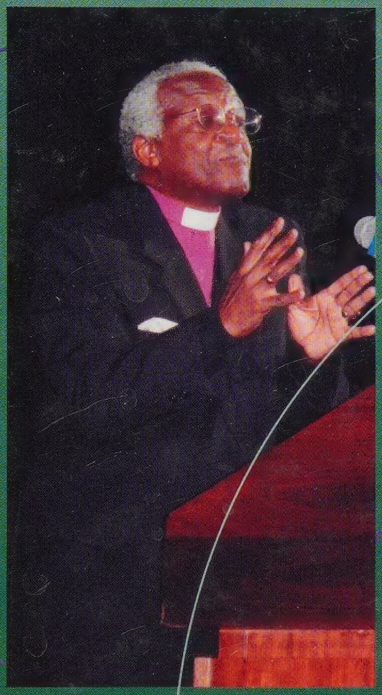
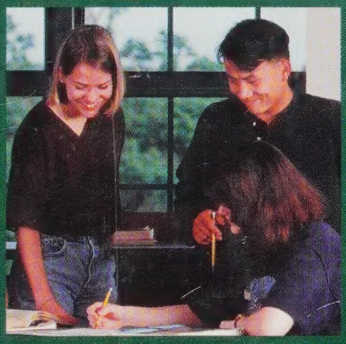
Applications.Communication

For Personal and Professional Contexts









James Payne

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Applications.Communication

For Personal and Professional Contexts

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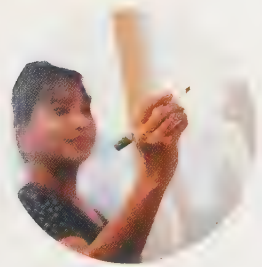
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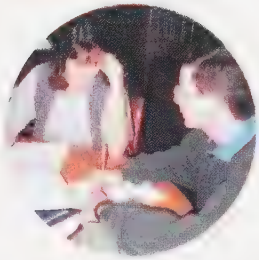
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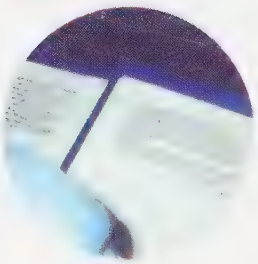
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Introduction

Key Concept

Oral communication is a very important part of everyday life. It is important to you because, as you make communication decisions, you are building your personal and professional future. Whether it is oral, written, or nonverbal, communication is what makes us human. It assists us in building relationships and carrying out daily work. Communication is also important to our society generally because it helps us develop a sense of community even though we are a diverse country with many differences of opinion. Through communication we discover our similarities of interest and purpose and can reach consensus or gain understanding on many issues about which we disagree



Introduction Objectives

- illustrate the importance of oral communication in daily life
- discuss social and ethical responsibilities of our communication decisions

Key Terms

- listener
- occasion
- self
- social/ethical responsibility
- task

Some things are so much a part of our lives that we don't even notice them. For example, most of us take breathing for granted. But if you study singing, you learn the mechanics of breathing so you can become a better singer. Most of us take eating for granted, until we want to improve our diet.

Like breathing and eating, communicating is part of our daily lives. Like breathing and eating, communication is really a requirement for survival. And like breathing and eating, we take communicating for granted...until we want to get better at it.

This textbook brings together a great deal of information on oral communication. When you read a chapter, you will get suggestions of what works for communicators and why. You'll get lists of ideas, paragraphs of explanation, and pages of suggestions. But everything in the book is designed to accomplish a primary task: We don't want you to take your communication for granted. To become a better communicator in personal and professional situations, you must become aware of your communication. You must reflect on it, talk about it with others, and plan for improvements.

This book is designed to help you with this first goal, and then to give you the kind of information you'll need for personal reflection, interaction with others, and planning for your future communication.

The Importance of Oral Communication

Even though you can all survive with the communication skills you currently possess, the value of effective oral communication—and of improving your skills—is immediately evident when you consider what it can mean to you.

Personal Importance. In some societies silence, or isolation, is the worst punishment that an individual can receive. Being a part of the lives of others and having them be a part of ours—can anything be more important? We want good friends. We want entertaining conversations. We want happy, harmonious relationships. How can we get these things we desire? Through communication. Does it sound too extreme to say our personal happiness can depend on our effective communication? What are the foundations for friendship and love, if not communication?

Professional Importance. Even if our social lives weren't dependent on effective communication, our professional lives are. In a work environment, we communicate with others to get a job done. When we communicate well, the

job is usually done better. The better the job, the more likely it is to be financially rewarded. In short, communication can help us realize our career and financial goals.

If that seems a little blunt, think about this: Which fast food restaurant do you want to eat in: one in which the manager can communicate effectively the importance of cleanliness or one in which the manager just hopes employees get the message? Many businesses don't exist today because people simply couldn't communicate well. Sadly, many people haven't thrived in their careers because they couldn't communicate well.

Social Importance. Think beyond yourself, and you will realize that effective oral communication is part of our drive toward improving our society. In fact, oral communication was so important that the Constitution's First Amendment guaranteed freedom of speech. Throughout the history of the United States, we have cultivated the belief that freedom and democracy depend on the open exchange of ideas.

Now think of yourself. What kind of society do you want to live in? One that promotes effective oral communication so the society can thrive and improve or one that ignores the need for effective oral communication?

Choices. Ultimately, improving your personal communication means giving yourself more choices. The more people with whom you can communicate, the more friends and acquaintances you'll have. The more you can take advantage of professional speaking opportunities, the more likely you'll be to receive promotions, raises, and job offers. The more you participate in the political and social discussions of your community, the more you'll understand and the more you can make your opinions known, and the more influence you can have over policies and events that affect you. Choice is another thing we take for granted. Think about how your own personal choices will increase as you improve your communication skills.

Social and Ethical Responsibility

As you can tell, communication is powerful; and with power comes responsibility. If communication can give you the power to make friends, it can give you the power to create enemies. If it can improve your professional and financial life, it can harm someone else's. If you can use communication to improve society, you can also use it to hurt society. And communication can be misused to restrict choices instead of to increase them.

Communication really is about others. Certainly, as we will discuss, you can communicate with yourself, but that will soon give way to a need to be with

and speak with others. Because your communication affects others, you must consider your social and ethical responsibility to others. Here are a few social responsibilities for you to consider as you begin this course of study.

Characteristics of communication	Implications for communicators
Socially and ethically responsible communication is honest.	Socially and ethically responsible communicators tell the truth.
Socially and ethically responsible communication is polite.	Socially and ethically responsible communicators respect the feelings of others.
Socially and ethically responsible communication is mutual.	Socially and ethically responsible communicators listen to and acknowledge the communication of others.
Socially and ethically responsible communication changes the lives of those around them.	Socially and ethically responsible communicators consider the effect of their communication.
Socially and ethically responsible communication is helpful.	Socially and ethically responsible communicators enable others to be better...personally and professionally.

These principles might seem simple to you, but they are anything but. Just think, if socially and ethically responsible communicators respect the feelings of others and tell the truth, what do you do if the truth hurts the feelings of others? That's not so easy. One thing you can do is tell the truth in a kind way, a way that will not hurt someone else. Again, this book asks that you keep your social and ethical responsibilities in mind as you improve your communication.

Standards for Decision Making

Effective communication means effective decision making. You have the power to choose what you say, how you act, how you affect others. This text will gradually introduce you to many important ways of making those decisions. As you move forward, though, you'll always keep four things in mind: yourself, your listeners, your occasion, and your task.

Self. Communication is self-expression. You communicate to build a bridge between yourself and others. To do this, you must be comfortable with your message, with what you want to say. You'll always want to consider yourself in making communication decisions.

Does that seem selfish? Perhaps. But it is also respectful of others. Other people deserve to know the real you. What do you feel? What do you think?

How do you react to them? Your personal message is the motive for most communication. You feel a need to communicate. While you'll always need to consider others, you can't lose sight of yourself as the beginning of your communication.

Listener. Since thought and life experience will give you an idea of your personal message, this book focuses a great deal of attention on listeners. In fact, the approach this book takes is to get you to see the communication situation from the listener's point of view, to understand the listener and how he or she thinks. You'll be encouraged to evaluate the success of your communication on how your listener responds. The listener becomes, therefore, a basis for making communication decisions.

Occasion. Every communication act occurs somewhere, sometime. Often the best guide you have for knowing how and what to communicate is the occasion. This book will ask you to think about the communication situation, your role in it (self), and the role of your listener in it. As you can see, self and listener come together in the occasion, which forms a third basis for decision making.

Task. You'll want your communication to accomplish a goal or task. You'll make your communication decisions, in part, on what task you are trying to accomplish. This text suggests many common tasks that you will undertake. We hope it will give you many examples of the types of personal and professional tasks that most of us undertake every day. We hope it will help you see how those tasks can be managed with better communication.



Introduction
Summary

This text proceeds from the idea that you want to improve your communication. More than that, it is built on the idea that when you improve your own communication, you will improve your life...personally and professionally. By practicing responsible communication, you will meet your own needs while benefiting others. We cannot live our lives taking our communication for granted. It is far too important to forget about. Like eating and breathing, it keeps us alive.




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Unit One
Applications.Communication Basics

Application.Communication Process 1

Application.Communication Management 2

Application.Listening 3

Application.Language 4

Application.Nonverbal Communication 5

1

Chapter One
Application.Communication Process

Key Concept

Improving communication skills and abilities requires us to talk about communication. We can talk about communication only when we have a common vocabulary.

Chapter Objectives

- define communication
- define metacommunication
- identify and analyze the related components of the communication process
- develop a basic vocabulary for talking and writing about communication



Key Terms

- channel
- communication
- communication imperative
- context
- feedback
- interference
- interpersonal communication
- intrapersonal communication
- mass media
- message
- metacommunication
- person-to-group communication
- receiver
- sender

We all communicate every day. So we think we understand what it is. Before you read any further, write down your definition of communication. Don't misplace it. We'll get back to it later in the chapter. Communication does come naturally to us. So, we think very little about calling someone on the phone or sending a e-mail just to ask them how they are doing. We often give thought to communication if we think it is likely to be special. For example, we prepare for a job interview or a speech. We think through what we're going to say. We even rehearse. But sometimes in day-to-day communication at work or in our social lives, we don't think about communication. We just "let it happen." Sometimes "letting it happen" works out very well. No one wants to believe that all communication is planned. Other times, if we would just stop to think about our communication, we could avoid misunderstandings, communicate more clearly, be more productive, and just get along better. Consider these two scenes:

Scenario #1

The time is Friday afternoon. This communication interaction takes place in Pilar's office. Pilar is a manager of an office that processes orders for a computer firm. The people in Pilar's office are present for a weekly wrap-up of the activities and planning for next week's needs—James, who is responsible for keeping the office on its schedule; Alicia, who is responsible for the computers and technology in the office; JaRon, who communicates regularly with the sales people who turn in the orders.

Pilar: *James, we have an important order coming through next week. The west coast order will be our biggest sale this quarter. Is everything in place to move the work through the office and make sure the order gets to warehouse and shipping?*

James: *That shouldn't be any problem, Pilar. We're in good shape. Is there any reason you think we'd have trouble? We've handled orders bigger than this.*

JaRon and Alicia remain silent.

Pilar: *No concerns. I just thought...*(Pilar's phone rings, interrupting her sentence. Pilar answers the phone.)

Sylvia: *Pilar here. May I help you?*

James: (to JaRon and Alicia): *If this order is so important, why does she take this phone call in the middle of our meeting? We've handled these orders before. What's the problem with what we've been doing?*

JaRon shakes his head and Alicia looks down at her notepad.

James: *I guess we all feel the same way.*

Scenario #2

The time is Friday afternoon. This interaction takes place in James' office before the weekly department meeting. Only Pilar and James are present.

Pilar: *James, when we meet this afternoon, I'm going to want you to speak about the upcoming west coast order. Since it's likely to be the biggest order we have this quarter, I want to be ready. (James furrows his brow.) You look concerned. Did something I said bother you? Are you okay with reviewing our procedures?*

James: *Sure. I guess I don't quite understand why. Do you have any specific concerns?*

Pilar: *No, not really. But since Alicia hasn't been here when we've processed an order this large, I'd like to have you review what we'll be doing to handle the increased paperwork. It might set her mind at ease. Also, she'll be more comfortable asking you questions if she knows that you've been through this before.*

James: *Do you want me to emphasize anything particular?*

Pilar: *Not really. I just thought...*(Pilar's phone rings.)

James: *You want to get that call?*

Pilar: *No, my assistant can pick it up at her desk. I want to be sure you're okay with doing the review. Don't emphasize anything particular, unless you think it's something Alicia needs to know.*

James: *I'll be ready. I'll even bring in that flowchart I made to show the sales staff.*

Pilar: *Great. Thanks for handling that.*

Can you see the difference between the two? Scenario #1 doesn't seem as if it's producing the kind of results Pilar wants. In fact, instead of helping Alicia understand, Pilar seems to have upset James. Scenario #2 delivers the same message to James: Pilar wants him to review the office's readiness for the big upcoming order. But James takes this message much better than he takes the same message in Scenario #1. Why?

Analysis

If we are to become more effective communicators, we must become accustomed to "communicating about communicating." In other words, we must get used to thinking about what we say or do when we speak and listen. When we communicate about communication, we are using metacommunication. To make metacommunication a lifelong habit, we should first build a small vocabulary to help us.

Metacommunication: A Lifelong Skill for a Lifelong Learner

It's helpful to think of metacommunication as occurring at three different stages: anticipatory, adaptive, and reflective. In other words, we can metacommunicate before, during, and after communication. We practice this trait all the time, but we often aren't aware that we are doing it.

Anticipatory Metacommunication. Think about Scenario #2. It's obvious that Pilar has thought about her communication. She knows she has an upcoming meeting. She knows she wants James to review office procedures. She has communicated internally—that is, communicated with herself about the meeting and what she plans to do. She realizes that James should be given some warning about the meeting. Communication within yourself is called intrapersonal communication. Pilar has used intrapersonal communication to plan what she will talk about in the meeting and how she can best get James to help her. In other words, she anticipates the upcoming communication and plans for it.

This is anticipatory metacommunication. By thinking through (in a way, talking to herself) about her communication, Pilar has avoided problems that could come about in the message she plans to give during the meeting. But anticipatory metacommunication can also take place with others. If Pilar had shared her upcoming meeting agenda with another person, talked to her, and

listened to her, she would also have anticipated the communication with another person.

Adaptive Metacommunication. We do the same thing while we are delivering a message. In Scenario #2, Pilar notices that James furrowed his brow. Her thinking probably went something like this: *James is furrowing his brow, looking concerned. I must have said something that caused him concern. I need to find out what it is, since I don't want James to worry that something is wrong.* This intrapersonal communication sounds a little bit silly written down, but this is the kind of metacommunication people do while they are communicating. Fortunately, we can talk or listen and think at the same time. Problems often result when we don't stop to think while we are talking or listening. When we stop to think about our communication, we are practicing metacommunication and adapting to the response we are getting from those who are listening to us.

Reflective Metacommunication. After we've finished communicating, we can also take time to think about what happened. When we think about communication "after the fact," we're involved in reflective metacommunication. This kind of reflection can help us understand what we did well, what we still need to do, and how we can improve.

Have you ever thought about something you said or heard and wished you could have done everything all over again? This often happens to us when we've been in a difficult situation. After it's all over, we think, "I should have said this or that. I guess I should have explained more carefully. Now what did I say that made that kind of impression?"

Communication Management—Metacommunication

Communication Management Metacommunication	Anticipatory Metacommunication	Adaptive Metacommunication	Reflective Metacommunication
When?	• prior to the actual speech, conversation, or presentation	• during the actual speech, conversation, or presentation	• after the actual speech, conversation, or presentation
Why?	• to prepare for the communication • to plan for what you would like to happen • to anticipate problems and opportunities	• to judge how communication is going • to adjust what you say or do • to help your communication be more effective	• to look back on communication and determine its effectiveness • to find out if more communication needs to take place • to learn how to communicate better in the future
How? 	• spend time thinking about the upcoming communication • rehearse presentations • ask advice of others • recall past communication • research topic • understand audience	• maintain eye contact so you can gauge audience reaction • listen to questions or comments • be prepared to modify communication	• set aside time for an evaluation of the communication • ask others for their opinions and advice • listen • accept praise and criticism • follow up with people with whom you communicated • determine if the communication had the effect you intended

Preparing for Metacommunication

Since we are practicing metacommunication all the time, you may wonder, "What is there to learn about it?" Just as with any other subject, we can learn to communicate about communicating when we develop a good vocabulary and an understanding of process.

For example, you might be interested in a sport such as soccer. If you're going to talk meaningfully about soccer, you must know the names of the positions and the various skills. In other words, you need to know the vocabulary. Also, you need to know the rules, or how the game is played. You need to know the process.

When you're thinking and talking about communication, you also need to know the vocabulary and the process. Without the right words, you can get confused. Without understanding the process, you can't think clearly about communication. Without vocabulary and process, you're a little like a spectator at a soccer match who has no knowledge of the game. You can observe what's happening, but you can't describe it. You might know when something good happens, but you can't say why it happened. And you certainly can't tell exactly what to do to help the players play better.

Key Terms in the Communication Process

While you cannot learn every communication term at once, several key terms help you get started. They are the basic terms for understanding the communication process. They are essential to metacommunication.

Sender: The sender initiates the communication.

Receiver: The receiver is the target of the communication.

Message: The message is whatever the sender communicates to the receiver.

Channel: The channel is the means used to transmit the message from sender to receiver.

Feedback: Feedback is the response the sender gets from the receiver.

Interference: Interference is anything that blocks or hinders the reception or intended interpretation of the message or the feedback.

Context: Context is the time or place where communication occurs.

These terms help us understand (and talk about) any communication act. In the examples that began this chapter, we can see all these terms in action. Pilar initiates the communication, so she is referred to as the sender. While there are multiple receivers in Scenario #1, James is the most obvious receiver in both. The message that Pilar intends is "I want you to review office procedures." Of course, the message is received differently in the scenarios. The channel is the "oral/verbal" channel. Pilar chooses to speak her message to James. There are several examples of feedback. For example, when James furrows his brow, he is responding to Pilar's message. He is responding through a nonverbal channel, which doesn't include words. The phone call is interference, especially in the first example, since it detracts from Pilar's intended meaning. Finally, the context for Scenario #1 is the weekly department meeting. The context for Scenario #2 is different: No one is present but Pilar and James, and the communication takes place prior to the department meeting.

Communication Management—Synonyms

Sometimes the terminology for communication includes synonyms. These words have the same or similar meanings to the words emphasized in this chapter.



Sender	Receiver	Message	Channel
speaker	audience	communication	media
communicator	listener	the point	method
self			means

Feedback	Interference	Context
feedback loop	noise	situation
response	communication failure	environment
	interruption	occasion
	distortion	setting
	disconnect	

Communication Management: The Feedback Loop



Feedback is a term we all commonly use. We see newsletters with the title "Feedback." We hear teachers and bosses ask for feedback on their ideas. We get feedback when we are graded or evaluated. If we go to a fast food restaurant, there is likely to be a "feedback card" for us to fill out about the service we've received. But what exactly do these concepts of feedback have to do with communication?

First, we need a better understanding of feedback. Whenever you look at a system that is well-designed, you'll notice what is called a feedback loop. For example, a household heating system has a feedback loop called the thermostat. If you set the thermostat at 70 degrees, it constantly monitors the temperature in your house. If the temperature is 70 degrees or more, the thermostat signals the furnace to remain off. However, if the temperature drops below 70 degrees, the thermostat signals the furnace to turn on and heat the house until the temperature is back to 70 degrees.

The thermostat provides a feedback loop that constantly samples the product of the heating system (temperature) and adjusts the system to produce the desired results.

Definition: A feedback loop is a part of a system which continually monitors the system's output and adjusts the system for better production.

Examples of a feedback loop:

Quality control check: If a person on an assembly line has a quality control responsibility, he is part of a feedback loop. Let's say the assembly line is producing blue paint. The quality control (or "QC") employee might check the shade of blue at various stages in the process. If the color is not right, he can spot where the problem occurred and alter the production of paint to achieve the correct shade of blue.

