

# [The engineering profession and communication](https://assignbuster.com/the-engineering-profession-and-communication/)

THE ENGINEERING PROFESSIONEngineering has been called an applied science that has as itsgoal the creation or improvement of products or technologies withimmediate practical application. Unlike scientists, engineers typicallywork on projects assigned by their management, most oftenwork in industry or government, conduct projects in teams, andfocus their goals on company or organizational success (Von Seggernand Jourdain, 1996). Engineers tend to be specialists who work to solve technicalproblems collaboratively with other engineers and with scientists. Typically engineers in both industry and academia ??? need more informationthan they generate,??? rely on personal information andexperience, seldom use libraries, and use more texts, technical reports, catalogs, and trade journals rather than scholarly journalsor conference papers (Leckie, Pettigrew, and Sylvain, 1996). The engineering profession is unique in many ways. For example, engineering is ??? context-specific and often involves proprietaryinformation??? and, as a result, ??? engineers tend to rely on conversationswith internal colleagues and clients??? (Veshosky, 1998). Scientists, on the other hand, are accustomed to external communicationsources, including academic journals and free exchangewith colleagues at other organizations. Engineers also communicatesome with external colleagues, but to a much more limitedextent.

The thinking process required in engineering requiresmore complex and abstract problem solving than most disciplines, so communicating with non-engineers may be difficult (Li, 1994). Although projects are assigned, engineers typically have freedomin deciding how to do their work and ??? they are expected tomake informed decisions in a number of situations where manypossible solutions are available??? (Hertzum and Pejtersen, 2000). The choices that engineers make in deciding how to approachtheir tasks and solve problems depends on their ??? understandingof the context of the task and, consequently, on their success inobtaining information about this context??? (Hertzum and Pejtersen, 2000).