

One of two new books that have come my way in the Delta business communication skills series. An interesting feature of this book is the self administered student needs analysis to help the learner focus on what she or he really needs. A learning journal encourages students to review learning, supporting the back cover claim of a learner-centred approach.

The rest of the book consists of six units entitled *Getting started*, *Being clear and concise*, *Choosing the right level of formality*, *Getting the tone right* and *Checking before you send*. I straight away turned to the 'Right level of formality' section because this seems to be the most confusing area of emails. Here, students are exposed to different styles of email, different company guidelines and there is some useful work on formal and informal language, internet abbreviations (and when it is appropriate to use them), combined with more traditional activities such as putting sentences in the correct order to make a message.

Listening (from the audio CD provided) is integrated with email writing; students make notes on a telephone message and write an email in reply. Each unit is concluded with a section of useful phrases and vocabulary along with things like useful abbreviations and emoticons used on the 'net.

The resources section at the back gives exercises on things like email addresses, including terms like 'forward slash' and 'hyphen', and checklists for writing emails which look at tone, structure, clarity and purpose, things which do sometimes get overlooked in this genre. Finally, the tape scripts and answer key complete the book.

This is a slim book at around 60 pages, its large attractively produced pages actually contain a lot of information. I especially appreciated the tips in yellow boxes found on many pages. This book would easily supplement a business course or would be useful by itself for business people wanting to polish up their skills whether in class or at home in this ever evolving field of communication.

This book is almost identical in structure to the Emailing book in the same series, however, as you would expect, this book is rather more based on the accompanying audio CD. The recordings themselves are interesting, and they have been made as realistic as possible by using a variety of non-native speaker accents but without distorting the language.

Stress and intonation is highlighted in this course, and students' awareness is raised by listening, repeating dialogues, copying the intonation, and drawing arrows showing intonation. Stress and intonation is dealt with throughout the book and is related to the subject of the unit so for example, in unit 5, the stress patterns are related to the problems of talking on mobile phones and the ever present possibility of being cut off.

Unit 6 is devoted to conference calls and the language that is needed, which is a cross between language of phoning and language of group discussion. As with other units, students are encouraged to relate what they learn to their own experience and there is a strong learner training component in this book. Students are recommended to note phrases they find difficult and practise them, record themselves, and reflect on actual telephoning performance and think of ways to improve.

There are useful tips scattered throughout the book which cover everything from techniques such as echoing information for confirmation, to technical details such as the fact that you may experience delays in sound across time zones.

This book integrates language work, business etiquette and telephoning skills, and works well on all three levels. Students are well prepared for each unit by discussion and brainstorming tasks and even reading passages on the subject. and there is a nice sense of progression as one works through the unit.

**E-mailing
by Louise Pile**

ISBN1 900783 81 9

Delta Business
Communication Skills
2004

Reviewer:
Simon Mumford

**Telephoning
by Susan Lowe**

ISBN 1 900738 79 7

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2004

Reviewer:
Simon Mumford

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