A "pop" quiz: A teacher will, from time to time, ask students to take an unplanned quiz. While this may help keep students on their toes, it can also be an effective feedback loop. If the teacher is providing lessons on nutrition, the pop quiz can let her know if students understand the material. If students do well on the quiz, the teacher probably feels comfortable in continuing the lessons. If not, the teacher might go back and cover material the students do poorly on. The pop quiz helps the teacher adjust her instruction to produce the desired result: learning about nutrition.

A speedometer: As a driver approaches a reduced speed area, she might let up the accelerator. The speedometer lets her know how quickly she is slowing down. If she doesn't slow down quickly enough, she may use the brake. The speedometer is the feedback loop that constantly checks the system output (speed or motion) and allows the system to be adjusted to produce the desired result: a speed within the posted limits.

What does this have to do with communication? Well, when you are in a communication environment, you are always part of a feedback loop. For example, when you are speaking to someone, you can see the facial expressions that will let you know if you are being understood. You can tell if the person is listening. If you feel you aren't understood, you can change your communication by using different words, asking questions, speaking more loudly, etc.

Consider again the definition of a feedback loop: A part of a system which continually monitors the system's output and adjusts the system for better production. In communication, we are trying to produce meaning in others (or in ourselves). We monitor the system to see if we are producing the meaning we desire. If we are not, we change our communication.

If you are explaining to your supervisor at work why you need the weekend off to get schoolwork done, you are trying to create meaning that will convince her to adjust your schedule. If you are using the feedback loop of the communication process, you are looking for her words or expressions that will let you know if she is sympathetic. If she says something like, "This is going to be a busy weekend," then you might alter your communication. Instead of asking for the weekend off, you ask if you can have Friday and Saturday off if you promise to work all Sunday afternoon. You are doing just what the thermostat, the assembly line worker, and the speedometer do: You test the output of your system (your communication) and modify the system to produce the desired result.

A Communication Model

As with the example of soccer, knowing the key terms is not enough. If you know the word "goalie" and know what the goalie does, you do not necessarily know what a good goalie does or what rules a goalie follows. The same is true for communication. You know what a sender does, but how do all the parts of the communication process relate? How does the sender relate to the receiver?

One good way to understand the process is through a communication model. A model is a way of reducing a complex object or process to a simpler representation. A good model reveals the essence of its subject but does so in a way that allows easier understanding. In science, for example, you might use a model of an atom to understand the roles of the proton, electron, and neutron.

Building a communication model piece by piece can further our goal of understanding and using metacommunication. It is easiest to start with the first three terms: sender, message, and receiver. Viewed at its simplest, communication is a sender transmitting a message to a receiver: Pilar (sender) telling James (receiver) that she'd like him to review office procedures (message). It can be represented like this:



Figure 1.1
The Foundation of the Communication Process

This is the basis for developing our communication model. At times we might wish that communication were just this simple. Have you ever heard people say, "Just tell me what you want"? Well, this is the simplest representation of that feeling. But it does not tell us much about communication in the real world. Even if we were told what someone really wanted, how would we acknowledge that we understood? How would we clarify or question? This simple model allows for nothing but one-way communication. Communication in the real world is two-way. There must be feedback.

Feedback

Feedback is the response the sender gets from the receiver. Even if you say something as simple as "please pass the salt," you need feedback in order to know if your message was received clearly and accurately. If the receiver of your message hands you the salt, you know your message was received. If not, you know something is wrong.

In Scenario #1, Pilar (the sender) sent a message. When James heard the message, he became a sender as well. He responded defensively to Pilar. At that point, Pilar should have been able to tell that her message was not well received. We can represent the feedback like this:

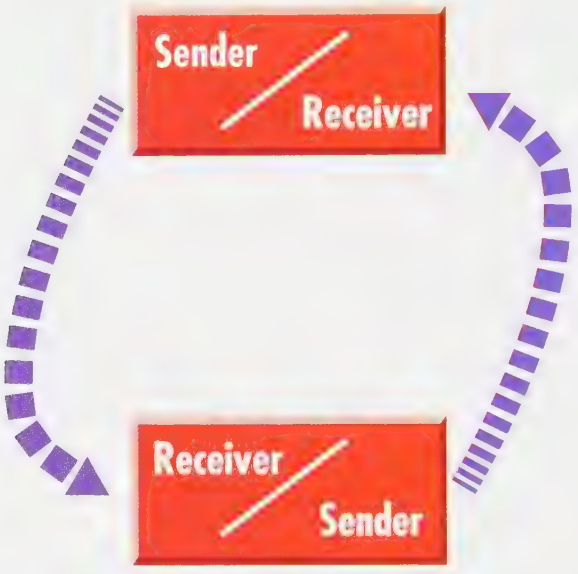


Figure 1.2
Feedback in the Communication Process

Note that feedback turns a sender into a receiver and a receiver into a sender. Why is feedback so important? In metacommunication, the sender can only plan and interpret if there is feedback. A receiver can only be an active part of the process if he or she can communicate back to the original sender.

With feedback in our communication model, we can understand why we say communication is circular. Like a complete electrical circuit, communication requires not only that a message is received but that a receiver can "talk back" to the original sender. Even if the feedback is not provided in words (such as James' furrowed brow), it can help refine and improve communication.

Feedback is essential to metacommunication. Pilar can plan her message by anticipating James' feedback. That is anticipatory metacommunication. She can refine her message by interpreting James' actual feedback. That is adaptive metacommunication. She can evaluate her own skills and improve her future communication by reflecting on what James said and did. That is reflective metacommunication.

Adapting your message during communication is extremely important. Without adapting, high quality communication could never take place. For

example, if you had only one idea in mind that you wanted to communicate to another person and could not change your message during your communication, you would say what you wanted and then stop, waiting to go to another topic. Would this ever lead to understanding or complex problem solving? Of course not.

Notice that including feedback blurs the distinction between sender and receiver. In our simplest model, one person is a sender and another is a receiver. How often in the real world is that the case? Even if you are taking orders from a boss or supervisor, you ask questions or share ideas. That's feedback, and it is part of real world communication. In the real world, we are almost always receiving and sending messages simultaneously. While we listen to someone explain a job to us, we nod our understanding.

Context

Now it is time to add the next piece of the model. Note that Scenario #1 takes place in Pilar's office during the department meeting. Scenario #2 takes place in James' office prior to the department meeting. Could this change in time and place make a difference in how a message is sent and received? Asking and answering that question is metacommunication. Think about James' response to Pilar in the department meeting. He was in her office. He was in front of people he worked with. It was a Friday afternoon. Could these factors have affected the way he interpreted her message or the way he responded? On the other hand, in his office with no one else around, he interpreted the message very differently. All communication occurs in a specific time and place. In addition, there are social and psychological aspects of context.

	Scenario #1	Scenario #2
Time	Friday afternoon during an office meeting	Friday afternoon, prior to the office meeting
Place	Pilar's office	James' office
Social setting	James' fellow employees are present	James and Pilar are alone
Psychological setting	James feels some pressure to respond to Pilar; he is surprised and confused.	James feels free to ask questions; he feels less threatened because Pilar has selected a safe place to share her plans.

While each dimension of context is listed separately, each affects the others. For example, the place, Pilar's office instead of James', affects the social and psychological components. To better understand context think about communication you might have with one of your teachers about a test grade. If the teacher says to you, "I'd like to visit with you about your last test," will you respond differently if you are in front of the class than if you are alone? Will you respond differently at the beginning of class than at the end? Will you respond differently after having seen your grade than before? All these changes are differences in context

In our model, we can represent context by surrounding the sender-receiver-message-feedback diagram with a simple square. That square can represent when and where the communication occurs. Think about context as containing the communication act.

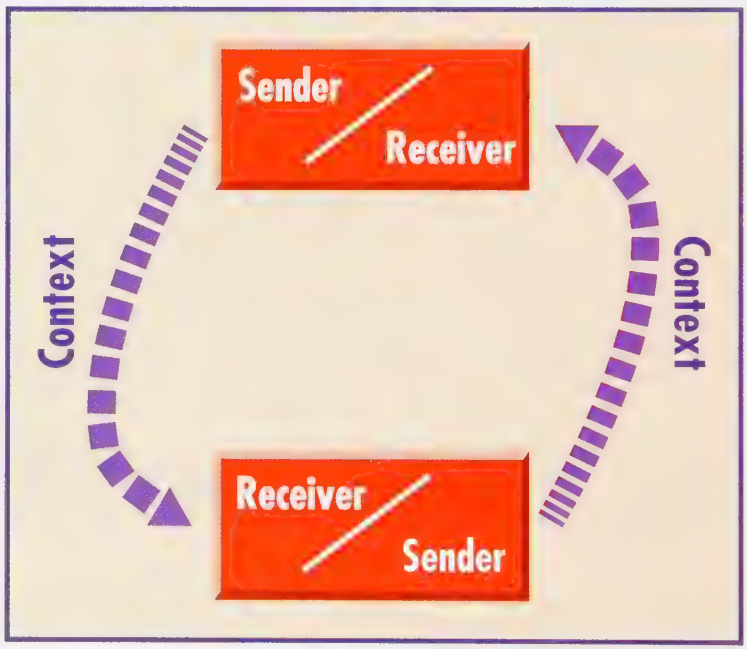


Figure 1.3
Context in the Communication Process

Interpersonal Insight



Social contexts form part of the communication situation. We move in and about communication situations as quickly and as fluidly as any organism in its environment. Communication principles apply to all of these types of social relationships. To help think and communicate about communication in various social relationships, think about two major factors in defining a relationship: duration and intimacy. A communication relationship has duration. It can be long (the relationship you have over many years with a family member) or short (the conversation you have with a stranger whom you meet waiting for an appointment). Furthermore, a social relationship has some degree of intimacy, from very intimate (your conversations with a best friend) to very casual (the conversation you have about your plans for lunch). This chart can show you how we must move from one social relationship to another many times in a day.

	High Intimacy	Low Intimacy
Long Duration	• family members • life-long friends • neighbors For example: high trust, high self-disclosure, development of personal meanings, physical closeness.	• business acquaintances • letter carrier For example: little personal self-disclosure, restricted topics, less physical closeness.
Short Duration	• psychologist • physician For example: high levels of self-disclosure, limited topics, high urgency.	• casual acquaintance • someone standing in line with you • someone you talk with in an hour-long meeting For example: small talk, reduced importance, little or no personal information.

Channel

The channel is the means used to transmit the message from sender to receiver. Just as television programs are broadcast over many channels, messages can be transmitted through many channels. When we usually think about communication, we naturally think about talking. But communication is more than talking. What about the communication that takes place when we notice someone's facial expression? Or when someone uses a pointing finger for emphasis? If metacommunication is going to become a lifelong habit, we must recognize that communication is more than just talking.

In the interaction between Pilar and James, Pilar chose to communicate orally to James. She could have sent an e-mail, which would have been another channel for communicating her message. James used both words (verbal) and facial expressions (nonverbal) to communicate his feedback.

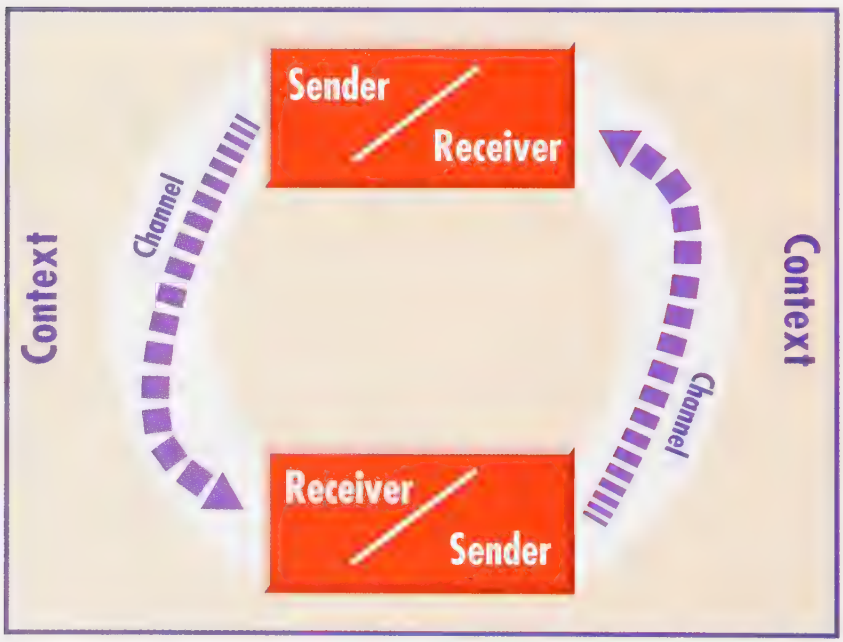


Figure 1.4
Channel in the Communication Process

Interference

Our basic model is incomplete without recognizing that not all communication occurs flawlessly. Sometimes the reception of a message (or of feedback) is blocked or distorted. Communication, even in its simplest form, is seldom perfect. Sometimes we cannot hear a message because of noise. Perhaps someone is blocking our view of a speaker. Maybe we carry in our own thoughts some prejudices or worries that cause us to misunderstand a message.

Interference is anything that blocks or hinders the reception of the message or the feedback. Our model should include the possibility of interference that can arise from the context, the sender, the receiver, or the channel.

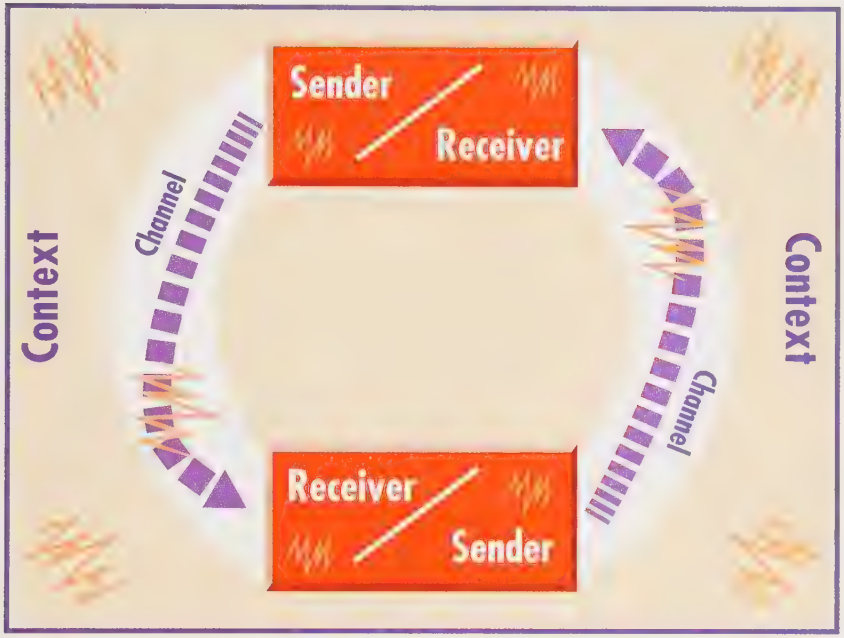


Figure 1.5
Interference

Consider sources of interference that arise in a context. The ringing phone that interrupts Pilar in Scenario #1 is a source of interference. It inhibits her communication because she chooses to answer it. James reacts negatively to Pilar's choice to answer the ringing phone. He thinks Pilar does not really care. Is this really the message Pilar wants to send? Consider Scenario #2. Pilar ignores the ringing phone. While its noise may interfere with the conversation, Pilar's decision to ignore the phone can communicate something important to James: Their conversation is more important to her right now than other demands on her time. James is likely to feel more important.

Interference can also arise within a person. In Scenario #1, James seems to be taken by surprise when Pilar asks him for an office review. He suspects that Pilar is not happy with the job he is doing. Perhaps he is tired; after all, it is Friday afternoon. Perhaps he is worried about how this question appears to his co-workers. Notice that in Scenario #2, Pilar anticipates these possible sources of interference and holds a "pre-meeting" with James to explain herself. By practicing metacommunication, Pilar avoids misunderstanding and a possibility of conflict with James.

Communication Management: Communicating Within Organizational Channels



In this chapter, we are developing a communication model. Many businesses and organizations, especially large ones, use another kind of model: an organizational chart. The purpose of an organizational chart is to identify lines of authority, or hierarchy, in an organization. Even those of you who work in a fast food restaurant are part of a line of authority. Generally, the "higher" a box is on an organizational chart, the more authority the person in the box has. In the example below, the vice-president is the person with the greatest authority, followed by the director, and so on. If boxes exist on the same level, the people in the boxes have roughly equal authority, even though they might be responsible for different parts of the organization. For example, the chart shows two assistant directors who have equal authority, although one is in charge of sales and one is in charge of business. The assistant director for sales supervises a sales staff. That staff is not in the office itself, since the line attaching it is a dotted line. The assistant director for business supervises four other people within the office.

An organizational chart can also be a guide to communication patterns in the organization. These patterns tend to follow some simple rules:

- People tend to communicate more directly with people who are in the boxes joined to their own. For example, we would expect the file clerk to communicate with the receptionist, the data entry clerk, and the office manager. We would expect much less communication with the specialist or the vice-president.
- There is a tendency for communication to flow "down." In traditional organizations, the boxes at the top of the chart communicate down, directing the actions of those below.
- The organization typically restricts "upward" communication to one level. Traditionally, a secretary with a problem should take that issue to the boss, not to the boss' supervisor. Jumping a level in communication is traditionally viewed as inappropriate. For example, the computer/tech specialist would take problems to the director and let the director take up the issue with the vice president if she thinks the vice-president needs to know.

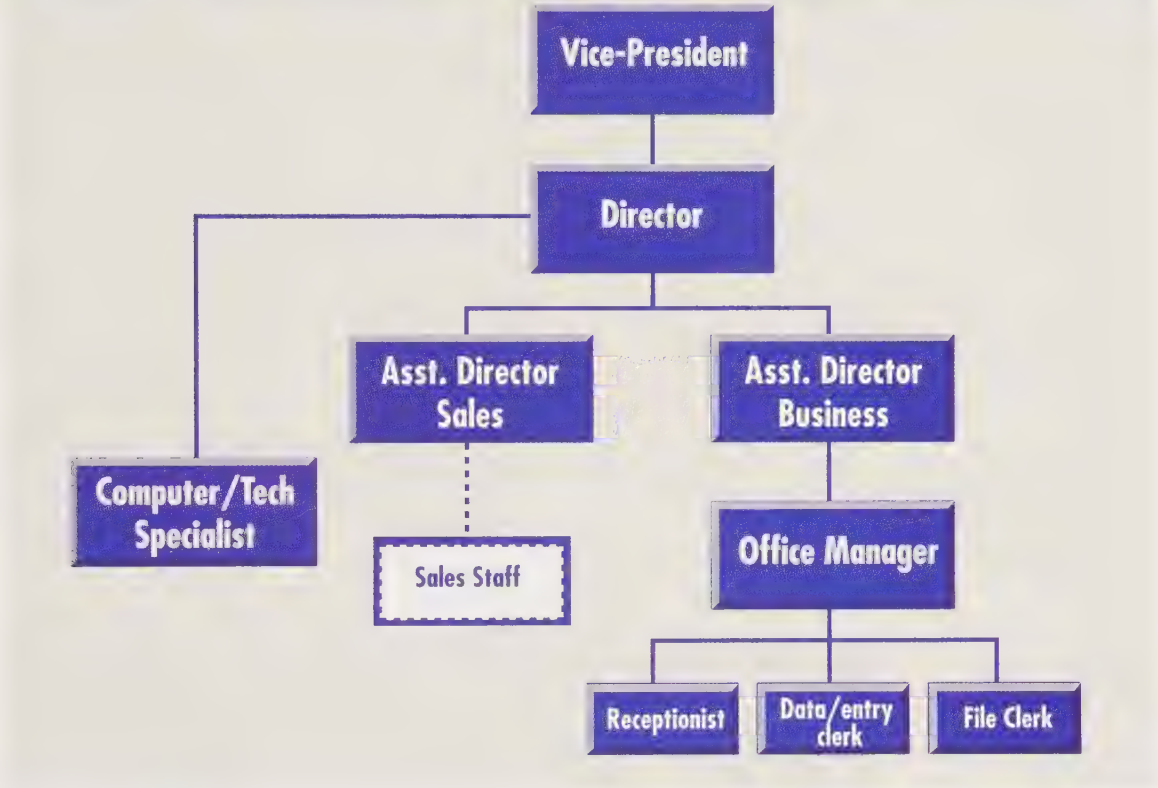
Based on the chart that follows and the "rules" above, what generalizations can you make about the communication in this organization?

