Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks
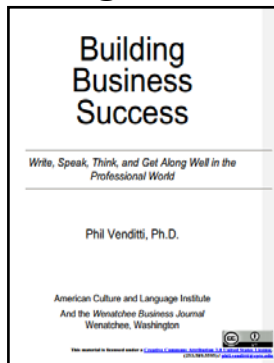
The California Open Educational Resources Council has designed and implemented a faculty review process of the free and open etextbooks showcased within the California Open Online Library for Education (www.cool4ed.org). Faculty from the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California were invited to review the selected no/low cost and open etextboks using a rubric. Faculty received a stipend for their efforts and funding was provided by the State of California, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Textbook Name:

Building Business Success: Write, Speak, Think, and Get Along Well in the Professional World

License:

Find it: eTextbook Website

Textbook Author:

Phil Venditti, Ph.D.

Reviewed by:

Leslie Collins

Institution:

Modesto Junior College
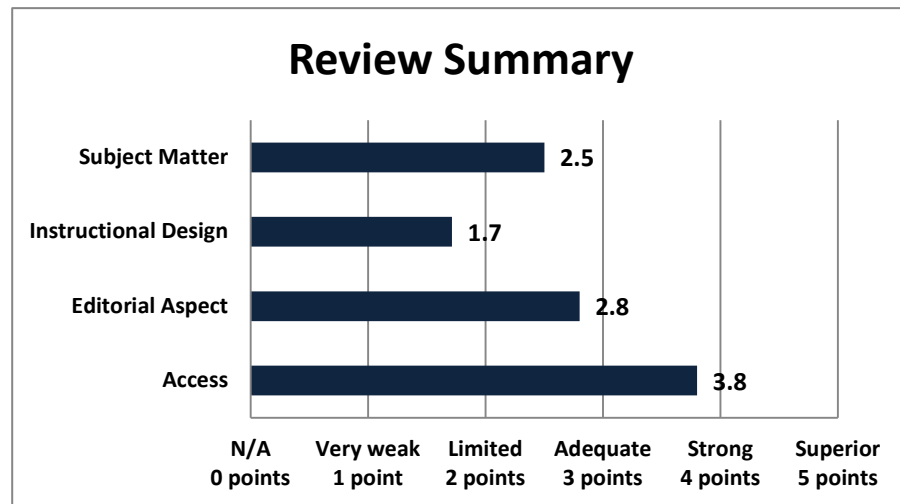
Title/Position:

Professor, Communication Studies

Format Reviewed:

Online Word Doc

A small fee may be associated with various formats.

Date Reviewed:

August, 2014

Review Summary

Category	Score
Subject Matter	2.5
Instructional Design	1.7
Editorial Aspect	2.8
Access	3.8

N/A 0 points	Very weak 1 point	Limited 2 points	Adequate 3 points	Strong 4 points	Superior 5 points

California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

CA Course ID: COMM 110

Subject Matter (30 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
Is the content accurate, error-free, and unbiased?			X			
Does the text adequately cover the designated course with a sufficient degree of depth and scope?		X				
Does the textbook use sufficient and relevant examples to present its subject matter?			X			
Does the textbook use a clear, consistent terminology to present its subject matter?				X		
Does the textbook reflect current knowledge of the				X		

Subject Matter (30 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
subject matter?						
Does the textbook present its subject matter in a culturally sensitive manner? (e.g. Is the textbook free of offensive and insensitive examples? Does it include examples that are inclusive of a variety of races, ethnicities, and backgrounds?)					X	

Total Points: 15 out of 30

Please provide comments on any aspect of the subject matter of this textbook.

The focus of this book seems more appropriate for a Business Communication course than a Public Speaking course. Only two chapters in the book focus on public speaking ("Pinballs and Presentations" and "Delivering the Goods"), and both of these chapters offer a cursory overview of public speaking in business settings. The textbook is written in the first person, and most of the examples come from the author's own experience. Because of this, the book reads more like a popular press self-help book than an academic textbook. There's value in the content, but it seems more appropriate for short supplemental readings rather than a comprehensive academic textbook.

