

Originally taken from Santa Barbara City College  
Business Communication Syllabus Fall 2001  
Ron Adler

A Note About Deadlines

Deadlines are a part of virtually every career. Jim Walling, a former communication professor who is now Coordinator for Human Resources for the Auto Club of Michigan, described the importance of deadlines in a letter to Spectra, newsletter of the Speech Communication Association. It summarizes the policy in this class regarding deadlines:

There is a growing feeling in the business community that teachers may be too “soft” on students in requirements, standards, and deadlines, leaving students unprepared for the demands they are *expected to meet* in business and industry... As a college teacher, I was lenient with students about turning in assignments in on time, though the quality of late assignments seldom offset the privilege extended of a few extra days to complete the assignment.

In business I have never been allowed to turn in assignments late without *extensive* documentation that lack of timely completion was “due to circumstances beyond my control.” I can occasionally negotiate deadlines before a project begins, but once agreed to, I am committed. Planning and acceptance of responsibilities I assume is a way of life.

Were I to reenter the academic world, I would be “tough” on assignments, requiring them to be of high quality and on time. I would focus on being fair, but not relaxing standards of quality and timeliness - - -