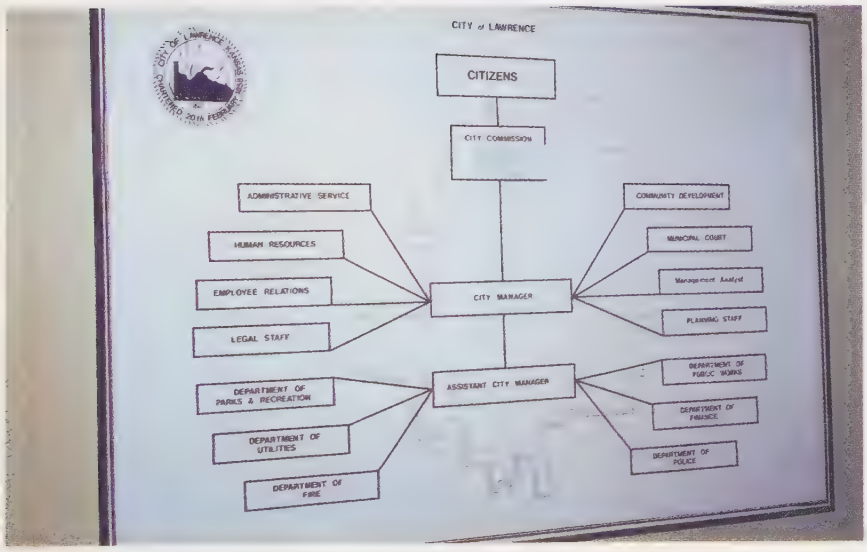
- Who is more likely to communicate directly with the public: the director or the receptionist?
- Who is more likely to "give orders": the office manager or the computer/tech specialist?
- What difficulties could arise if the receptionist, data entry clerk, and file clerk notice that the computer system isn't functioning efficiently? To whom would they communicate their concerns? How might that person communicate the issue to the computer/tech specialist?

How would each of these practices help or hurt communication within this department?

- Weekly meetings with the vice-president, director and assistant directors
- Regular meetings chaired by the assistant director for business and including the office manager, the receptionist, the data entry clerk, and the file clerk
- A suggestion box in the office
- Instead of a line of authority from the director to the computer/tech specialist, a line of authority from the vice-president to the computer/tech specialist
- A policy that states that all office communication about technology improvements and concerns may go directly to the computer/tech specialist
- An "open door" policy by the vice-president that allows anyone to schedule time to visit about any work-related topic
- A requirement that all office purchases must be communicated directly to the assistant director for business

If the goal of this department were to increase the frequency and quality of communication, what polices would you suggest? Would you re-draw the organizational chart? If so, how?





Position titles are an important part of any organization.

Expanding the Model – Group Communication

This simple model can help us develop the vocabulary and understanding to talk about an act of communication as simple as the one we've been using as an example. More important, it can serve as the basis for understanding other acts of communication as well. Instead of considering just Pilar and James, add the other two department members in Scenario #1, JaRon and Alicia. Adding them complicates the discussion of the communication, but does not change the terms or our understanding of the process.

The context is still the same. Pilar is communicating the same message. But there are now three receivers and three instances of feedback. Moreover, the feedback is not simply directed to Pilar. All group members are senders and receivers of feedback.

It is true that JaRon and Alicia say nothing. JaRon shakes his head and Alicia looks down at her notepad. Even without saying a word, JaRon and Alicia become part of the group communication. James interprets both JaRon's and Alicia's actions to mean that they agree with him, but could they mean something else? Whatever JaRon's and Alicia's feelings, even saying nothing creates meaning for James.



The number of people involved increases the amount of feedback.

Expanding the Model – Public Speaking

The terminology of the model is still useful when applied to public speaking situations. The sender is the speaker. The receiver is the audience. Feedback can be applause, questions—any of the responses typical of a listening audience. Interference can be noise, a bad microphone, audience feelings, etc. And public speaking takes place in a context, too. Everything from the size of the room to the size of the audience to the audience's knowledge of and attitudes about the subject affect the context and impact the communication.

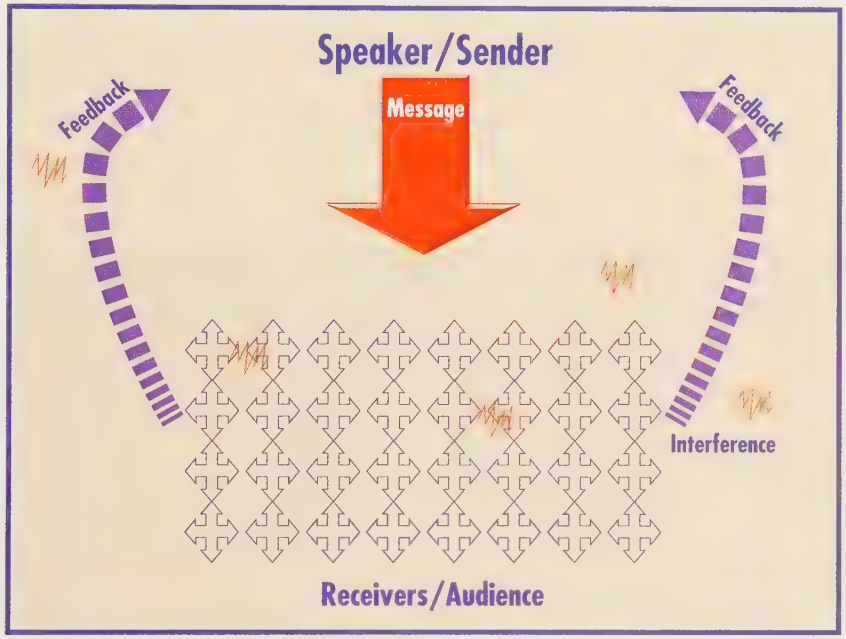


Figure 1.6
A Model of the Public Speaking Process

Defining Communication

With a model of communication developed, we can now attempt a definition. Communication happens around us all the time. We are part of it. But do we ever stop to define it? You were asked to do that at the beginning of the chapter. As you read this section, compare your definition.

Briefly stated, communication is the negotiation of a shared meaning. In other words, the presence of meaning means that communication must have taken place. If a work of art has meaning for us, then a form of communication must have taken place. The artist is a "sender" and we are "receivers." If an object has special meaning for us, communication is taking or has taken place.

Perhaps the communication is within the one person for whom the object has meaning, but the creation of meaning, even within a single person, is a form of communication.

Why use the word "negotiation"? Because in the action of communication we are sharing our understanding, trying to understand others, asking questions, and solving problems. As we progress through an act of communication, we deal with others so we can reach agreement on what we mean.

When we consider the kind of specific, intentional communication that we engage in with others daily, we can also say that exchanging messages is communication. After all, exchanging messages is creation of meaning. When communication goes awry, we say we failed to communicate. That isn't exactly accurate because some type of meaning was assigned to the message by the receiver. What didn't occur was a shared meaning. Through the use of metacommunication and feedback, the chances of negotiating shared meaning are increased.

Communication Management—Negotiations and Transactions



We're used to hearing the words "negotiation" and "transaction" in discussions about business. The terms are very useful in communication, too.

Negotiation in business is a set of messages, the purpose of which is to arrive at an agreement. In communication, we are always striving for an agreement about meaning. When we speak with others, we note when we aren't understood. We try to make ourselves understood by explaining, defining, relating a story. We want to be sure that the person to whom we are speaking shares the meaning we intend. That doesn't mean that they agree with everything we say, only that they agree with the meaning of what we are saying.

The word "negotiate" comes from the Latin word meaning "to transact business." Communication scholars say that communication is transactional. That means that communication, like negotiation, is ongoing, dynamic, and variable.

- **Ongoing**: Communication is ongoing because it is a process. Even when we stop talking, we are communicating with our silence. For human beings, the process of communication never stops.
- **Dynamic**: Communication is dynamic because it is always changing. In the simplest of conversations we naturally move from one thought, idea, or topic to another.
- **Variable**: The communication model we are developing shows that there are many parts to an action of communication. Change any one of these parts and the communication act itself changes.

These terms, although drawn from the world of business, help describe communication. For this reason, we often use the word "transaction" as a sort of shorthand for an act of communication.

Characteristics of Communication

We can make several highly important and descriptive statements about communication. Each of these statements expresses an important principle that can help us communicate better about communication.

Communication is all around us: We cannot avoid being part of communication processes. Everywhere we turn, meaning is created within us, and we are creating meaning in others. We read and talk. We listen and react. Communication is as human an activity as breathing or eating. We could say that communication is a human imperative. An "imperative" is something you must do. Put another way, you cannot "not" communicate. Even if you sit in class and say nothing, you are communicating because you are creating meaning. Someone might interpret your silence as boredom. Others might think you are snobbish. Still others might conclude that you simply haven't read the assignment. Even if you are absent from class, people find meaning in your absence.

Communication is complex: The model we've put together shows that even a "simple" act of communication involves many parts or pieces. We do it so often, we don't always stop and think about how complicated creating shared meaning can be.

Communication is multilevel: There are levels of communication. We can create shared meaning within ourselves or within others. We can communicate in a small group or in a very large group. We can communicate directly, or via a mass medium such as television or the Internet.

- **Intrapersonal communication:** The meaning we create within ourselves is called intrapersonal communication. We think to ourselves in words and images. We create meaning within ourselves. Before we communicate with others, we create within ourselves the meaning that we want to transfer with our message. Intrapersonal communication takes place when we think about the messages others send us. Without intrapersonal communication, no communication would be possible.
- **Interpersonal communication:** Interpersonal communication occurs in contexts where two or more people actively participate in exchanging messages. A conversation, a small group discussion, an interview—all are examples of interpersonal communication. The largest group that allows interpersonal communication among all members is about 10-14 people.

- **Person-to-group communication:** This level of communication is usually called public speaking. In this level of communication, one person is typically labeled the "speaker" and the other people are called the "audience." The members of the audience are typically not addressed as individuals. Instead, the speaker tends to address the audience as one "receiver." Examples include lectures, reports, speeches, etc.
- **Mass media:** Mass media uses technology to communicate the same message to very large groups of people. Printing enabled thousands and millions of people to receive the same message. Electronic media allowed thousands and millions to receive the same message at the same time. The Internet allows an audience to interact with the developer of the message.



Mass media communicates the same message to large audiences in multiple locations.

Public Speaking Application: Metacommunication

One of the most touching and most famous speeches of the past decade was given at the funeral for Princess Diana of Great Britain. Following her death in a car accident, many people around the world sought to blame someone for the death of the popular Diana. When her brother, Lord Spencer, gave Diana's eulogy at her funeral, the speech was immediately the subject of intense discussion. Was he too critical of the press? Was Diana's funeral the appropriate place for his comments? Was he criticizing the royal family (the Windsors)?

Following is the text of Spencer's speech. After reading the speech, consider the comments from public sources, two of which are included. Add your own comments. What was good about the speech? What should Lord Spencer have done differently? Why?

If possible, view a videotape of the speech. Does the viewing change your opinion? What kinds of comments would you make about Lord Spencer's delivery of the speech (remembering, of course, that he was speaking at the funeral of his sister)?

Text of funeral oration by 9th Earl Spencer
September 6, 1997
Associated Press

I stand before you today the representative of a family in grief, in a country in mourning before a world in shock.

We are all united not only in our desire to pay our respects to Diana but rather in our need to do so.

For such was her extraordinary appeal that the tens of millions of people taking part in this service all over the world via television and radio who never actually met her, feel that they, too, lost someone close to them in the early hours of Sunday morning. It is a more remarkable tribute to Diana than I can ever hope to offer her today.

Diana was the very essence of compassion, of duty, of style, of beauty. All over the world she was a symbol of selfless humanity, a standard-bearer for the rights of the truly downtrodden, a truly British girl who transcended nationality, someone with a natural nobility who was classless, who proved in the last year that she needed no royal title to continue to generate her particular brand of magic.

Today is our chance to say "thank you" for the way you brightened our lives, even though God granted you but half a life. We will all feel cheated that you were taken from us so young and yet we must learn to be grateful that you came along at all.

Only now that you are gone do we truly appreciate what we are now without, and we want you to know that life without you is very, very difficult.

We have all despaired at our loss over the past week and only the strength of the message you gave us through your years of giving has afforded us the strength to move forward.

There is a temptation to rush to canonize your memory. There is no need to do so. You stand tall enough as a human being of unique qualities not to need to be seen as a saint. Indeed to sanctify your memory would be to miss out on the very core of your being, your wonderfully mischievous sense of humor with the laugh that bent you double, your joy for life transmitted wher-

ever you took your smile, and the sparkle in those unforgettable eyes, your boundless energy which you could barely contain.

But your greatest gift was your intuition, and it was a gift you used wisely. This is what underpinned all your wonderful attributes. And if we look to analyze what it was about you that had such a wide appeal, we find it in your instinctive feel for what was really important in all our lives.

Without your God-given sensitivity, we would be immersed in greater ignorance at the anguish of AIDS and HIV sufferers, the plight of the homeless, the isolation of lepers, the random destruction of land mines. Diana explained to me once that it was her innermost feelings of suffering that made it possible for her to connect with her constituency of the rejected.

And here we come to another truth about her. For all the status, the glamour, the applause, Diana remained throughout a very insecure person at heart, almost childlike in her desire to do good for others so she could release herself from deep feelings of unworthiness of which her eating disorders were merely a symptom.

The world sensed this part of her character and cherished her for her vulnerability, whilst admiring her for her honesty. The last time I saw Diana was on July the first, her birthday, in London, when typically she was not taking time to celebrate her special day with friends but was guest of honor at a charity fund-raising evening.

She sparkled of course, but I would rather cherish the days I spent with her in March when she came to visit me and my children in our home in South Africa. I am proud of the fact that apart from when she was on public display meeting President Mandela, we managed to contrive to stop the ever-present paparazzi from getting a single picture of her.

That meant a lot to her.

These are days I will always treasure. It was as if we'd been transported back to our childhood, when we spent such an enormous amount of time together, the two youngest in the family.

Fundamentally she hadn't changed at all from the big sister who mothered me as a baby, fought with me at school and endured those long train journeys between our parents' homes with me at weekends. It is a tribute to her level-headedness and strength that despite the most bizarre life imaginable after her childhood, she remained intact, true to herself.

There is no doubt that she was looking for a new direction in her life at this time. She talked endlessly of getting away from England, mainly because of the treatment she received at the hands of the newspapers.

I don't think she ever understood why her genuinely good intentions were sneered at by the media, why there appeared to be a permanent quest on their behalf to bring her down. It is baffling. My own, and only, explanation is that genuine goodness is threatening to those at the opposite end of the moral spectrum.

It is a point to remember that of all the ironies about Diana, perhaps the greatest is this: that a girl given the name of the ancient goddess of hunting was, in the end, the most hunted person of the modern age.

She would want us today to pledge ourselves to protecting her beloved boys William and Harry from a similar fate.

And I do this here, Diana, on your behalf. We will not allow them to suffer the anguish that

used regularly to drive you to tearful despair.

Beyond that, on behalf of your mother and sisters, I pledge that we, your blood family, will do all we can to continue the imaginative and loving way in which you were steering these two exceptional young men, so that their souls are not simply immersed by duty and tradition but can sing openly as you planned.

We fully respect the heritage into which they have both been born, and will always respect and encourage them in their royal role. But we, like you, recognize the need for them to experience as many different aspects of life as possible, to arm them spiritually and emotionally for the years ahead. I know you would have expected nothing less from us.

William and Harry, we all care desperately for you today. We are all chewed up with sadness at the loss of a woman who wasn't even our mother. How great your suffering is we cannot even imagine.

I would like to end by thanking God for the small mercies he has shown us at this dreadful time; for taking Diana at her most beautiful and radiant and when she had so much joy in her private life.

Above all, we give thanks for the life of a woman I am so proud to be able to call my sister: the unique, the complex, the extraordinary and irreplaceable Diana, whose beauty, both internal and external, will never be extinguished from our minds.

Analysis

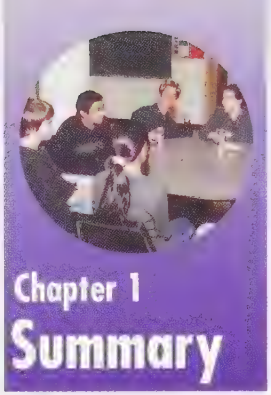
Throughout the week, the public shifted between appreciations of the dead princess and assignments of blame to one culprit, then another—first the paparazzi, then the driver of the car, and then the royal family itself. The questions expanded in scope (has the press no shame?), then contracted (how drunk was the driver?), and then expanded again (why does monarchy still exist?). Even in his funeral oration, Diana's brother, Earl Spencer, was openly emotional about the need to identify guilt, suggesting the English press engaged in a "permanent quest" to bring his sister down, because "genuine goodness is threatening to those at the opposite end of the moral spectrum."

Greg Easterbrook
U.S. News and World Report
9/15/97

In his oration, Spencer seemed to lay down the gauntlet to the Windsors when he not only attacked the media for hunting Diana but also pledged that the boys would be brought up as Spencers so that their souls could sing. He received an astonishing ovation.

"Rethinking Diana"
William Shawcross
The Age, August 29, 1998 Copyright© David Syme & Co 1999.

The underlining should draw your attention to Lord Spencer's comments about the media and the royal family. Many other passages also deserve our attention. Review the words with which Lord Spencer praised his sister. Discuss the implications of his description. How did it add to the sorrow and solemnity of the funeral? How did it help us form a final impression of Princess Diana?



Chapter 1 Summary

Communication is a process which has several important components. When we label and talk about those components, we can improve our own communication and better understand the communication of others. When we talk and think about communication, we are practicing meta-communication. One of the major goals of this book and this course of study is to become better communicators...and better metacommunicators. While this chapter generally defines and describes the communication process, people who are successful in professional and social situations must learn to apply the concepts as they manage their communication choices.

Although it is complex, human beings are natural communicators. We can learn to be better communicators by defining the communication process and understanding its characteristics.

Remembering

1. Define communication.
2. Define metacommunication.
3. Identify and explain each component of the communication model developed in the chapter.
4. Draw the communication model developed in the chapter.
5. Draw the model for public speaking.

Reflecting

1. The chapter points out that communication is a complex process. Usually, however, people treat communication as a very simple activity.
   a] Why do people tend to take the complexity of communication for granted?
   b] When are people most likely to understand the complexity of communication?
2. Sometimes we don't need to think much about our messages; we simply talk or write. At other times, we must carefully plan what we want to say.
   a] When are you most likely to practice anticipatory metacommunication? What circumstances will be most likely to cause you to plan your speech communication activities?
   b] When are you least likely to plan your communication. Why?
   c] What advantages are there to planning?
   d] What disadvantages might result from over-planning your communication?
3. Develop a narrative of one page in which you describe a conversation or a speech during which you were a "sender." In your description, explain how you knew how the receiver(s) were reacting to your message. If you changed your message, state how and why. If you did not change your message, explain why. Did you have shared meaning?
4. Reflective metacommunication often occurs in class work, when a teacher asks you to reflect on a speech, a discussion, a debate, or a composition.
   a] What questions are you likely to consider as you practice this type of reflection?
   b] What are the most beneficial aspects of thinking over something you've already finished communicating?
5. As you watch television or browse the Internet, you are likely to find many authorities whose job is to practice metacommunication. Often, they spend their time speaking and writing about the communication of others. They comment on what someone has said or should say.
   a] Select an example of one of these commentators or critics and summarize the advice they have for a person in public life.
   b] What terms do they use? How could you rephrase their suggestions using the terminology in this chapter?

Reaching

1. Teaching is a very special and important example of communication. When teachers talk together about teaching, much of what they do is talk about how to communicate with students. They are practicing a special kind of metacommunication about teaching. Ask a teacher if he or she will share with you the evaluation process for teachers in your school.
   a] What kinds of metacommunication will a teacher practice with his/her evaluator?

b] Interview one of your present or former teachers. What are the metacommunication topics that will most likely be brought up when teachers talk together? What suggestions do they hear for improving communication with students and parents?

