Preface

The communication demands expected of today’s engineers and information technology (IT) professionals immersed in multicultural global enterprises are unsurpassed. Effective workplace and professional participation does not merely ask but demands proficiency in varied multi-media rich communication skills. Global industries, markets, and professional organisations require graduates who, in order to be work ready, need to be equipped with excellent written and oral communications skills, to be multi-literate in various digital, verbal and written modes of communication, as a baseline rather than optional extra capability. Trans-cultural multi-modal communication skills, now imbued with immense significance, are allied as a powerful and crucial determinant capability highly sought in trans-national and trans-cultural workplaces and professional communities. In the highly multicultural universities and colleges, the development of these skills among both faculty and students also has a direct impact on student learning outcomes as well as on the overall quality and content of educational programs. The acquisition of expertise in transcultural, multi-modal communication skills will greatly enhance the ability of students to apply and transfer their learning into their professional practices in increasingly globalised and demanding workplace settings.

However, research indicates a paucity of literature on the types of communication skills increasingly demanded and practiced in 21st century engineering and technology workplaces. Moreover, most of the literature on communication skills that is available is generic in nature, and by aiming at the higher education sector in general, ignores the specific requirements and contexts of the engineering and IT communities of practice. These points to the urgent need to close the performance gap in basic, let alone more sophisticated and technologically enabled communication skills for the engineering and IT professions. Therefore, current evidence points to a distinct need for a comprehensive resource for the learning of traditional as well as new 21st Century, new paradigm digital and trans-cultural communication skills in both workplace and educational settings in engineering and Information Technology.

The overall objective of this book is to provide a comprehensive resource for new and experienced professionals, as well as students and faculties/academics. All are stakeholders who have to come to grips with new communicative practices in increasingly trans-national, trans-cultural, and digitally-rich contexts. In doing so, the book aims to provide new and experienced practitioners, academics, employers, researchers, and students with international examples of best practices in new as well as traditional communication skills in increasingly trans-cultural, digitalised, hypertext environments. The book consists of 11 scholarly chapter contributions on diverse issues and trends in new media communication skills for engineers and IT professionals. This book will be a valuable addition to the existing literature and resources in communication skills in both organizational and higher educational settings. The book intends to incorporate the views of a wide range of stakeholders: practitioners, professionals, academics,
and students. The intention is to give readers comprehensive insights into the proficient use of a broad range of communication skills and tools critical for effective professional participation in the globalised and digitised communication environments that characterise current engineering and IT workplaces.

Arun Patil  
CQUniversity, Australia

Henk Eijkman  
University of New South Wales, Australia

Ena Bhattacharyya  
Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, Malaysia