Instructional Design (35 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
Does the textbook present its subject materials at appropriate reading levels for undergrad use?				X		
Does the textbook reflect a consideration of different learning styles? (e.g. visual, textual?)		X				
Does the textbook present explicit learning outcomes aligned with the course and curriculum?		X				
Is a coherent organization of the textbook evident to the reader/student?			X			
Does the textbook reflect best practices in the instruction of the designated course?		X				
Does the textbook contain sufficient effective ancillary materials? (e.g. test banks, individual and/or group activities or exercises, pedagogical apparatus, etc.)		X				
Is the textbook searchable?				X		

Total Points: 12 out of 35 points

Please provide comments on any aspect of the subject matter of this textbook.

- The subject matter and writing style seems more appropriate for a popular press publication than an academic textbook.
- The textbook is largely text-based and doesn't appeal to the needs of auditory or experiential learners.
- I did not see student outcomes designated in the book.
- A table of contents is present, but the wording of the sections and chapters leaves the reader uncertain about each chapter's content.
- Only two chapters explicitly focus on public speaking. Within those chapters, common terminology (vocabulary) about public speaking is not used.
- I see no ancillary materials.
- The textbook is searchable if one uses control f in Microsoft Word. There are no instructions for this feature.

Editorial Aspects (25 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
Is the language of the textbook free of grammatical, spelling, usage, and typographical errors?					X	
Is the textbook written in a clear, engaging style?					X	
Does the textbook adhere to effective principles of design? (e.g. are pages latid0out and organized to be clear and visually engaging and effective? Are colors, font, and typography consistent and unified?)			X			
Does the textbook include conventional editorial features? (e.g. a table of contents, glossary, citations and further references)				X		
How effective are multimedia elements of the textbook? (e.g. graphics, animations, audio)		X				

Total Points: 14 out of 25

Please provide comments on any aspect of the subject matter of this textbook.

- There are some formatting errors throughout the textbook, primarily where text boxes or illustrations break up the text.
- The textbook is written in a personal style that is clear and engaging. It's not an academic style, which some readers (especially my English Language Learner students) may appreciate. However, the writing isn't challenging enough to keep my stronger readers engaged.
- The book is primarily text-based. There are very limited visuals and no multimedia content. This is not a visually engaging text. It helps that the chapters are short, though, as Millennials struggle to pay attention while reading large chunks of text.
- There is a table of contents (hyperlinks would help connect to the actual content).
- There are no citations in-text or in footnotes, but most of the content is written from the author's own viewpoint and from his own experience

Access (30 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
Is the textbook compatible with standard and commonly available hardware/software in college/university campus student computer labs?					X	
Is the textbook accessible in a variety of different electronic formats? (e.g. .txt, .pdf, .epub, etc.)			X			
Can the textbook be printed easily?						X
Does the user interface implicitly inform the reader how to interact with and navigate the textbook?				X		
How easily can the textbook be annotated by students and instructors?						X

Total Points: 19 out of 30

Please provide comments on any aspect of the subject matter of this textbook.

- The book is currently in a .doc format in Dropbox, which would be accessible through any computer on my campus. Some students who do not have Word at home may have issues if they download the file and try to open it.
- The textbook can be printed easily.
- The table of contents will help students navigate the book. Hyperlinks between the table of contents, the index, the suggested readings, and the content will help students navigate more effectively.
- If the content stays in a .doc format, both students and faculty can download, annotate, and modify the content if they so choose.
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Overall Ratings (10 possible points)	Not at all (0 pts)	Very Weak (1 pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3 pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
What is your overall impression of the textbook?			X			
	Not at all (0 pts)	Strong reservations (1 pt)	Limited willingness (2 pts)	Willing (3 pts)	Strongly willing (4 pts)	Enthusiastically willing (5 pts)
How willing would you be to adopt this book?	X					

Overall Comments

If you were to recommend this textbook to colleagues, what merits of the textbook would you highlight?
- I would not recommend this book to a colleague for a college-level public speaking class.
- I may recommend sections of this book to a colleague who teaches Mediated Communication and another colleague who teaches Organizational Communication.
- I doubt they would use the entire book, but they might be interested in using a few of the chapters as supplemental readings.

What areas of this textbook require improvement in order for it to be used in your courses?
I need a public speaking textbook that focuses on the theory and practice of public speaking. This book

features a more holistic approach to business communication and is written in a popular press style. It's simply not a good match.

We invite your feedback on the textbook or the review to the textbook site in MERLOT.
(Please register in MERLOT to post your feedback.)

CALIFORNIA
OER
COUNCIL
CSU + CCC + UC

For questions or more information, contact the CA Open Educational Resources Council