2. By its very nature and purpose, a model is a simplification of a complex process or object. Review the model for communication that the chapter developed step-by-step. The simplification required for the model leaves out some important elements of communication. Apply the model to an act of interpersonal communication that you typically engage in. What elements of your communication does the model leave out? Could you think of a clear way of including them in the model?
3. The models developed in the chapter are only possible communication models. Using a drawing program, a flowcharting program, a presentation program, or other software, design your own communication model. You may use the terminology of the chapters' models or invent your own. Use graphics to enhance the appeal of your model.
4. A print model of communication is only one way to represent the communication process. Develop your own three dimensional model of the communication process. Try to include all of the components identified in Figure 1.5.

Real Life

1. If you have been part of developing a web page, think about the work that went into designing the page. What kind of metacommunication took place in the planning? How many times did the people designing the page think of the user? Interview a person who designs web pages. Ask about the things the person tries to think of in creating web pages. Explain to the class what you find out, using the vocabulary in this chapter as a model.
2. Prepare a short presentation to your class about a time when you faced an important personal communication situation. (Examples include such things as asking someone for permission to do something, explaining something you have done or a choice you made, giving directions, asking someone to attend a school event with you.) Explain the thought you put into the communication, what you thought as you were involved in the communication, and what you thought after the communication. In this activity you are focusing on metacommunication, so concentrate your explanation on the message you were delivering, the receiver of the message, how you presented the message, etc. Try to use the vocabulary developed in this chapter. Your teacher might ask you to present this activity formally to the class, in a small group discussion, or in a class discussion.

2

Chapter Two
Application.Communication Management

Key Concept

Effective communicators know the value of planning communication, adapting communication to their audiences, and evaluating their communication for improvement.

Chapter Objectives

- identify the four basic variables in making communication choices
- explain the use of audience as a standard for communication choices
- explain the use of situation as a standard for communication choices
- explain the use of purpose as a standard for communication choices
- distinguish among types of communication situations
- distinguish among explicit purpose, understood purpose, and hidden purpose
- identify key elements of demographics that help understand audience



Key Terms

- audience
- communication apprehension
- demographics
- empathy
- ethnic group
- gender
- method
- purpose
- reading the audience
- situation
- stage fright

Metacommunication occurs when we communicate about communication. It occurs constantly and subtly throughout our daily lives. Sometimes, however, metacommunication is obvious…even worrisome. When we really stop to think about planning a speech, interviewing for a job, or making a good impression, metacommunication is the key to preparation. Sometimes it is the cause (and the solution!) to communication apprehension. This type of metacommunication is anticipatory: that is, it helps us to think about an upcoming communication interaction, plan for it, and make it successful.

One of the most common of all forms of anticipatory metacommunication is selecting a subject or topic for a speech or a conversation.

Scenario

This planning session occurs in Pilar's office. She's asked Alicia and JaRon to join her to brainstorm ideas for an upcoming trip Pilar will make to a convention in Dallas. Pilar will give a presentation to a large group of sales staff. She has thirty minutes to present on a topic of her choice. Members of the sales staff have talked with Pilar on the phone, but they haven't met her.

Pilar: *I'd like some advice on what I should say during my speech to the sales staff. Since I don't know them very well, I need to introduce myself. But what should I talk about after that? I've considered talking about our new computer ordering system, the organization of our office, and the upcoming changes in the catalog.*

Alicia: *Those a certainly three good ideas. I don't know if there are any other topics that could be discussed. The new computer ordering system is really important. It will affect sales as soon as it is adopted. Maybe you could even hook up live on the Internet and give a demo.*

JaRon: *I've been on the phone with three sales people and one sales manager within the past twenty-four hours. They are looking forward to meeting you. So far, you are a "mystery woman," a voice on the phone. I suggest you spend your time letting them know who you are and develop one topic only. I agree with Alicia that the computer system is big news, but that is six months off. The new catalog comes out next month. I think they would rather hear about it, since they are a bit worried about learning the new product line.*

Alicia: *But the computer system will really be impressive…state-of-the-art. With the new server, the sales people will spend less time on-line and have more time for their sales work. The MP-3000, the T1 LAN, and the 22-line autocaller are all items that will affect their work dramatically.*

JaRon: *I agree, but they won't really follow those technical issues as well as you do. If you talk about "LAN" and "MP-3000," they will probably dread the new system. I think a demo is needed, but we should schedule that for sometime nearer to the computer adoption date. And really, I think they would get more from a presentation made by you as opposed to one from Pilar. Pilar, if they are just getting to know you, I think it would be better if you identified yourself with our products instead of our technology.*

Alicia: *I guess the new tech system is pretty complicated.*

JaRon: *Well, they will sure think so. And remember: they'll sit through about four hours of presentations at that convention. I don't think they will be ready to hear about the tech stuff, especially if Pilar has to speak at the end of the day.*

Pilar: *That's a good point. I could use the PowerPoint slides to show the current mock-up pages of the new catalog. That will make a good presentation and the audience will leave with a nice handout that they can study for the future. We can do the presentation on computers later. Alicia, could you put together the demo later this year, say around June? Maybe we could do it on-line so the sales staff could stay in the field. Also, you could use the new net-meeting technology to help them appreciate the new computer system.*

Alicia: *Sure, that's no problem.*

JaRon: *We should count on the newer sales people being at the convention. The more experienced staff usually wait for the summer meetings. These new people are all between 22 and 30. They're more at ease with technology than our veteran staff. They'll probably catch on to the new computer system quickly, so there's no rush to introduce it before we have to.*

Pilar: *The computer system is important. But the catalog will immediately affect their sales and their customers. I personally would rather talk about the computer system. We've put in a lot of hours in its design. But it's like the poster on my wall says: "I like chocolate ice cream, but when I go fishing I*



Anticipatory metacommunication enables a speaker to assess audience needs before preparing a speech.

use worms because fish like worms." In this case, the "fish" will likely get more out of hearing about the catalog. And it will give me more of a chance to get to know them while talking about product rather than tech. Thanks for your advice. Alicia, start thinking about how best to introduce the computer system. JaRon, can we meet during lunch? I'd like to hear more about what you've found out from the sales staff.

Pilar asked for advice and she got just what she asked for. Both Alicia and JaRon had good ideas. They both focused on topics that were very important. JaRon seemed to have the better idea. He kept in mind that Pilar needed to introduce herself, and he had access to the most immediate concerns of the sales staff. Alicia's ideas were good, but she didn't have the same understanding of the needs of the sales staff as JaRon.

Pilar admitted that she personally wanted to talk about the computer system, but recognized that she should probably talk about something else if she were going to meet her needs…and her audience's.

All three were using anticipatory metacommunication. They were anticipating the speaking opportunity Pilar would have and preparing for it by communicating about it. This is the same process we all go through daily, but we could do it better if we were more aware of anticipatory metacommunication and its importance.

SPAM

The most effective and convenient means of anticipating the communication situations you face is summarized by the acronym SPAM. (An acronym is a word created from the first letters of other words. Acronyms help us remember more complicated ideas.) If you can recall what the four letters of SPAM stand for, you have a basis for successfully anticipating communication transactions.

The "S" in SPAM stands for situation. In the model, the situation is the context in which the communication takes place. All communication occurs at a specific time and place. When you think of "S" and "situation," think about the entire situation you are part of when you communicate. Situation becomes a standard for making communication choices. Your communication choices should be appropriate for the situation.

"P" stand for purpose. We define purpose as the goal the communicator wants to accomplish. Communication is purposeful. You usually want to accomplish something with your communication. Sometimes, you concentrate on self expression...that's your main purpose, to express yourself. Other times, you want someone to agree with you or to change. In two different situations, you might even have different purposes for communication in mind, even when you are communicating about the same subject. Purpose, too, becomes a standard for making communication choices. Your communication should be designed to accomplish your purpose.

The "A" in SPAM stands for "audience." Your audience is the person (or the people) to whom you are directing your message. With your audience as a partner, you help create a shared meaning. Any time you are planning communication, you must think about your audience. The audience forms the third standard for communication choices. Your communication should be designed to appeal to members of your audience, so you they will share the meaning you intend.

The acronym SPAM ends in "M," for "methods." The three standards—S, P, and A—form the bases for making choices about your communication methods. You choose various methods of communicating, depending on the audience you are considering, the situation you are in, and your purpose. Most of the time, a situation is presented to you, and you can't do much about it. The same goes for an audience; you can't always pick and choose with whom you speak. Even your purpose is often predetermined by carefully thinking about audience and situation. However, the methods you use in communicating are your choice. Will you write an e-mail or hold a meeting? Will you use an example or statistics? Will you sit or stand? Use visual aids? These and many

other methods are your choice. You choose what you feel are the best methods for accomplishing your purpose with a particular audience and a particular situation.

If you understand SPAM, you know the basics of anticipating a communication situation and making it successful.

S: Metacommunication and Situation

How do we start to understand the communication situation or context? Think about the conversation Pilar had with Alicia and JaRon. Think about how many times they referred to the situation. All these comments are part of the situation:

- Apparently, Pilar is new in her position. People haven't met her yet.
- There will be a new computer system adopted soon, but it is still somewhat in the future.
- A new product catalog is about to be released.
- The speech will occur at a convention where people will be hearing four hours of presentations in one day.
- The meeting is one which, experience tells JaRon, will be attended mostly by newer employees.

The three planners discussed all of these components of the situation in just five minutes of conversation. Each aspect of the situation played a part in helping Pilar make her decision to talk about the catalog. Just as important is the thinking and communicating about the situation that made this a good planning session. Knowing the situation is only part of the answer. Note what decisions they made based on these comments.



Some situations make it more difficult than others to maintain audience attention.

• Pilar is new in her position. People haven't met her yet.	• Based on the situation Pilar finds herself in, she knows part of her presentation will be introducing herself. She and JaRon believe her first contact will be most successful if she identifies herself with the company's products, not their computer system.
• There will be a new computer system adopted soon, but it is still somewhat in the future.	• Based on the timing of the computer update, the planners think a presentation would be best if it were delayed until June.
• A new product catalog is about to be released.	• This part of the situation allows Pilar to talk about something really important to the sales staff. It also allows her to use materials she has already prepared and talk about a subject she already knows about.
• The speech will occur at a convention where people will be hearing four hours of presentations in one day.	• Maybe a convention isn't the best place for talking about the new computer system. If the audience's attention is stressed by four hours of listening, maybe the subject is more complicated and technical than they'll be ready for.
• The meeting is one which, experience tells JaRon, will be attended mostly by newer employees.	• The convention's timing will mean a particular type of person will attend. The age and experience of the audience will be a factor to consider in delaying the computer presentation.

Classifying Communication Situations

Situations are often classified as formal or informal. A formal situation typically has a determined set of behaviors that are expected from communicators. Formal situations are usually characterized by how people are expected to dress, the "manners" they are expected to display, the kinds of topics that are discussed, and so forth. An informal situation typically has fewer rules and expectations. Informal situations are usually characterized by informal clothing, more relaxed manners, a broader range of discussion topics, and the like. We often prefer informal situations to formal ones, but communication occurs in both settings. To make the most of our communication, we need to understand both situations and plan for communication in both.

In addition to level of formality, communication situations are often classified as personal and professional. A personal communication situation often involves people brought together by personal issues: a group of friends, a church congregation, a club, etc. A professional communication situation is likely characterized by a career, job, or business interest.

	Personal	Professional
Formal	Funeral • association of people is personal • expectations for appropriate dress, behavior, and language • communication topics restricted	Business speech to a large group • association of people based on mutual interests in business • expectations for appropriate dress, behavior, and language • communication topics restricted
Informal	Conversation with close friend • association is by personal choice • language and behavior more informal • expectations are based on previous experiences as friends	Social gathering for colleagues/clients • association may be friendly, but based on mutual interest in business • although behavior is less formal, topics and language are still somewhat controlled by relationship • communication can have impact on business relationship

Communication Management—Checklist for Analyzing the Situation



Here are some of the questions you might want to ask yourself about the situation in which you will be communicating. This list is only a start. As you become practiced at analyzing a situation, you'll recognize important dimensions of situations without thinking of a list at all.

1. When will the communication likely take place? Will the time of day (week, month, year) make a difference? Do I have any control over the timing, or will I have to adapt to a specific time?
2. Where will the communication likely take place? Do I have any control over the place or must I adapt to a certain place?
3. Has anything happened recently that will impact the way people think or feel about me, or the topic, or the group I represent? Is there someone I can talk to who knows this?
4. Is there a "history" that I need to know about? Is there something I should know about things that have happened, even though they are not recent?
5. What other communication will be occurring at the same time as mine? Will there be people talking about the same subject? How will my communication affect theirs? How will theirs affect mine?
6. Is my situation formal or informal? Will I need to prepare for questions?
7. Is this situation governed by a set of traditions and expectations that I need to be aware of?



If entertainment is your purpose, the audience's reactions help you assess if you were successful.

P: Metacommunication and Purpose

Communication is purposeful. This simple statement is another key to making good communication choices. When you have a purpose, you know what you want to accomplish. You have a goal. You can only make conscious, well-reasoned communication choices if you know what you are trying to accomplish.

Sometimes, you choose a goal more by default than anything else…even by impulse. You and a friend are driving down the street. You see a bicyclist, which reminds you of a news item you read in the paper. You share the news item with your friend. You might not think of this as "goal-oriented" communication, but you are trying to accomplish something. Are you trying to inform your friend? Entertain her? Warn her? Educate? Or simply pass the time? Even "simply" passing the time is a purpose. If entertainment is your goal, won't you relate the story differently than if you are trying to educate or inform? You will make choices based on the purpose you have in mind.

Interpersonal Insight—Small Talk



We often engage in what is commonly called "small talk." Small talk is talk that, at least on the surface, seems a bit pointless. It might be talking about the weather, or asking about someone's health, or chatting about how late the bus is. While this small talk probably doesn't share much information, it can serve a very important purpose.

Whenever people are together—socially or professionally—long stretches of time without talking can be awkward or embarrassing. For example, if you have met someone while you are both sitting in a hospital waiting room, you could begin a conversation about the length of the wait. Why? Both of you might find it awkward merely to sit and stare at each other. Perhaps you could ignore each other, but small talk fills an awkward gap in an interpersonal situation. The two of you can talk about any number of topics out of politeness, thus lowering the discomfort of sitting next to a stranger.

Small talk is a kind of communication called "phatic communion." It allows people to structure time with informal talk. We all feel the need for this type of communication. Intuitively, we know that even silence communicates to others. If we are at a party and are introduced to a person, silence after the introduction might be interpreted as poor manners, boredom, lack of interest, snobbery... even hostility. Imagine how much more smoothly the introduction might go with just a bit of phatic communion or small talk.

Phillip: Hi. I'm Phillip Anderson. I saw you come in with Raquel. I'm Pete's friend.
Tony: I'm Tony Nguyen. Glad to meet you. (They shake hands.)
Phillip: Pete really throws a great party. It's a great chance to meet some of the people he works with.
Tony: I know what you mean. Raquel and I met at Tony's last get-together, that barbecue on his birthday. Did you make it to that one?
Phillip: No, I couldn't make it. Had to work.
Tony: What kind of work do you do?
Phillip: I work downtown at the Post Office. You?
Tony: I work downtown, too. Right now I'm an office assistant at Smith, Carson, and White.
Phillip: Really? Are you interested in law?
Tony: Not really. I like office work, and it's a great place to work.
Phillip: That's terrific.

In this exchange, Phillip and Tony share some information. More important, they structure their first meeting without awkward silences that can be misinterpreted. If Tony had not responded to Phillip's approach, imagine how awkward they both would have felt.

Even though this wasn't a rich, complex conversation, both Phillip and Tony had decisions to make. By starting with Raquel's name, Phillip gave them common ground: They both know the same person. Similarly, by bringing up Pete, they discovered they had more in common. When Phillip said he had to work, Tony used that opportunity. He decided to ask Phillip about his work. At the end of this brief exchange, small talk had given them a chance to discover things they had in common and to begin a conversation.

The purposes we have for communication are usually expressed in terms of the person or persons to whom we are talking. We usually intend to entertain, inform or persuade. Often, we want to do all three at the same time. While we tell an entertaining story, we might share information. Simply sharing information might lead to persuading someone. For example, you might tell about a video you've seen. Your first purpose might be to entertain the group you are talking to by relating funny episodes to them. As you tell your story, you inform the group: What is the video about? Who's in it? Did you like it? You might even conclude by persuading members of your group to rent the video and see it themselves.

Whatever your purpose, it is related to the situation. For example, if you are in a film class, you might focus your communication on informing people about the video. If you are with a group of friends looking for something to do, you might be more interested in persuading them to see the video. Your selection of purpose is directly related to situation.

In the conversation Pilar had with Alicia and JaRon, Pilar was asking for advice on a speech topic. To select a good topic, she had to think about purpose. In this case, one of her biggest considerations was meeting the sales staff for the first time. She had to give a speech that would allow her to meet them and impress them. She didn't talk about the computer system, in part, because she didn't want them to identify her solely with technology. She did want to be identified with the products the sales staff were promoting. She really had two purposes, one obvious and one more subtle. Her obvious purpose was to educate the sales staff about the catalog. Her more subtle purpose was to meet them and build a good relationship with them. In short, she wanted to persuade them that she was a person who deserved their trust. Note that in a different situation, Pilar might have had a different purpose and selected a different topic. If the computer system were being introduced in a week or a month, she might have decided to talk about computers and attempt to make an impression with that topic.

Stating Your Purpose...Or Not

One question that communication students want an answer to is "should I state my purpose for communicating or not?" While one definite answer would certainly be convenient, there really isn't one. Of course, a person doesn't usually state a purpose in interpersonal situations. If you are speaking to someone about how tough your homework is, you don't start by saying, "My purpose in conversing with you is to convince you that I have a lot of homework this week." On the other hand, your purpose will likely be evident to anyone who is listening to you.

Communication Management — Apprehension



There is a type of anticipation that can interfere with effective communication. When we think about an upcoming communication opportunity, we might get nervous. If we get too nervous, we can develop communication apprehension. Communication apprehension is a feeling of anxiety or dread that can overcome someone who is facing a speech or interpersonal interaction. It can also be called "stage fright."

Some apprehension is normal, even helpful. For example, almost everyone facing a job interview develops some nerves over communicating well in a pressure-packed situation. These appropriate and normal feelings produce two advantages: First, some anxiety motivates a speaker to spend time preparing. If the speaker prepares, he or she will likely do better. Second, communication apprehension can enhance or sharpen our skills. Just as an athlete turns nerves or "jitters" into extra energy, a speaker can turn some apprehension into additional energy to devote to communicating.

Scientists believe that such apprehension is normal. Imagine an animal in the wilderness confronted by a larger animal. The small animal prepares for flight (running away) or fight (physically challenging the larger animal). In either case, the smaller animal experiences increased blood flow to the legs, higher rate of breathing, and other physical changes that prepare him to run away or stand his ground. Communication apprehension does the same. A public speaker, for example gets "butterflies" in the stomach. That's because blood is rushing to the arms and legs, away from the stomach and intestines. The speaker perspires because metabolism increases. The speaker might breathe more rapidly to get more oxygen to the blood. All these physical changes prepare the speaker to devote extra energy to the task at hand. Instead of fight or flight, the speaker prepares to communicate.

So if you experience some nervousness, remember: Communication apprehension is normal. Some of the greatest speakers and actors experience nerves. In addition, the apprehension prepares you physically to devote your energy to the communication task at hand.

But what if the apprehension interferes with your communication? What if you feel uncomfortable? There are some clues to helping combat communication apprehension.

- Prepare thoroughly. If you feel prepared, you will feel less anxious about communicating. Preparation can include research, rehearsal, and review of content.
- Take a few deep breaths. Concentrate as you breathe on relaxing your neck and shoulders.
- Make a tight fist and relax your hands. Repeat several times.
- If appropriate, move around. Take a short walk to "burn off" some nervous energy.
- Think about your attitudes when you are a member of an audience. Remind yourself that audiences are usually charitable and understanding.

There are certainly times when an explicit statement of your purpose is useful. In a formal speech, for example, you might choose to say "My purpose in speaking to you today is to be sure that everyone here understands the pros and cons of the new e-mail system." When an audience hears a statement such as this, they have no doubt about the purpose of the communication. But the same can't be said for a statement of purpose in a casual conversation. How natural does this sound? "My purpose in talking with you today is to entertain ourselves and share a little about my hobbies."

