's workplace demands a well-trained workforce equipped with *soft skills*, which are sometimes also referred to as _____.

- a. cultural awareness
- b. diplomacy
- c. emotional intelligence
- d. academic intelligence

ANSWER: c

83. Sensitive communicators know the difference between facts and opinions. Which of the following statements would be considered factual?

- a. Consumers are willing to pay more for a product if they believe that it was produced ethically under fair-trade standards.
- b. Social responsibility is a marketing tool to increase sales.
- c. Women have been limited by the corporate "glass ceiling."
- d. Women are starting businesses at two times the rate of men.

ANSWER: d

84. In which part of the globe do today's workers put in the longest hours on average?

- a. Japan
- b. Europe
- c. United States
- d. Middle East

ANSWER: c

85. A _____ is a website that allows multiple users to create and edit pages collaboratively.

- a. blog
- b. wiki
- c. podcast
- d. toolbox

ANSWER: b

86. Identify and discuss the skills necessary to achieve digital age literacy. Why are these skills so important today in ensuring your continued professional success?

ANSWER: Student answers will vary and should touch on some or all of the following points.

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To achieve literacy in the digital age means not only using multimedia applications and snazzy late-model gadgets but also thinking critically about new media, especially during an era of fake news. It means using technology thoughtfully and in a professional manner to achieve success in a hyperconnected world. The twenty-first-century economy depends mainly on information and knowledge; in fact, the data that humans create and copy annually in the “digital universe” is doubling every 12 months. This exponential growth of knowledge is expected to continue and accelerate, making the ability to learn and analyze key to success.

87. Describe five trends occurring in today's dynamic workplace and discuss how communication skills are related to those changes.

ANSWER: Students will select five of the following and answers will vary.

Social media and changing communication technologies: To use new communication technologies, including social media, the Internet, e-mail, instant messaging, text messaging, voice mail, telephony, smartphones, powerful laptop computers and tablets, satellite communications, wireless networking, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, blogs, wikis, and presence technology effectively, skilled business communicators must develop a tool kit of new communication skills including how to select the best communication channel, how to use each channel safely and effectively, and how to incorporate the latest technologies and search tools efficiently.

"Anytime, anywhere": 24/7/365 availability offices: As you rise on the career ladder, you may be expected to work long hours without extra compensation and be available practically anytime and anywhere, should a crisis strike at work. In many industries information workers are expected to remain tethered to their workplaces with laptops, tablets, and smartphones around the clock and on weekends.

The global marketplace and competition: Successful communication in global markets requires developing new skills and attitudes. These include cultural knowledge and sensitivity, flexibility, and patience. If necessary, multinational companies even adjust their products to different palates.

Shrinking management layers: Today's flatter organizations require that every employee be a skilled communicator. Frontline employees, as well as managers, participate in critical thinking and decision making. Nearly everyone is a writer and a communicator.

Collaborative environment and teaming: When companies form cross-functional teams, individuals must work together and share information. These employees must develop strong interpersonal, negotiation, and collaboration skills.

Growing workforce diversity: Business communicators must be able to interact with many coworkers who differ from them in race, ethnicity, gender, age, and many other ways.

Virtual and nonterritorial offices: Working in open offices, having flexible working arrangements, telecommuting, and being a member of virtual teams all require the need for even stronger communication skills. Staying connected involves sending messages, most of which are written, meaning that one's writing skills are constantly on display.

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88. Explain *media richness theory* and give an example of a rich medium and a lean medium.

ANSWER: Student answers will vary.

Media richness theory attempts to classify media in organizations according to how much clarifying information they are able to convey from a sender to a recipient. The more helpful cues and immediate feedback the medium provides, the richer it is. The richest media are face-to-face conversations and meetings. The leanest media are newsletters, flyers, bulletins, and posters.

89. Identify and describe the three directions that information flows within organizations and discuss strategies for improving communication within each.

ANSWER: Student answers will vary.

Information flows formally in organizations in three ways:

Downward flow: Information flowing downward generally moves from decision makers, including the CEO and managers, through the chain of command to workers. This information includes job plans, policies, procedures, and feedback about employee performance. Today's managers recognize the importance of letting workers know how well the company is doing and what new projects are planned and can do this through a variety of channels including announcements, meetings, podcasts, and videos.

Upward flow: Information flowing upward provides feedback from nonmanagement employees to management. This information includes such items as progress reports and suggestions. Today, many companies are improving upward communication through (a) hiring communication coaches to train employees, (b) asking employees to report customer complaints, (c) encouraging regular meetings with staff, (d) providing a trusting, nonthreatening environment in which employees can comfortably share their observations and ideas with management, and (e) offering incentive programs that encourage employees to collect and share valuable feedback.

Horizontal flow: Lateral channels transmit information horizontally among workers at the same level. These channels enable individuals to coordinate tasks, share information, solve problems, and resolve conflicts. Today, many companies are engaging in the following efforts to improve horizontal communication: (a) training employees in teamwork and communication techniques, (b) establishing reward systems based on team achievement rather than individual achievement, and (c) encouraging full participation in team functions.

90. Discuss the importance of workplace ethics, including examples of (a) guidelines for ethical behavior and (b) questions to ask yourself when faced with ethical dilemmas.

ANSWER: Student answers will vary.

Ethics refers to conventional standards of right and wrong that prescribe what people should do. Dealing honestly with colleagues and customers develops trust and builds strong relationships, especially important in today's business environments. Guidelines for ethical behavior include abiding by the law, telling the truth, labeling opinions, being objective, communicating clearly, using inclusive language, and giving credit.

Questions to ask yourself when faced with ethical dilemmas at work include: Is the action legal? Would I do this if I were on the opposite side? Can I rule out a better alternative? Would a trusted advisor agree? Would family, friends, employer, or coworkers approve?