Purposes can be explicit, understood, or hidden. These three terms help understand the kinds of purpose statements that we might use.



A speech title, context, and the speaker's position all suggest something about purpose.

Explicit purpose	The purpose is stated word for word.	"My purpose in speaking to you today is to be sure that everyone here understands the pros and cons of the new e-mail system."	Used often in formal settings and presentations; sets a formal, business-like tone; helps prevent misunderstandings; helps an audience know early on in a speech how to interpret the speaker's words.
Understood purpose	The purpose remains unstated, although both sender and receiver know the purpose.	A mother shares the incidents of the day with her teenager at the dinner table. Both know that the purpose is to stay in touch and share some time together.	Often used when a sender and receiver know each other well or are in agreement; used when the situation is so immediate and well understood that a statement of purpose is not necessary; used in social and informal situations when an explicit statement might sound awkward: "My goal at the dinner table tonight is to share some of my day with you in hopes that you will share some of yours with me."
Hidden purpose (sometimes called a "hidden agenda")	The purpose remains hidden or obscured by the sender; the receiver might or might not discern the purpose.	A speaker who shares many interesting stories about her experiences in Teach for America is really using the stories to share a message of public service without saying so.	This approach is often used by speakers who feel the audience might be "turned off" by a statement of purpose. If the speaker says, "I'd like to convince you all to donate your time to public service," she might lose her audience's attention. By relying on entertaining stories, she can make her point without stating it explicitly.

Communication Management—Think of Yourself



Whenever you think about the purpose of your communication, you express that purpose in terms of audience: entertain (or interest), inform (or educate), persuade. But with all three of these purposes, you have one more: self-expression. When we communicate, we do want to express ourselves.

When you share an interesting story during a speech, you might hope that it entertains your audience, informs them, or persuades them. You always want that story to express something about yourself. You chose the story. You probably chose it to help your speech succeed. But you also chose it because you wanted to tell it. You found it interesting. You like telling it. You feel that it says something about your opinions or feelings.

Communication that doesn't allow you to express yourself can be pretty unexciting. As a communicator, you must be aware of the situation and select a purpose, but you also must be true to yourself. During the act of communication, you need to feel as if you are expressing yourself. Without this feeling, you will quickly lose interest in what you're saying. And the audience will notice.

A: Metacommunication and Audience

Remember that metacommunication occurs whenever we "communicate about communicating." Understanding audience is the key to successful communication and metacommunication. The audience is the people (or person) to whom you are directing your message. The audience is your partner in negotiating a shared meaning. Anticipating a communication transaction means anticipating your audience. Adapting during a communication transaction means you know how your audience is responding. Reflecting on your communication means, in part, measuring the reaction of your audience.

Reading Your Audience

Anticipatory metacommunication regarding audience is often called "reading your audience." To read your audience, you must practice empathy, the ability to put yourself in someone else's place and understand his or her feelings.

Think about the advice Pilar got from Alicia and JaRon. Who was more effective in understanding the sales staff? Alicia had good ideas, but JaRon understood how the sales staff would feel. Note how he uses empathy to understand their needs:

- They are *looking forward* to meeting you. So far, you are a "mystery woman," a voice on the phone. (Chances are, none of the staff called Pilar a "mystery woman." JaRon is using empathy to understand their feelings about Pilar and communicating his understanding to her.)
- The new catalog comes out next month. I think they would rather hear about it, since they are *a bit worried* about learning the new product line.

- I agree, but they *won't really follow those technical issues* as well as you do. If you talk about "LAN" and "MP-3000," they will probably *dread the new system.*
- They are more at ease with technology than our veteran staff.

JaRon was "reading" the audience. He knew that they wanted to meet Pilar, that they were worried about the catalog, that they are at ease with technology, but they don't follow technical issues. More important, he acted on his understanding and helped Pilar choose a suitable topic.

You can read your audience, too. If you are making a presentation in class, you probably know what the other students in your audience know. You understand how they feel. You can make choices designed to make your communication more effective.

Demographics

Demographics are statistical descriptions of the characteristics of a particular group of people. In communication, demographics are used to understand the possible characteristics of members of an audience. Using demographics, you can make judgments about a group of people, especially if you really don't know the individuals within the group. Demographic information typically tells you about:

- age
- gender (the statistical breakdown of the audience into male and female)
- occupation
- religious background
- political background
- ethnic or cultural background
- socioeconomic background

In preparing for your communication, you will probably not have access to highly detailed demographic information. Instead, you'll rely on generalizations that you can make about your audience.

Communication involving politics, advertising, business, and other highly specialized fields will be much more precise. In fact, political campaigns, advertising agencies, and businesses often hire public opinion pollsters to supply very detailed demographic information to help tailor messages for specific audiences.

Demographic Characteristic	Possible Demographic Description	Possible Judgment Based on the Demographic Description
age	The members of my audience will be between 15 and 18 years of age.	The audience will likely be more interested in high school education than in elementary or middle school.
gender	My audience will be 80% female.	I should include some of the recent research on the progress made by girls enrolled in girls' only science and math classes.
occupation	The members of my audience belong to the Future Teachers of America club.	While they will be interested as students, they are also interested in education as a possible career. They would like to hear about how teachers are trained.
religious background	The members of my audience all go to a Catholic school.	My audience will be interested in comparisons between the public schools and the private, religious schools.
political background	About half of my audience will be Republicans, a third will be Democrats. The rest are independent voters.	Since the audience will know both sides of education as a political issue, I should take care to be fair in representing both sides.
ethnic or cultural background	About half of my audience will be Hispanic.	I might want to quote some of the city's Latino leaders so that I represent this group's commonly held opinions.
socioeconomic background	This school is in a very new part of town. The members of the audience are in an upper socioeconomic group.	If I speak of the new school bond issue, I should emphasize the building projects on the new side of town.

M: Metacommunication and Method

You've analyzed your situation.

You know your purpose.

You've read your audience.

Now you're ready to make some important decisions about your communication methods. Only when you know situation, purpose, and audience are you ready to make informed choices about what to say and how to say it, when to be silent, when to use visual aids or statistics, or hundreds of other choices.

In the scenario that opened this chapter, Pilar needed information to help her make good communication decisions. She acquired reliable information about the situation and audience. She determined her purpose. Only then

could she decide what to say and how to say it. A good choice regarding her communication methods came only from an understanding of situation, purpose and audience.

We instinctively make these choices all the time, so often that we might even think the choices are "instinctive." Assume that you are going to speak to your supervisor about changing your work hours to accommodate your new class schedule. This is not a difficult or unusual situation, but note—even in a simplified version of this problem—you have many variables to consider.

Here are some communication choices you might have to make in this situation. Which would you choose?

- Do you call him on the phone or go in to talk to him in person?
- Do you propose a schedule you can work with or share your needs and let him develop a schedule?
- Do you call him at home or wait until he is at work?
- Do you make an appointment? Do you just call or drop by to talk with him?
- Do you start with an apology for bringing this issue to him?
- Do you put your request in writing or just speak to your supervisor?

Don't you need much more information to make a good choice for each of these questions and many others? Reconsider the questions after reading this analysis:

Situation	Purpose	Audience
• You need an answer right away because enrollment is coming up. • A number of others in your supervisor's department have started school and have asked for schedule alterations. • The new work schedule will come out in one week. • You can work weekends, but you cannot work Monday through Thursday. • Most other employees want weekends off. • You have worked for the supervisor for six months.	• You want to convince your supervisor to accommodate your schedule while maintaining a good relationship with him.	• Your supervisor is old enough to be your father. • He has been supportive of the students who work for him. • He is under some pressure to get the work schedule complete. • In evaluating your job performance, he has commented on your hard work and willingness to help.

Note than even an "instinctive" decision on a fairly simple communication transaction will be based on how you read your supervisor and the situation.

The majority of this textbook is about the methods effective communicators use in their daily lives. We will talk about the choices they make. We will look at skills that good communicators develop. All of these methods, choices, and skills depend on situation, purpose, and audience.

Adapting Your Communication

If you have anticipated a communication transaction and planned using certain methods to accomplish your purpose, what happens if things change while you are communicating? Experienced, talented communicators know that even the best plans need to be changed, sometimes in the middle of a conversation, presentation, or speech.

Changing your communication transaction means reading the audience "on the fly" and altering your message/methods to suit your new perceptions. Imagine a teacher is presenting a lesson on American history…World War II. She begins her prepared lesson on the impact of the war on daily life in the United States. In her preparation, she assumed that her class—11th grade in high school—had studied the use of ration books during World War II in junior high school history. However, when she begins to discuss rationing, she notices that students begin looking around at each other. She notices some craning their necks to look at other students' notes. She is receiving feedback. She is seeing that something has not gone as she planned.

She has two options. She can continue her lesson as planned, but what is the good in that? Students are obviously confused and are unlikely to get much from the lesson. On the other hand, she could change her lesson and spend some time explaining rationing and ration books. In this case, she changes her planned communication to adjust to the needs of her audience.

Why is this an example of metacommunication? Two reasons: First, the teacher could have stopped her lesson and spoken with her class about the lesson. She could have asked if she had mentioned something that confused them. She could have asked for questions. She could have asked if this topic were something the students had studied earlier. These questions are certainly about her subject and her audience, but they are also about her communication. She is asking for information that can help her determine how she can best communicate her lesson to the class. Second, even if she had not stopped to ask the class a question, she is practicing intrapersonal communication; she is communicating with herself about the reaction she is getting from her students and how she can adjust what she is saying.

It is very important to note that SPAM—situation, purpose, audience, and method—are still the variables for a sender who is adapting and adjusting communication during the communication transaction. Whatever happens during the communication which changes the communicator's understanding of any of these variables can lead to a change or adaptation.

Reflecting on Your Communication

Even when you feel a communication transaction is completed, metacommunication is not over…at least it should not be. One characteristic that effective communicators share is the ability to think about past communication and make judgments about future communication. By reflecting on communication—successful and not-so-successful—experienced communicators learn what works and what doesn't. By practicing "reflective metacommunication," good communicators keep and improve what methods work and discard or improve what methods fail.

Think about Pilar's presentation that she planned for the sales force in her company. She had a goal to get to know the people in sales and make a favorable impression. Inevitably, she will have to ask herself if her presentation was successful. How could she tell? Here are some techniques she could use to determine the success of her communication:

- Ask the members of her audience to fill out a questionnaire.
- Ask for questions from the audience.
- After the presentation, ask individuals informally what they thought about the presentation.
- Wait for audience members to volunteer comments.
- Send a follow-up letter or e-mail to members of the audience asking for advice or opinions.
- Wait to see if the better relationships developed.
- Ask JaRon, who is in contact with the sales force, what he heard.

Do you see what each of these techniques has in common? Each is a means of increasing feedback. Remember that feedback is the response the sender gets from the receiver. In this case, Pilar wants a response from members of her audience that will let her determine if she succeeded in forming a positive impression and establishing relationships. A questionnaire formalizes the feedback process by formally requesting a response. Other methods are much less formal. If Pilar waits for people to volunteer comments, she may not get a variety of responses from many people.

If she is serious about being a good communicator, Pilar will take what she knows and reflect on her communication. If the presentation was well



Experienced communicators learn from formal feedback such as evaluations.

received, she would be smart to learn from her success. If not, she certainly doesn't want to make another unsuccessful presentation.

You can reflect on your communication all by yourself. That is, once you have received feedback, you can think about the feedback and make judgments about the success of your communication. Many people prefer to talk to others about their communication, to employ the analysis, assistance, and advice of others to help them reflect. In a speech class, you have a teacher to help in communication evaluation. The class is structured to allow reflection and evaluation that is cooperative.

The same can be true in the "real world." How could Pilar get assistance from others? Imagine a brief evaluation session with JaRon and Alicia similar to their brainstorming session. If JaRon and Alicia were present at Pilar's talk, they could give first-hand impressions. Since JaRon communicates regularly with the sales force, he's in a position to hear about any response to Pilar's presentation. What if he hears nothing? Even no response is information that Pilar can use to evaluate her own communication.

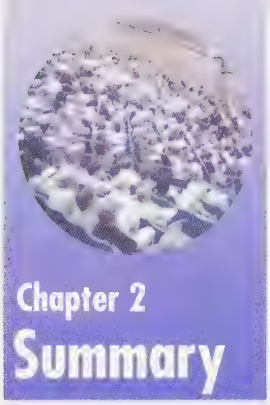
Communication Management—Reflecting & Evaluating: The Basis for Evaluation



Communication can be evaluated formally or informally. A formal evaluation could be a critique, a grade, a feedback form, or other highly structured way of helping you reflect on your communication. More often, you will have the responsibility of judging your own communication's effectiveness. You can seek out others to help. You will likely want to focus on one or more of these evaluation bases.

Basis for evaluation	Key question	Use
Results-based	Does the communication accomplish its goal?	This is the "bottom line" evaluation favored by many. It simply asks us to reflect on if the communication transaction met the purpose the sender had in mind. Note that the purpose of some communication is obvious. Other communication purposes are not. Many communication transactions (such as "small talk") have immediate goals that can develop into further communication transactions.
Artistic-based	Does the communicator select and use the elements of communication effectively?	This evaluation is often used to help communicators grow. Teachers use it to point out how a student can get better. When you advise someone to speak more forcefully or to improve eye contact, you are practicing "artistic" criticism. The opinion you share should be labeled as that. Tying back to results can help someone understand this type of evaluation. For example, you state, "In my opinion, looking your interviewer in the eye will make you appear more sincere, and you will be more likely to get the job."
Content-based	Does the communicator say things that are appropriate to purpose?	This type of evaluation ignores artistic elements of delivery or style and focuses only on the verbal message. This type of evaluation is very helpful to communicators who need help in communicating meaningful and appropriate information.
Ethics-based	Is the communicator being honest and trustworthy?	Evaluation of communication using an ethics base touches on the character of the communicator. This type of evaluation examines the truthfulness or honesty of a message. Key to this kind of evaluation is the question, "Does the communicator believe what he or she is saying?" Please realize that there is room for honest differences.

Combination: Usually, evaluating communication means combining all these approaches. Tying them all together allows you to reflect on an act of communication as a whole.



Chapter 2
Summary

Too often, we think of communication as something that "just happens." Effective communicators know that learning about communication means planning, adapting, and reflecting. The key elements in planning, adapting, and reflecting are situation, purpose, audience, and method. By remembering the acronym SPAM, you can adjust communication to suit your needs and your audience's.

Communication Management—Helpful Hints for Practicing Metacommunication

Helping Yourself	Helping Others
 Build a support system for yourself. Build relationships with people who will listen to you and give you advice. Listen to your support system.	Be part of other people's support system. Help them when asked. Remember, too, that you are offering advice, but the other person has to judge what is best for him or her.
Many types of communication don't allow for planning. Conversations develop spontaneously, or you are asked to speak when you weren't planning to. Even in these situations, reflect on your communication to understand what you did well.	Label your opinions rather than presenting them as indisputable fact. This notifies the person being evaluated that you recognize your role as advice-giver and won't be offended if other people have other advice.
When you have a chance, rehearse. This is especially important for formal presentations.	Avoid making personal remarks. Such comments as "That really made you sound stupid," isn't the type of support and help people are looking for. Be positive, even when giving advice for improvement.
As you prepare for a formal communication opportunity, prepare as if a member of your audience were with you…anticipate that person's interests and needs. Tailor communication to fit.	Make a suggestion. Don't just offer a person a criticism. Suggest a way of altering communication to make it better.
Remember the old saying: "The best-laid plans of mice and men go oft astray." Even great preparation isn't perfect. Be ready to alter communication if necessary.	Treat every communication opportunity as a learning experience.
Practice. The more you communicate…and the more you talk about your communication…the better communicator you will become.	Be specific. If someone asks if the speech was well organized, don't limit yourself to "yes" or "no." Share with them exactly what you thought was good. If you think improvement is necessary, let them know exactly what could be improved and let them make the decision if they will change. Specific information helps a communicator know exactly how one potential audience member (you!) thinks.

Remembering

1. Identify the four basic variables that should be used in making communication choices.
2. Explain the importance of audience in making communication choices.
3. Explain the differences between formal and informal communication situations. Use two examples of each.
4. Distinguish between personal and professional communication situations. Use two examples of each.
5. Define stated purpose, understood purpose, and hidden purpose. When should each be most effectively used?
6. List seven key demographics that help a person understand audience.

Reflecting

1. Select a communication transaction in which you have recently taken an active part. Analyze the transaction using situation, purpose, audience, and method. Summarize your analysis in a chart.
2. The acronym SPAM helps us remember the variables of the communication process that must be considered in making communication choices. While all are important, audience is central to making good choices. Explain the importance of audience in making successful communication choices. Use an example to support your explanation.
3. Expectations for behavior generally are higher in formal and professional situations than in informal and personal situations. Select two situations in different squares of the chart on page 38. Compare and contrast the expectations in each situations. Answer these questions:
   a] What are the expectations for behavior? For dress?
   b] Where do these expectations come from?
   c] Are the communication expectations consistent with other expectations?
   d] What are three expectations that people have of others who are communicating in the situations you have selected? What would happen if someone ignored the expectations?
4. Demographics can be extremely useful in developing messages for public speakers and mass communicators. Develop a list of topics that are currently being discussed in your community or state. What demographic variables might a speaker want to know about an audience if the speaker were developing a presentation for people in your community?

Reaching

1. Demographics are used extensively by advertisers, journalists, and politicians. Identify a topic of interest and find polls which disclose the public's opinion on the topic. Look specifically for demographics that are "broken down" by such factors as age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomics, etc. Explain how an advertiser, journalist, or politician might use the demographics in preparing or analyzing communication transactions. Don't forget: Many groups that develop demographics keep them privately for their own use. Many others, however, publish their findings. In addition to newspapers and magazines, look on the Internet. You might even visit some web sites such as those for CNN, Gallup, and other polling organizations.

2. Develop and write your own scenario which shows someone planning for a communication opportunity. Center the scenario on a key decision that must be made. Show the planning that leads to a defensible decision. Be sure the scenario provides the kind of information that would allow the communicator to make a good choice.
3. Develop a demographic description of your class. Use variables such as gender and age to start. Expand by asking for opinions and interests. Represent your findings with charts or graphs. (Avoid demographic categories that your classmates might not want to disclose or discuss. Remember: Most demographic descriptions don't allow you to know specific information about individuals, only about the group.)
4. Look up the meaning of the word *empathy*. In small groups, share your understanding of the word. Discuss how empathy can help make communication more effective. Report back to the class your group's answers to these questions:
   a] What kinds of things do people say when they are being truly empathetic?
   b] What is the difference between empathy and sympathy?
   c] What questions should you stop to ask yourself if you are concerned with increasing your empathy?

Real Life

1. When you practice metacommunication, you can often benefit from the opinions of others. Develop two lists for yourself. On one list, identify people whose advice you would seek for any type of presentation you might be asked to give. These people might be friends, family members, teachers, or classmates. On your second list, identify people who would be valuable resources if you wanted advice on specific topics or on specific audiences.
2. Think about "small talk." What are the social situations in which you might find "small talk" useful?
3. Many social situations require empathy, especially situations in which people are likely to feel uncomfortable. Identify a situation which could create such discomfort (examples could be an apology, a job interview, a person meeting his or her fiancee's parents for the first time, etc.). Use your own empathy to describe the emotions the uncomfortable person is feeling and the methods for making him or her feel more comfortable.
4. Prepare a review of a book, movie, or television series to give to your class. The presentation should be 4-5 minutes long. Use your understanding of the class to choose the specific topic. Plan to present your review in class with other students who are presenting their reviews. Use empathy to help you prepare information and a style of presentation that your audience would appreciate. After your presentation, identify orally or in writing three communication decisions you made that were influenced by your understanding of the audience you were addressing.
5. Software developers have created several database products that allow tracking of individuals' characteristics and group demographics. These are typical fields that might be tracked in a database. Select three fields on the next page. Explain how as a salesperson you would use the information to help you make a sale. If you prefer, explain how the demographics from the database might help you as a marketer make decisions about marketing.

First Name
Last Name
Nickname
Title
Address
City
State
Zip
Country
Phone No. Work
Phone No. Home
Fax Number
E-mail

Birthday
Last contact date
Last meeting date
Referred by
Marital status
Spouse's name
Children's names, ages
Photo
Hobbies/interests
Organization memberships

3 Chapter Three Application Listening

Key Concept

Truly effective communicators are good listeners. If you are a good listener, you communicate to others their importance and the importance of the communication transaction. Good listening skills can be learned.

Chapter Objectives

- contrast listening with hearing
- identify key components of the listening process
- identify specific levels (kinds) of listening
- explain strategies that can enhance listening
- identify barriers to effective listening and how to overcome them



Key Terms

- attitude
- critical listening
- hearing
- listening
- precision
- retention
- selective listening

When someone is speaking to us, we know that they intend to communicate. Speaking is an intentional act, and if someone says something, we know that they intend to be understood. What we sometimes fail to realize is that listening is also an intentional act. If we intend to be understood, we speak (or otherwise communicate). But if we intend to be understanding, we must become good listeners. Unless we view listening as an intentional act that requires specific skills and attitudes, we won't be as good at communicating as we want to be.

First, we should distinguish listening from hearing. By definition, hearing is a sense that allows you to perceive sound. Hearing is a physical act, which requires only the reception of sound waves. Hearing is passive. You often hear even when you don't want to. Hearing implies no intention from the "receiver" of the communication.

Listening is far different. Listening might begin with hearing, but it goes far beyond merely using one of the senses. Listening is an active process. It is an intentional act. Far from being involuntary, listening requires concentration, effort. We define listening as a mental process that requires concentrating on sound, deriving meaning from it, and reacting to it. Without listening, the communication process itself becomes ineffective. Consider this scenario.

Scenario

James, the office manager, is in the room where everyone takes breaks. He is sitting down, eating lunch and reviewing some papers. No one else is present except Alicia, who's come in for a cup of coffee. Alicia has been on the job for about three months. James has been with the company for about five years. He recommended Alicia for her job based on the work she had done in a project James had worked on earlier. Alicia's three-month evaluation is coming up in a week.

	The Conversation	Commentary
Alicia:	James, do you have a minute?	Alicia is getting James' attention. She is inviting him to listen. By doing this in the informal atmosphere of the break room, she further communicates her intention to make this a personal conversation.
James:	*(James puts down his papers and looks at Alicia.)* Sure, Alicia. What can I do for you?	By putting down his papers, James devotes his attention to Alicia. He looks at her, an important part of listening. He responds to her invitation and lets her know that he wants to listen. More important, his behaviors make Alicia *feel* as if she is listened to.
Alicia:	Well, my three-month evaluation with Pilar is coming up next week. I'm trying to get ready for it.	
James:	You sound a bit nervous. Do you want to talk about it?	James is listening to the way Alicia is communicating, not just to what she is saying. He shares his perception with her.
Alicia:	Well, if you don't mind…	
James:	No problem. I know how you feel. These evaluations are simple enough, but they can be a little nerve wracking…stressful. What would you like to talk about?	James tries to calm Alicia's nerves. Apparently he really understands her feelings. As a good listener (and speaker) he asks for more information.
Alicia:	I am kind of stressed about it. At my last job, these conferences were pretty intimidating. I've got copies of my job targets. I've made notes on the tasks I'm working on and the ones I have left to learn. *(James nods.)* I think I'm prepared to talk with Pilar… maybe I've prepared too much.	
James:	Things around here are different than they were at your last job. Sounds to me like you're ready. Do you want advice?	Before giving advice, James asks if that's what Alicia wants.
Alicia:	If you have any.	
James:	My advice is to be yourself, bring up any issues that you want to talk about and listen to Pilar. My experience is that she will really control the conference. She's really understanding and a good listener.	
Alicia:	That makes me feel better. Is there anything particular I should be ready for?	Alicia rewards James' listening by sharing her feelings explicitly.
James:	Maybe I'm wrong, but you sound as if you expect some kind of surprise. Would you like to hear about my last evaluation conference with Pilar? Would that help you know what to expect?	
Alicia:	Would you mind? I'd feel so much better if I just knew what was going to happen.	
James:	Let's go to my office so we can talk in private. This won't take long, but we ought to talk where we won't be interrupted. It's kind of hard to talk in here when folks can just walk in and out.	By shifting locations, James shows his sensitivity. Both he and Alicia can listen better in a more private setting.
Alicia:	Great! I'll come by after you've finished your lunch.	

Fortunately, James and Alicia both sound as if they are good listeners. James is willing to hear what Alicia has to say. Alicia wants advice and is ready to hear it. Because they are good listeners, they are likely to have a productive and pleasant conversation.

The Listening Process

When we listen, we go through separate stages or steps. At each step of the listening process, we have opportunities to effect communication—positively or negatively.

- **Step One is sensing**...simply hearing the words. Before James can be a listener, Alicia must get his attention. After she does so, James can receive the message she wants to communicate. Later, they meet in James' office so they can hear each other better and talk privately.
- **Step Two is interpreting**...deriving meaning from the words. Alicia's message is very clear. James has no problem understanding what she is saying.
- **Step Three is evaluating**...judging what the message is about in context. James hears more than the words; he is particularly good at hearing everything Alicia is saying. She is doing more than talking about her upcoming meeting with Pilar; she is worried and wants advice.
- **Step Four is responding**...turning listening into a two-way process. This step allows feedback, advice, action, and reaction.

Listening as Part of the Communication Process

To appreciate listening, think about its role in the communication process. As we've seen in the first two chapters, feedback is an essential part of the communication process. Feedback lets us know we are being understood. Feedback enables us to modify a message and improve understanding. Listening is essential to feedback. If someone merely hears a message, there can be no genuine feedback.

Think about the conversation between Alicia and James. James' first words ("Sure, Alicia.") seem insignificant, but they are important feedback. His words let Alicia know that she has James' attention. Without this feedback, Alicia can't know if she should continue talking or not. Did James hear her? Is he too busy to listen?

When James says, "You sound a bit nervous. Do you want to talk about it?" he is giving Alicia more feedback. He lets her know that he would like her to continue to speak and that he is ready to talk about the subject. If James had not listened to Alicia, he might not have appreciated how much she wanted to discuss her evaluation.

Similarly, listening is an essential part of metacommunication. How can you possibly talk about communication if you haven't listened closely to the communication? Listening is vital to anyone who wishes to communicate well.

Levels of Listening

While we all want to be better listeners, it is probably not realistic to be listening intently all the time. Listening takes concentration and effort, so we reserve our most demanding listening skills for special occasions. We can appreciate this when we consider the levels of listening.

Level 1: Listening for Enjoyment. This is the easiest of the five levels of listening. We listen for enjoyment when we listen to music, TV, or radio for our own entertainment or amusement. Listening for enjoyment requires momentary concentration. The stakes aren't high. If we miss a song or a joke, we've only lost a bit of our own amusement. No one takes notes. There are few expectations for remembering the content of what we listen to.

In social situations, listening for enjoyment is listening to a light conversation or joining someone in listening to music. Listening for social reasons means being a part of the ongoing communication process. Not only is listening polite, it validates the other person as being important. And don't forget: any social situation might require a listener to move from listening for enjoyment to a higher level of listening. If you aren't listening, you'll miss the cues that let you know the conversation has changed in importance and in the kind of listening expected of you.

Listening for enjoyment is a step above hearing. Hearing is a physical process. Listening requires mental involvement. Listening for enjoyment requires very little active involvement in the process.

Level 2: Listening for Information. When you listen to a class discussion or an informative speech, you are usually listening for information. This level of listening requires more concentration than listening for enjoyment. Listening for information carries with it an expectation of retention. Retention, the remembering and recall of information, is an expectation of this level of listening.

Don't limit "information" too much. Listening for information is as important socially as it is in any job-related situation. Certainly listening to a lecture in math class and trying to learn a formula or axiom is listening for information, but an informal conversation can also be listening for information. If a friend is telling you about what's wrong with her car, you could be listening for many reasons; but one reason to listen is to acquire information.

Information is important to carrying on the conversation. You might be able to help her solve her problem. Listening for information can come up at any time.

In social situations, you can uphold your end of the conversation only if you follow the "thread" of the conversation. A normal conversation naturally leads the people talking from one topic or idea to another. To make appropriate comments in a conversation, you must track the information that is being shared. Without listening for information, you run the risk of making inappropriate comments, comments that are off-topic and puzzling to others.

Level 3: Critical Listening. Critical listening is an even more active process. Not only does it involve listening for information, it involves analyzing and evaluating information. A critical listener will take in information and retain it. At the same time, a critical listener questions the information and tests it against other information. A critical listener is able to give more thoughtful and perceptive feedback.

Don't confuse *critical listening* with *being critical.* We usually think that being critical is a negative quality. The *American Heritage Dictionary* identifies this use of critical as "inclined to judge severely." Another common use of the term—the use intended here—is "characterized by careful and exact evaluation and judgment." Listening critically means listening with the intent of evaluating or judging what you hear. It requires a high level of involvement and concentration.

Critical listeners are very useful in helping you become a better communicator. By listening closely to what you say, examining it, and judging it, they can give you sound advice on what you are saying.

Level 4: Precision Listening. Precision refers to exactness or the ability to distinguish clearly. Listening with precision goes beyond listening critically. Precision listening is listening with attention to details that give you clues to the speaker's emotion or state of mind. Precision listeners not only hear the facts, they hear the subtle changes in a speaker's voice that reveal what the speaker feels.

When you practice precision listening, you will be in tune not only with what is said (substance) but also with the way something is said (style). For example, if you are going to judge or evaluate a sales talk, you might pay attention to how the speaker says something as well as to what he is saying.

Precision listeners can help you, too. Not only will precision listeners help you improve what you say, they will help you improve how you say it. A subtle

rise in volume or elimination of a single pause can change how your message is interpreted. Precision listeners pay close attention to these kinds of details.

For example, if you are listening to someone explain how she feels about her new raise in salary, you might hear enthusiasm or disappointment in her voice, no matter what words she uses. Suppose she says, "I got a raise today." If she emphasizes, ever so slightly, the word "I," she could be expressing pride. If her tone is flat throughout, she might be disappointed in the amount of the raise. Either way, a precision listener will hear more than words. A precision listener will hear the subtleties of the message.

Level 5: Empathic Listening. This is the highest level of listening. It requires concentration, retention, and judgment. More important, it requires empathy. We have previously defined empathy (Chapter Two) as "the ability to put yourself in someone else's place and understand his or her feelings." Listening with empathy requires the skills of a precision listener plus one very important motive. An empathic listener is motivated to listen for an understanding of how the speaker feels. An empathic listener, while not always agreeing with a message, makes an effort to understand why someone feels a certain way.

This level of listening is the most difficult to master. It requires qualities that don't come easily to all of us.

- An empathic listener often will not offer a personal opinion.
- An empathic listener will serve as a sounding board, even when someone is venting emotions that are difficult to talk about.
- An empathic listener suspends judgment, offering opinions when asked.
- An empathic listener understands that a person has chosen to talk and respects the role of a listener.
- An empathic listener respects the feelings of others, without necessarily agreeing with those feelings.

Take the social situation when a friend says "I got a raise today." The precision listener can hear the subtleties of voice that reveal feelings. The empathic listener goes one more step and helps the speaker talk over her feelings. The empathic listener is satisfied to help by being there for the other person.

Communication Management—Levels of Listening

	Motive	Definition	Skills Required	Application example
Listening for enjoyment	Entertainment	Listening passively for one's own pleasure	• None	• Listening to a television comedy
Listening for information	Gathering facts, opinions, and other information	Listening to acquire data for recall	• Concentration • May require note-taking skills • Retention	• Listening to a sales presentation • Listening to a training session
Critical listening	Listening with the intent to judge or evaluate	Listening to make an evaluation or judgment of what is said or based on what is said	• Concentration • May require note-taking skills • Retention • Analysis • Reflection	• Interviewing a potential employee
Precision listening 	Understanding substance and style for clues as to meaning	Listening with attention to details that give you clues to the speaker's emotion or state of mind	• Concentration • May require note-taking skills • Retention • Analysis • Reflection • Recall of details • Willingness to evaluate how something is said as well as what is said	• Listening to gauge people's opinions on a new and important company policy • Listening to a colleague rehearse a speech with the intent of giving advice
Empathic listening	Listening to help others	Listening to understand another person's emotions and state of mind	• Concentration • Retention • Reflection • Empathy • Suspension of judgment	• Listening to various sides of a conflict express themselves

A Specialized Listening Application: The Focus Group

A focus group is a special group used by advertising and political campaigns to develop a sales or political message. Not-for-profit organizations also use focus groups to help them better meet their clients' needs. In essence, a focus group is a special group formed expressly for the purpose of listening.

Take an advertising campaign as an example—say a campaign to sell products that are more environmentally friendly than other products of the same type. Typically, a campaign will hire someone who specializes in focus groups to organize the group. People who represent the target audience are brought together at one time. They are invited to answer questions and comment on statements or issues. By listening closely to the comments of the members of the group, the ad campaign can adjust and refine its message to be more effective.

Effective use of a focus group requires many qualities: organization, understanding of issues, and research, for example. But one of the most important skills needed to conduct a focus group is the ability to listen.

First, the members of a focus group must feel as if someone is listening. If they are to share their beliefs and opinions, they must feel as if someone cares. This means that they must believe that someone is listening to them. A director of a focus group can build this belief in many ways:

- taking the time to hear what each member has to say
- not interrupting
- asking for explanations or comments
- looking at the speakers
- encouraging comments with positive reinforcements ("That's a really interesting statement. Would you explain?")

Second, the comments of the group must be analyzed carefully. Only careful listening can produce careful analysis. Certainly a focus group can provide information. But if the level of listening applied to a focus group is merely "listening for information," then much of the focus group is of limited use. Precision listening gives much more than information. The way a group member expresses herself might be exactly the insight needed to refine the message of the ad campaign.

Third, effective uses of focus groups require empathic listening. If a political campaign is going to make the best use of the focus group, the people in the campaign must understand how the group members really feel.

Fourth, the focus group—if it is effective—will alter a message or practice. If a focus group reveals that too many people are reluctant to believe claims about atmospheric pollution but are open to information about water pollution, that information can help tailor the message to the audience.

In short, the focus group is a special mechanism that makes listening a key part of the communication process. In Chapter Two, we learned about SPAM. We must analyze the situation (S), know our purpose (P), and understand the audience (A) before we can choose the methods (M) of communication we choose. A focus group brings together representative audience members to help us make sound communication choices...but only if we're willing to listen.

Overcoming Barriers to Effective Listening

We've already introduced the idea of interference (Chapter One). Interference is anything that gets in the way of effective communication. The most serious sources of interference are often the barriers to effective listening. A listening barrier is any physical, mental or cultural condition that reduces the likelihood a message can be received and understood. By reducing listening barriers, we can increase our understanding of others. When we know about listening barriers, we can craft our messages so that others will understand us.

Physical Barriers to Listening

The most common physical barriers to listening are the physical barriers to hearing itself. A total or partial hearing loss will make listening more difficult, but certainly not impossible. Other physical barriers include common circumstances, such as a poor audio system. Note that speakers and listeners both share responsibility for good listening.



Focus group moderators and participants need to listen carefully for an effective result.

Interpersonal Insight—Listening and the Hearing Impaired



Throughout the world there are people for whom the word "listening" isn't altogether accurate. Members of our community who are hearing impaired often use sign language to communicate. Some use "lip reading." Other use a combination. In the United States and Canada, American Sign Language (ASL) is a common means of communicating for the hearing impaired.

Many of the skills and attitudes stressed in this chapter can be applied to communicating with the hearing impaired. Whatever the means of communication, being an effective receiver of messages requires attention and concentration. A person who communicates using ASL or lip-reading needs your attention and your empathy. They need to know that the person with whom they are communicating is receiving the message and understanding. They need to be effective communicators by making their message understandable and making receiving their message as convenient as possible.

What can you do to help the hearing impaired receive your message?

- Be polite. Don't exclude a person who is hard of hearing from group conversation.
- Make sure you have the person's attention before speaking. This might mean waiting for them to finish a task and look up at you.
- Establish and maintain eye contact. Face the person when speaking. Check lighting. Be sure the person can see you clearly.
- Check for understanding through eye contact. More frequent checks for understanding might be needed. You might have to wait a little longer for a response
- Try to hold your conversation or deliver your speech in a location free of noise or other interference. Remember: For the hearing impaired, common noises from radios, copy machines, etc. may hinder communication.
- Be prepared to repeat your message if necessary. When you repeat, repeat an entire sentence rather than just a word or phrase.
- Employ someone to sign for public communication. Be aware if members of your audience are hearing impaired.
- Use visual aids and written material to supplement your message.
- Speak slowly and clearly. Raise your voice slightly, but don't shout.
- Don't cover your mouth while speaking. Don't eat, drink, or chew gum while speaking.
- Don't forget: Your expression and gestures can help convey your meaning.
- Not all older people have hearing problems, but between 20% and 30% of people over 50 have some hearing loss. Remember this fact as you prepare for your audience.

Mental Barriers to Listening

Mental barriers to listening are more difficult to deal with. The most common mental barrier is lack of concentration: a wandering mind or inattention. It's no wonder that our minds sometimes wander when we're listening. Our brains process words at over 500 words per minute. Most speakers communicate at 125-250 words per minute. When we think faster than others talk (especially when we listen for information, criticism, precision, and empathy) we should fill in the extra time with empathy, judgment, analysis, and the other skills that help us listen. Sometimes, however, our minds "wander."

An attitude is a state of mind about something or someone—the beliefs or feelings we have about ourselves, other people, ideas, and events. Often an attitude can be a mental barrier to listening. If an audience has a hostile attitude (or worse, an apathetic one), listening will probably be a problem. Listening in school is a good example. If you are in a class and you have a negative attitude about the class topic, you might find listening difficult. Another example is an audience prepared to listen for enjoyment. If the speaker wants listening for information, he or she needs to change the attitude of the audience if the speaker is to meet his or her purpose.

One of the most common attitudinal barriers is our tendency to try to "rehearse" or plan what we want to say rather than listen to others. We can only overcome this attitude by concentrating on listening. We can help others when we speak by allowing time for others to think and process our remarks.

Another common attitudinal problem is selective listening. Selective listening occurs when we block out anything we don't want to hear and pay attention only to information that coincides with our own beliefs.

Cultural Barriers to Listening

When people from two different cultures try to communicate, both need to take care that the communication is effective. Sometimes a cultural barrier can be language. It's obvious that a Canadian and a Bulgarian might have to overcome language and accent to communicate better, but even speakers of the same language sometimes have cultural differences. An Australian and an American might both speak English, but use different vocabulary.

In the United States, many people come from cultural backgrounds that can, if allowed, inhibit listening. Our country is a "melting pot," but there are still cultural distinctions that good communicators should be aware of. Take the word "hey." In some parts of our country, "hey" is a greeting similar to "hi" or "hello." In other parts of the country, "hey" is a means of getting someone's attention, some might think in a rude way. Using the word "hey" can be a barrier to listening if it is interpreted as rudeness rather than a friendly greeting.

One major barrier to listening is accents. Most of us find accents charming and intriguing. Sometimes, however, an accent can make listening difficult. For example, listening to non-native speakers of English can require higher levels of concentration. One strategy for managing this potential barrier is to listen for overall content rather than trying to understand each specific word the speaker uses. In a world that is becoming increasingly multicultural, people listening in either business or social situations cannot afford to allow accents to be a barrier.

Communication Management—Solving Common Listening Problems

Barrier	Explanation/Example	Applying what you know
Competing Noises	Our hearing can be obscured by noise such as shuffling feet in a hall, clashing cafeteria trays, other conversations.	• Speakers should choose a suitable location for communication. • Speakers can speak up if they need to overcome unavoidable competing noises.
Blocked View	Someone could sit between the speaker and listener. The seating arrangement might not allow easy viewing of the speaker.	• Speakers should try to place themselves so others can see them. • Listeners can adjust their positions to see better.
Poor Speaking Volume	A speaker who doesn't "speak up" creates a barrier for listeners.	• Speakers should plan for a suitable volume and adjust volume as required. • Speaker can use a microphone. • Listeners should let a speaker know when they can't hear.
Listener's Physical Condition	We are all familiar with trying to listen when we are tired or ill. These, too, are physical barriers to listening.	• When possible, speakers should plan for communication at a time when audiences are physically prepared to listen. • When possible, listeners should be well-rested and prepared to listen.
 **Listener's Attitude**	Sometimes a listener isn't "prepared" to listen to someone. The listener can be bored or prejudiced, perhaps even hostile. The listener might even be listening selectively; that is, the listener might be listening only to things he or she wants to hear.	• The speaker should try to capture the listener's attention and focus it. • The speaker should be prepared to reschedule communication for a better time. • The listener should try to overcome negative attitudes. • Speakers should work on a pleasant, interesting voice.
Vocabulary or Language	If a person's vocabulary, language, or accent differs significantly from our own, we might find listening difficult.	• Speakers should anticipate the needs of listeners and modify messages appropriately. • Listeners should be open-minded about most differences in vocabulary or language.

Improving Listening Skills

You can make short-term improvements to your listening by following the suggestions for reducing barriers. Over the longer term, improving listening requires even further effort. Developing good listening habits (and fighting poor listening habits) is a lifelong search for understanding and being understood. In business or social situations, you can become a better listener by remembering these suggestions.

First, work on concentration. Don't let your mind wander. Look at the person who is speaking and put yourself in his or her place. Sometimes in social situations, it is tempting to try to listen while doing other things. For levels of listening higher than enjoyment, concentration is better than trying to do two things at once.

Second, practice good listening. We all have plenty of chances to listen. Listening "exercises" can include listening to others as well as listening to your environment—the hum of the fluorescent lights, the dull roar of the highway close by, the sound of the wind. Practice can even help you become a better social listener. Every listening opportunity is another step toward sharpening listening skills.

Third, prepare yourself to listen. Take care that you have situated yourself so you can see and hear. If you are going to listen to a topic for the first time, consider researching and finding out about it. If there are preparatory materials (an assignment in the text, a handout, an e-mail, a web site), read it. Make notes if necessary.

Fourth, listen for key words. When someone is speaking to you, the person will usually clue you in when he or she is about to say something important. For example, the word "however" usually means the person is about to make an exception to what was just said. Even "for example" prepares you to listen to an example that will make the communicator's message clearer.

Fifth, take notes. Even the best listeners need to take notes. Now we don't take notes when we listen for enjoyment, but anything beyond that might require notes to help us remember what was said. Even the act of writing down important points will help us remember, even if we never refer to the notes.

Interpersonal Insight—Feeling Heard



You've probably heard the old riddle: "If a tree falls in the forest and there is no one present to hear it, does it make a sound?" Well, we're not going to tackle that riddle here, but it is the same as this question: If a person says something and you don't listen, did they really express themselves? Listening is a vital part of interpersonal communication. Without a listener, a speaker can't feel heard.

Have you ever had something you just had to say? Something you wanted others to hear? You might not have even cared if anyone agreed with you or not, you simply had the need to express yourself. That feeling is common. Many people have a need to speak their minds...or their hearts. They have a message that is important to get out.

In interpersonal interaction you could find yourself listening to a message just so a person can feel heard. If someone is unhappy, you can help her feel better by listening to a problem. If someone is angry, you can help him feel calmer by listening. Even if you don't agree with a person's opinion, you can help her feel better just by listening to the opinion.

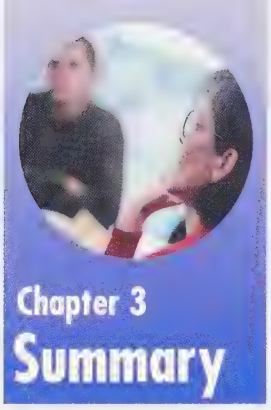
If you've ever felt the need to be heard, you can at least empathize with that need, even if you have little understanding or feeling for the specific message. We all need to feel that someone at least cares enough to listen.

The Business of Listening

One of the most important skills of a successful professional is the skill of listening. Many businesses have used the concepts of William Covey to help improve themselves. Listening is an important part of Covey's ideas. One of the most important parts of Covey's *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* is "Seek first to understand, then to be understood." While this belief could be useful in any area of life, it is particularly helpful in the business and professional worlds.

One example can illustrate the importance of listening on the job. Think about someone who is taking a complaint from a client or customer. The client or customer who approaches the communication with some negative feelings is dissatisfied. The person talking to the customer or client is likely to be defensive. These two attitudes could be difficult barriers to successful communication. Good listening habits can overcome the barriers.

For example, the customer might begin by expressing dissatisfaction. The other person might be tempted to interrupt with an apology or an explanation. Often, however, hearing out the other person is the best thing to do. Remember: It's not enough to be listened to. A person must feel listened to. By allowing the customer to explain the complaint fully, the listener can often give him or her just what is needed.



Chapter 3
Summary

It's tempting to begin a discussion of communication talking about ourselves. However, listening is such an important part of the communication process that we must always keep in mind that we all need to be good listeners. We must also communicate in a way that will help whomever we talk to be good listeners as well.

Remembering

1. Explain the difference between listening and hearing.
2. Select a conversation or discussion that you have been a part of recently. Recall as specifically as possible something that you heard during that conversation or discussion. Trace the listening process using what you heard. In a sentence or two, explain what happened at each stage of the listening process.
3. Identify the five different kinds (levels) of listening.
4. Identify five strategies that can improve listening.
5. Identify five barriers to effective listening and give at least one strategy for overcoming each.

Reflecting

1. Focus groups are planned specifically for the purpose of listening to representative members of a potential audience. Use your library-media center or the Internet to look up focus groups. You'll likely find most information about groups used politically.
   a] Describe a situation in which a focus group was used
   b] Explain how the focus group affected the final message, campaign, ad, etc.
2. As useful as focus groups can be, there are dangers to their use. Using your research, explain the possible risks of using a focus group.
3. The level of listening you engage in is usually determined by your own purposes and interests. Sometimes, however, you will engage empathic listening because the person to whom you are speaking lets you know that they would like that level of involvement from you. Recall instances in which someone has let you know that he or she wants you to listen empathetically. How did you know that this was the kind of listening that was required in the situation? What did the speaker say or do that encouraged you to use this level? Write a paragraph describing this situation.
4. Do you know someone who is a good listener? Someone you would go to if you really wanted to talk about something important? In small groups (3-4), share the qualities that a good listener has. Compile a list. Share the group's list with your class.
5. Do you know someone who is easy to listen to? Someone you would gladly listen to for enjoyment or for information? In small groups (3-4) share the qualities that make you want to listen to someone. Compile a list. Share the group's list with your class.

Reaching

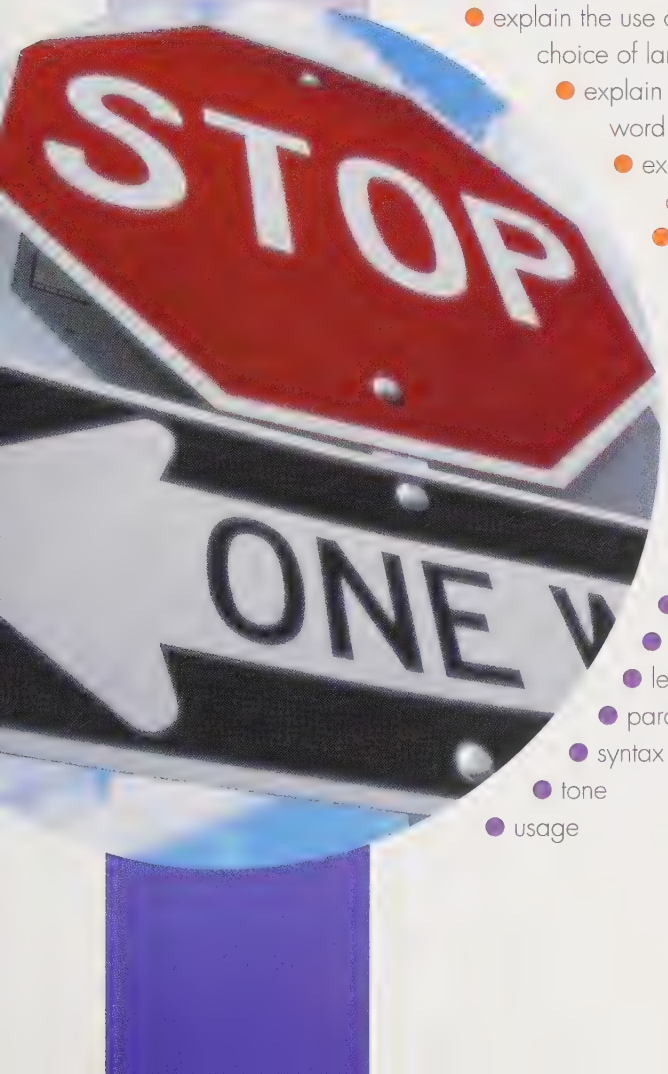
1. One of the most famous listeners in recent years is Carl Rogers, who was famous for using listening at a critical stage in helping to counsel patients. Using your library-media center and/or the Internet, research "Rogerian" therapy and the role of listening. Prepare a short presentation for your class on your findings. Be sure to include an example of Roger's style of listening.
2. Set up this experiment. Select a videotape of a person giving a short speech. Ask half of your class to listen to the speech, but not view it. Ask the other half to listen to the speech and view it. (You can ask half to turn their desks around. This way both can participate at the same time.) Prepare a questionnaire to be filled out by each group. Give the group the chance to recall and interpret parts of the

speech. Contrast the way the listen-only group understood the speech with the understanding of those who listened and watched. As a class, try to account for the differences (or similarities) in the results.

Real Life

1. Select a situation in which a group of people are expected to listen. It could be a school assembly, a class lecture, a video presentation…any typical school activity. Observe the listeners. What clues are there that some people are listening closely? Identify the clues that show that they are listening. Identify members of the audience who are probably not listening closely. What behaviors do they exhibit that cause you to think they are not listening?
2. Interview someone who is responsible for receiving complaints from clients or customers. Ask them about the importance of listening. Ask for examples or stories of receiving complaints. Share these examples or stories with the class.
3. Record an interview from television. Watch the interview as a class. Assign one group to listen for information, one group to practice precision listening, and one group to practice listening empathetically. After you've listened, allow each group to share their findings within the group. Complete this activity by having the groups report what they discovered from their listening.
4. Conduct a focus group to learn how to best promote a school or community event. Prepare a written report in which you:
   a] describe the group (number, demographics)
   b] briefly describe the purpose of the focus group and the major questions to be asked
   c] summarize the responses and common themes among the answers
   d] give suggestions based on the group's comments

4 Chapter Four Application.Language



Key Concept

Word choice and arrangement are the principal tools for complex social and professional communication. The key to making good language choices in oral communication is understanding levels of usage.

Chapter Objectives

- explain the use of situation, purpose, and audience in determining choice of language
- explain the importance of denotation and connotation in word choice
- explore the levels of usage and the bases for choosing appropriate levels
- learn strategies for improving language use in personal and professional situations

Key Terms

- brevity
- clarity
- connotation
- denotation
- economy
- grammar
- idiom
- jargon
- level of usage
- parallelism
- syntax
- tone
- usage

Scenario

Pilar is presiding over a staff meeting. She has asked James, the office manager, to speak to everyone in the office about proper office dress. She has noted that many people are breaking some of the office's dress code. James agrees that the dress code needs to be a topic for discussion. He has planned two small speeches. Note the differences in language.

Pilar: *We have a topic on today's agenda that needs a bit of attention. I've asked James to talk about it.*

James: *Okay, guys. I've got a new topic to bring up. Now, I'm not the most stylish or fashionable guy around, but I've noticed that the level of dress in our office is slipping somewhat. For example, the dress code that we established when we opened this office has been posted in the break room since we started. It states that women will wear hose with skirts. It states that men will wear ties and slacks. Well, I know that many of us prefer to dress more comfortably, but the company's dress code is the same in all offices. I'd appreciate it if you folks would review the code and be sure you comply with it. This isn't*

Pilar: *We have an issue on today's agenda that must be addressed. Since James is office manger, I've asked him to handle the task.*

James: *It has come to our attention that several employees have not been dressing according to the office and company dress code. That code, which was established when we first opened the office, has been part of everyone's orientation and is the official, posted policy. It specifically states that women will wear hose with skirts. And that men will wear ties and slacks. You might not agree with the code, but this code is the company policy for all offices. Beginning tomorrow, the code will be enforced with more attention. Be sure you comply with the code. If you have questions, please*

something we have a lot of choice about, so be sure that—starting tomorrow—we are all doing as the company requests. See me if you have questions. Thanks.

check the posted dress code in the break room. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Don't both of these passages say the same thing? The key difference is obviously the wording. From the very beginning, Pilar's choice of word changes the tone of the meeting. In example #1, she says there is a "topic on today's agenda." In example #2, it is an "issue." The words might mean the same thing on one level, but do they really create the same meaning? Isn't a topic something for a discussion? Isn't an issue a topic about which there is dispute or controversy? Just that one word can change how people will respond to James' talk.

Which speech is friendlier? Which is firmer? Which would you like to hear if you were an employee? Which would be most likely to improve the compliance with the dress code? On one level the speeches say the same thing. On another, the choice of language makes them two completely different speeches.

Language. Language is the most important tool in our communication toolbox.

Consider that simple sentence. Buried within it are the qualities that make language one of humanity's most important characteristics. Consider the very complicated task this ten-word sentence can perform.

With one word—"language"—the sentence focuses our attention on a topic. The topic is complicated, but the word is brief. In one short written or spoken word, the speaker and the listener begin negotiating a meaning of a topic about which countless volumes have been written.

- The sentence establishes a concept. It creates even more meaning in whoever reads or hears the sentence.
- The sentence establishes a relationship among all communication elements, placing language in the primary position.
- The sentence even stretches meaning by using metaphor, stating that language is a tool in a toolbox.

Not bad for ten words. When you consider that thousands of words we manipulate daily as speakers, writers, listeners, and readers, it is no small wonder that we often find ourselves caught up in the problems and opportunities of language.

Denotation and Connotation

Wouldn't it be simple if every word had one clear-cut meaning? If we could utter a sound and have anyone hearing know immediately what we mean? But even simple, concrete terms aren't that precise. If you hear the word "pencil," you might think of a yellow, wooden object, sharpened lead at one end, eraser at the other. Most people would. But some people will think of a mechanical pencil or an artist's pencil or a flat carpenter's pencil. Fortunately, we can clear up the meaning of "pencil" quickly. Imagine the difficulty, however, in clearing up any misunderstandings that might arise from far more abstract words such as "honor," "freedom," "democracy," or "justice."

Words will convey meaning with either their denotations or their connotations. A word's denotation is its explicit meaning. You can think of it as the dictionary definition or literal meaning. We all tend to share the same basic denotation for most words. That makes clear communication possible. A word's connotation is the meaning that is implied or suggested. We might not all share as much of a word's connotation as denotation. That makes word choice very important.

To illustrate, think about the word "computer." We can all agree on the word's denotation: A computer is an electronic device capable of high-speed calculations that allow users to perform high level tasks very quickly. More specifically, in general conversation, we think of a computer as a personal computer, with a keyboard, a mouse, and a monitor. Because we share this much meaning almost immediately on hearing the word computer, we can easily talk about computers.

But there is another dimension to the meaning of "computer"—its connotation. Some people hear the word and associate meanings with it. Perhaps they find computers interesting and challenging. If so, those feelings come along with the word. Perhaps they don't know much about computers and feel that computers are threatening and complicated. For them, the word has a far more negative connotation.

As you choose your words for a social or professional situation, you are navigating through complex patterns of denotation and connotation. As in the example of James' message to employees, you can say the same thing in many ways. You must determine which way is going to meet your goals best.

Communication Management—Connotation



All these words mean basically the same thing. If someone called you a "funny" person, you would probably feel flattered (as long as the denotation of "odd" isn't what you think is intended). How would you feel about being called amusing? Or comical? Or diverting? All the words in the left column are thesaurus entries under "funny." Note the differences in connotation.

funny	He told a funny story.	"Funny" is a common word. We associate it with causing laughter.
amusing	He told an amusing story.	"Amusing" means the same, but does it connote laughter? Or is an amusing story somewhat slight, inconsequential?
comical	He told a comical story.	Unlike "amusing," which seems less than "funny," comical seems more than funny. A comical story seems longer, more involved. And far funnier than merely "funny."
entertaining	He told an entertaining story.	"Entertaining" is more like "amusing," but it doesn't connote laughter at all.
diverting	He told a diverting story.	A story is diverting if it draws our attention to it, usually in a positive way. But was the story funny? Amusing?

Metacommunication Strategies of Managing Denotation and Connotation

How can you be sure that your audience shares as much of a word's meaning with you as possible? There is nothing wrong with communicating directly about the meaning of words. In fact, sometimes direct communication about a word's meaning can clear up misunderstandings and become a valuable method of increasing the quality of communication.

- Read your audience. What words will likely be unfamiliar? Can you substitute another word?
- If you use an unfamiliar word, can you supply a clear definition?
- If you and the audience share the denotative meaning of a word, do you share the connotative meaning? Can you replace a word with another word that has a connotation that you share? If not, can you explain your use of the term in a way that helps the audience understand the word's connotation for you?

- Remember, there's nothing wrong with asking someone to share his or her understanding of a word. If you are conversing with someone and you suspect that you do not share a word's denotation or connotation, put yourself in the place of the other person. What do you think they mean by the word? Perhaps you might even ask for a definition of the word as he or she understands it.

Levels of Usage

Making choices about words involves situation, purpose, and audience. Diction, another word for "word choice," depends on the situation you find yourself in, your goal in communicating, and your listeners. A simple analogy is our choice in addressing someone. Assume you know an adult, maybe a teacher at your school. His name is Charles Cooper. You and your family have known him for years, and for years you've called him "Chuck."

You are faced with a decision throughout the day: Do you call him "Chuck" or "Mr. Cooper"? You'll make this decision based on situation, purpose, and audience. For example, if you are in a public situation (a class or an athletic practice) where others are present (and become part of the audience), you'll probably want to call him "Mr. Cooper." To do otherwise would likely cause him some embarrassment and suggest a lack of respect for him. And if you are trying to accomplish something with Mr. Cooper, you might find your purpose harmed if Mr. Cooper must stop and remind you that you have crossed a line.

The same is true in selecting any word. Society follows rules. The rules of language are learned from the first times you begin speaking. Language is a system. That means that it is composed of many related features: nouns, verbs, conjunctions, and other parts of speech; clauses and phrases; the sounds of speech; the use of tenses and moods; and many, many more. Grammar is a description of the way these many parts work together to make language work. Usage is more than a description. Usage is the relationship of language to the specific situation, purpose, and audience. Grammar describes how language works. Usage prescribes the rules that are appropriate in given situations.

The most important principle of usage is to match the level of language to the situation and audience. Spoken language is generally less formal—or more colloquial—than written language. Colloquial means characteristic of spoken language as opposed to written language. In most of our speech—public and private, formal and informal—we strive for a colloquial usage that allows our listeners to be relaxed and to listen easily to what we have to say. We are tempted to view language as one way or another, to draw a bright line and say,

"On this side of the line the language is acceptable. On the other side, the language is not acceptable." Acceptability, however, is determined by the situation, purpose, and audience. Language becomes a method that the speaker uses to create the kind of meaning that will suit the purpose. There is no "bright line" test to determine appropriateness of language. There are, rather, general levels of usage that a communicator chooses from. The communicator has much room to maneuver within a given level.

	Written	Spoken
Standard — this level includes language that is… • formal and technical • informal (or general) • colloquial	Standard Written usage is the highest level of usage. More is expected of the person who writes standard English than is expected from those who speak standard English.	Standard Spoken (or Oral) English is less governed by rules. We will use more colloquialisms, the language of informal, familiar conversations.
Nonstandard — this level includes language that is… • slang • dialectical	We don't have many opportunities to write Nonstandard Written English. If we do, it is in personal notes and other highly informal situations.	Nonstandard Spoken English includes words that, while they might have some appropriate uses in formal situations, are often slang and dialect. We have many opportunities to use Nonstandard Spoken English.
Substandard — this level includes words that are… • invented or coined • "illiterate" • obscene or profane	We don't typically distinguish between Written and Spoken English. Substandard English follows so few rules that there are extremely few situations in which we write it. Moreover, speaking Substandard English can be a real problem. Choosing to use Substandard English (or not knowing any better) can lead others to think of you as unwilling to observe polite rules of English or as uneducated.	



There are many ways to use language to communicate a message.

Here are some samples of how these levels of usage look in day-to-day speech and writing.

	Written	Spoken
Standard—this level includes language that is… • formal and technical • informal (or general) • colloquial	I shall try to express my friends' attitudes about the use of video interviews by analyzing the differences between personal interviews and interviews conducted on video.	I'll try to share my friends' attitudes about televised interviews noting differences between face-to-face interviews and TV interviews.
Nonstandard—this level includes language that is… • slang • dialectical		My buddies think these TV interviews are totally bogus. These media dudes diss the who public with their yadda-yadda-yadda all the freakin' time.
Substandard—this level includes words that are… • invented or coined • "illiterate" • obscene or profane	TV interviews ain't near as good as real interviews. If you ask me, interviewing on TV is a cruddy idea that won't never be no good.	

Since this text deals primarily with oral communication, we shall concentrate our attention on Standard Spoken English and Nonstandard Spoken English. We do need to say a few words about written English and Substandard English.

Written English does have its place in the personal and professional oral English world. We may from time to time be asked to make a presentation that is so special, so sensitive that we will want to write down exactly what we want to say and repeat it word for word. An example would be a press release. An oral press release is accompanied by a written document. If you are attempting to get a specific and exact message out to the press, then an oral press release will sound a lot like written English.

But don't be confused about the differences between written and oral language. Oral language will be less formal: more contractions, more colloquial, sentence fragments, etc. Oral language is less formal because it is usually composed "on the spot." We expect that when people speak in our daily interactions, they haven't written out a script. We allow for a "looser" language usage. Oral language can afford to be less formal. There are so many ways of modifying a sentence with tone of voice, volume, facial expression or gesture, that a

speaker can be very expressive without following all the rules of written usage.

That is not to say that in oral usage "anything goes." Listeners still have expectations of vocabulary, syntax, proper usage, and other characteristics of careful language. The expectations will vary according to situation and audience, but the expectations are definitely there.

Using Substandard English is highly risky. There are few personal and professional situations in which illiterate language will successfully meet a speaker's purpose. Language that makes the speaker appear uneducated, vulgar, and sloppy will yield almost no positive results, despite situation, purpose, and audience.

The preferred level of usage for personal and professional face-to-face interaction (interpersonal, group, and public speaking) is Standard Spoken. It is not as formal as Standard Written. It sounds "natural" in conversation and in speeches. It allows the speaker to use some informal and colloquial words and phrases, while at the same time setting limiting slang and other non-standard features.

Communicating About Language

When we practice metacommunication about language, we're using language to describe itself. In other words, we have a vocabulary of language. In addition to denotation and connotation, these are some of the terms with which we speak about language errors. These terms give you vocabulary with which to improve language use and avoid language errors. One of the most common words used in speaking about language is diction. Diction is word choice in speech or writing. (You can also use diction to refer to the clarity and distinctness of a person's speech.) Each of these examples will help you improve your diction.

Abstract

An abstract word is a vague general word. Abstract language has its place, but usually more direct, concrete words help an audience understand. A concrete word is more likely to generate the meaning you want. A general rule is avoid abstract terms when concrete terms are available.

Abstract	**Improved**
Joe *had a few problems* with the new dress code.	Joe *disagreed* with the dress code's *requirements of white shirts and ties for male employees*

Repetition

Repetition comes in three forms: intentional repetition, which can increase the appeal of language; unavoidable repetition, which is required by the nature of the topic or purpose; awkward repetition, which sounds as if the speaker hasn't given enough thought to the message.

Intentional repetition is used by many eloquent speakers to make a point memorable. Who can forget "of the people, by the people, and for the people"? The repetition makes the series of phrases historic. Sometimes, a speaker can't avoid repeating a word or phrase. For example, if you are in a group discussion on environmental problems, it will be difficult to avoid repeating the word "environment." Too often, repetition just doesn't sound right. In those cases, the awkward repetition should be replaced with better wording.

Awkward	**Improved**
The *dress* code *addressed* how employees should *dress* for the office.	The dress code stated the type of clothing employees should wear in the office.

Intentional repetition comes in many forms. Each of these language choices can help make your communication clearer or more eloquent. One important use of language is parallelism. Speakers practice parallelism when they arrange sentences so that words and phrases are similar in length and structure.

Not parallel	**Parallel**
Dress codes are unnecessary, old-fashioned, and not complying with laws. (Unnecessary (adj.), old-fashioned (adj.) and not complying (verb) are linked together.)	Dress codes are unnecessary, old-fashioned, and illegal. (Unnecessary, old-fashioned, and illegal are all adjectives.)

One of the most annoying forms of repetition is redundancy, unnecessarily repeating an idea. For example, you might have heard someone say something about "today's modern world." *Today* and *modern* really repeat the same idea. Today's world *is* modern.

Cliché

A cliché is a saying that is overused. It has little meaning for people because they have heard it so much. When people hear clichés, they often conclude that a speaker lacks creativity. Some clichés are so overused that audiences become annoyed with them. Avoid clichés in favor of language that is fresh…or at the very least not overused.

Cliché	Improved
The new dress code *goes way overboard.* It's the *last straw* for some of us.	The new dress code is unreasonable. It will cause some employees to look for another job.

Dialect

A dialect is a language pattern—often regional in nature—which is different from the dominant or typical language pattern. Dialect can differ from the dominant language in vocabulary, pronunciation, and syntax. In most cases, dialect does not hinder communication. In fact, many audiences find a dialect charming or interesting, if it is understandable. People who speak a dialect of English are at no disadvantage when speaking with an audience of people who speak the same dialect. When addressing another audience, dialect becomes a factor in language choice. For example, in some regions of the country, it would not be unusual to hear someone say, "he is sure enough going to be there." In other parts of the country, this expression is unusual. You must decide—as a communicator—which elements of dialect belong in typical conversation and which do not.

Idiom

An idiom is an expression that is characteristic of a language. It isn't explainable by rule or reason, it just "is." It is simply the way the idea is expressed in a language. For example, when you use the word "slip," you often follow it with a preposition. Why do we differentiate between slip up (make a mistake), slip over (make a brief visit), slip out (leave early), and slip around (sneak)? How would a person just learning English know these idioms? There are no rules, that's just the way the language is. Good communication is idiomatically correct.

Non-idiomatic	Idiomatic
We need some time to think on the problem.	We need some time to think about the problem.

Sometime dialect and idiom go hand-in-hand. Certain idioms are familiar in certain parts of the country. A few years ago, Governor Ann Richards of Texas made an impression on the country when she gave the keynote address at the Democratic National Convention. In her speech, she declared, "That dog won't hunt." She used an idiom that people in the South or in rural areas were more likely to understand than people in other locales. Because she made sure the meaning was clear in context, she used the phrase as an attention-getting device for her idea: "That explanation is not believable."

Jargon

Jargon is specialized, technical vocabulary of a certain occupation, hobby, or other activity. Since the language is highly specialized, it should only be used when speaking with people who are part of the group that typically uses the language. Use with audiences outside the specialized group will create confusion. Worse, members of audience could consider your use of jargon as an attempt to show off or to make them feel ignorant.

Syntax

Syntax is the way words are put together to form phrases and sentences. In English, word order has a lot to do with meaning. Consider these two sentences:

He *only* wanted to read the proposal.
He wanted to read the proposal *only*.

Notice the difference? If you are talking about language, you use the word syntax to talk about how words and phrases are constructed.

Tone

Words themselves don't have a tone, but when placed in a sentence and used in a given situation, words contribute to the creation of tone. Tone (not *tone of voice*) is the author's attitude toward his or her subject or topic. A speaker reveals his or her attitude about the topic by selecting words that cue the audience into how the speaker feels. For example, if the speaker says the new dress code is a "small improvement" in running the office, the word "improvement" conveys a positive attitude toward the subject. If the speaker says the new dress code is a "small change" in running the office, that positive attitude is replaced by a neutral attitude.

Vocabulary

Generally, effective communicators work to improve their vocabularies. The ability to choose from among a large number of words gives speakers more chances of arriving at just the right meaning. As Mark Twain once said, the difference between the right word and almost the right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug.

Comparing Two Uses of Language

We take for granted sometimes that how we say something is often as important as what we say. Sometimes it could be more important! Following are two speeches about the same topic, with decidedly different levels of usage. Which would you think would be more effective? Why? Both speeches use exactly 917 words. Which speech uses words more effectively? Which would you pick to make your ideal speech?

Situation: The owner of a chain of dry cleaners has had a report that a dissatisfied customer verbally abused and pushed one of the employees. He's called an evening meeting of the managers to talk about the incident.

Purpose: To inform managers (and later employees) of a new policy designed to protect them and retain good customer service.

Audience: Ten store managers. There are five men and five women. Ages range from late twenties to late forties. All have been with the firm for more than a year, some as long as ten years.

Speech A

Thank you all for attending. I know this is not our regularly scheduled meeting time, and I appreciate your taking time to be here. I hope you know that I wouldn't have asked you to come if I didn't think this was a very important topic.

Most of you know about what happened at Kyle Benson's store late last week. Rhonda Carter, who has worked with us for three years, was taking a complaint from a customer regarding a dress that had not been cleaned well. Kyle tells me that Rhonda was practicing our customer service policy relative to complaints and that Rhonda is very good with the public. As the woman complained, Rhonda could see that she was very agitated. The customer

Speech B

Hi, *folks*. Thanks for attending, especially on a night that I know most of you would rather be home with family and friends. I wouldn't have *pulled you out* to this *get-together* if I didn't think we had a real important topic to discuss.

By now you've all heard about the *big shake-up* over at Kyle Benson's store last week. Rhonda Carter, a *gal* who's worked for Kyle for about three years, was taking a complaint from *some lady* about a dress she says wasn't cleaned well. Kyle didn't see the whole thing, but he *backs up* Rhonda and says she's *real good with people.* As the woman complained, Rhonda could see she was getting *hotter and hotter.* The customer *cranked up the volume,* and started

began using loud, vulgar, abusive language. She finally shoved the dress back at Rhonda so hard that Rhonda fell over backwards. Fortunately, she wasn't hurt. Other customers and employees saw and heard the whole episode.

Unfortunately, this is the third time this summer that one of our own employees has had to deal with that kind of treatment from our customers. Tonight, I'd like to review our customer service policy and add a new piece that Shilpa Prakash from store #2 and Diane Turner from store #5 helped write.

Let me start by saying this:

First, customer service is still the most important feature that sets us apart from the competition. Anyone can go to any dry cleaners in the city. Some offer cheaper dry cleaning than we do. None will offer the customer service that we do. I'd like you to communicate this to your employees. We are proud of the relationships they have established with people who use our services.

Second, we feel that the problem does not lie with our ways of treating complaints. As you all know, every cash register has the acronym L.E.A.R.N. in bold letters placed so our employees can see it. These letters stand for

cussing and *carrying on something terrible.* Finally, the customer shoves the dress at Rhonda, and pushes her *head-over-heels.* Thank goodness Rhonda wasn't hurt *or nothing.* A bunch of others in the store saw this *go down.*

Well, this is the third time this summer we've had something like this happen to our employees from some of our *customers acting up.* Tonight, I want to go through our customer service policy and add a new idea thought up by *me, Shilpa Prakash at store #2 and Diane Turner at store #5.*

First off, let's get a few things straight.

Customer service is still the thing that we do better than anybody else in this city. We may not be cheapest, but we will always *beat the other guy* in service. I want you to make sure our employees know that this is something we're *real* proud off, and *we're not about to change.*

Now, I don't feel the problem comes out of our complaint process. You all know that we post the *abbreviation* L.E.A.R.N. on each register. The letters stand for

L Listen carefully to what the customer is saying.

E Explain what happened. Customers appreciate explanations, but they don't want to hear excuses.

A Apologize for the difficulty. We want our customers to know that we regret inconvenience or other problems we caused.

R Make it Right. Do what you can to solve the problem. If necessary, get a manager involved.

N Take the Next Step. Tell the customer exactly what you are going to do—then do it.

As I stated before, Rhonda was following the L.E.A.R.N. sequence when she was pushed and berated. It is obvious to those of us who talked to witnesses that Rhonda was behaving courteously and professionally.

So what do we do when a customer becomes threatening or abusive? Shilpa, Diane, and I propose training our employees to handle such stressful situations. I personally talked with Rhonda and she shared some important insights with me.

- She said that she knew the customer was losing control. She could tell from her volume and her language.
- She said she didn't know how to keep the situation from getting worse. She knows that customer service is very important, and she didn't feel as if she could say anything back to the customer.

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A Apologize for the difficulty. We want our customers to know that we regret inconvenience or other problems we caused.

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N Take the Next Step. Tell the customer exactly what you are going to do—then do it.

Rhonda was doing the L. E. A. R. N. *thing* exactly like we taught it to people. Everyone in the store says Rhonda was *like real* polite and courteous *and everything*.

So *how in the world* are we *gonna* solve this problem? Shilpa, Diane, and *me* think we should train our employees to handle *ladies like this—and guys,* too. Rhonda really o*pened my eyes* when I talked to her.

- She told me she knew the *lady was losing it*, because of *like how loud she was and how she was cussing and stuff.*
- She said she didn't know what to do to keep the *lady* from *going off on her.* Rhonda knows that customer service is *number one*, and she didn't really think she could say anything to stop this *lady*.

I believe it's important for our employees to know that it is acceptable to draw the line. While I still want the best customer service in the city, I want our employees to know that they don't have to accept behavior that is out of control. And they certainly don't have to accept abusive language or physical threats.

I would like each of you to schedule store meetings during the next two weeks. I would like to come to those meetings. I want our people to know that we care about them. We'll present our new "civility policy." The policy will have these key points:

- We want good customer service.
- We want our employees to use the L.E.A.R.N. approach to fielding complaints.
- We want our employees to know that if a customer is not civil, the employee is empowered to do these things:
    - Refer the customer to one of you.
    - Give the employee my office number.
    - End the interaction in a polite way.

Basically, we want our employees to know they can "draw the line" on certain behaviors. We want customer service, but not at the expense of employee well-being.

What is "uncivil behavior"? Shilpa found these descriptions on the Internet that have been cited as behavior that shouldn't be tolerated:

I want our employees to know that it is *O.K.* to say *"I'm not gonna take this stuff,"* but do it in a nice way, *you know.* Just *because they are the customer,* doesn't mean we have to put up with that kind of *stuff*—and we sure don't have to put up with rough language and threats.

I'd like each of you guys to schedule store meetings during the next *couple of weeks.* I want to be there. I want our employees to know that we care about them. We'll present our new "civility policy," which will have these major ideas:

- Customer service is still number one.
- We still want everyone to use the L.E.A.R.N. stuff when we get *complainers.*
- We want our employers to know that when a customer is not *nice,* the employee can do something about it:
    - They can turn the *complainer over to you.*
    - They can have the complainer call me.
    - They can end the conversation, but in a *nice way.*

We want folks who work for us to know they *don't have to take whatever people dish out.* We want customer service to be *number one,* but we don't want employees paying too high a price for that.

So what is "uncivil"? *Shilpa looked these things up on the Internet,* and

- Language that is abusive or threatening.
- Comments about a person's race, religion, gender, or ethnicity.
- Name-calling.
- Physical threats such as pushing or violating someone's "personal space."

When I visit with employees, I'll have examples of each and how to manage each, without being uncivil ourselves.

Each of you have managerial experience. I'm proud of the quality service you provide. I'm also proud of the kind of people you hire. I believe that this new "civility" policy will help us serve all customers better and protect our employees. We don't want to allow 99% of our customers and all of our employees to suffer because we can't handle the 1% of complaints that are out of control.

I'd like to get your reaction to this proposal, and I'd like to get our schedule for presentations settled tonight. I'd also like to thank Shilpa and Diane for their help, and all of you for making sure that these kinds of incidents aren't repeated.

Any questions?

found out what other people are saying. Something is uncivil if it has some of these *earmarks:*

- Language that is abusive or threatening.
- Comments about a person's race, religion, gender, or ethnicity.
- Name-calling.
- Physical threats such as pushing or violating someone's "personal space."

When *I get out to your stores*, I'll make sure they understand what this *stuff* means and how to react if there's a problem…*without them being out of line.*

Now, each of you *guys* have experience running things. I'm *real happy* with what you do, and I'm *real happy* with the *folks* you get to work for us. I think our new policy *will kill two birds with one stone:* help serve our customers and protect our employees. We don't want to let the *bad apples spoil things for everybody else.*

I thought we'd *run this thing out* to you all and see what you think. I'd also like to *set up* my visits. My thanks to Shilpa and Diane for their help. Thanks to you all for coming.

You got any questions?



Language helps define who we are. It reflects our individual style.

Language and Style

Style is the way something is said or done, as opposed to content—what is said or done. Using a sports analogy, many basketball players dunk the basketball. Michael Jordan had a style of dunking that set him apart. He dunked (what he did) with a degree of acrobatic grace (the way he did it.) Looking at style another way, anyone can wear a hat. Some people make wearing a hat an act of style by wearing the hat in a certain way or choosing a certain kind of hat that sets them apart.

We each have a language style. We use language in ways that set us apart from others. You may know someone whose every comment is spiced with humor. Another person might use words very sparingly. Still others might have a folksy style, full of sayings and stories.

As we speak—formally or informally—we should pay attention not only to what we say but to how we say it. Sometimes it's useful to divide messages into substance and style. The substance is the part of the message we intend to communicate with the denotations of the words themselves. This part of the message can be summarized, re-explained, and paraphrased. The style is the part of the message we intend to communicate with the choice of words, the level of usage, etc. that cannot really exist apart from those words. Style can be described, but it cannot be summarized or paraphrased.

When you read through the two short speeches about the civility policy, you can readily see that each speech has essentially the same substance; they say the same things. But you can also easily see that Speech B is totally different in style from Speech A. This difference in style is the result of the speakers' diction and arrangement of words.

Adopting your own style means developing a way of expressing yourself that represents you well to others, allows you to feel comfortable, and communicates your intended message. There are three components of style: clarity, economy, and grace.

	Clarity	Economy	Grace
Definitions	Clarity means clearness. Clarity of style is selecting understandable, precise words and placing them in an understandable order. Effective style is above all clear. Style doesn't conceal a message, but enhances it. Your messages must be accessible to your audience. Any stylistic choice you make should further the clarity of your message.	Economy means getting the most meaning from the fewest number of words. It is second in importance to clarity. Economy in style is not wordy. It doesn't try the patience of the audience. It is planned to express an idea briefly and to the point.	Grace means expressing your ideas in an appealing and skillful manner. It is third in importance because clarity must be the first consideration or meaning will be lost. And grace at the expense of economy becomes tedious. A graceful style will be pleasant to hear and memorable—even eloquent.
Example	"The Community Blood Bank campaign is an important part of our company's support of community charities."	The goal of our Community Blood Bank campaign is 100% participation of all local employees.	The Community Blood Bank campaign shows our commitment, our caring, and our capacity to give.
What to avoid	• words that are unclear to your audience • abstract terms • jargon • poorly constructed sentences • running ideas together so the audience cannot clearly follow them	• long-winded expressions of simple ideas • repetitiveness • poor organization	• phrases and sentences that sound awkward • lack of parallel structure
Negative examples	The Community Blood Bank campaign, which we certainly endorse and which is important, is a part of our charity work. We support charity, and of course, the Community Blood Bank, the point of this being that we are committed.	We have many goals this year, but one of our goals involves the total participation of all employees of the local groups to the tune of 100% as givers to the charity work to which we are so committed.	The Community Blood Bank campaign shows how committed we are, that we care, and the capacity to give.

Interpersonal Insight—Choosing Language in Everyday Conversation



We will often think carefully about the language we use in a public presentation, such as a speech. But we should also give careful consideration to the language we use in everyday conversation. Careful choice of conversational language depends on the same factors as other language choice: situation, purpose, and audience. If being careful with your conversational language sounds artificial or phony to you, think about this:

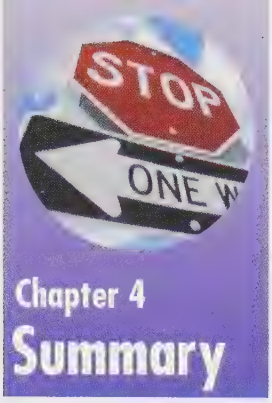
First, thinking about situation, purpose, and audience shows you care enough about what you are saying to the person to whom you are speaking to choose language that is appropriate.

Second, failure to think about situation, purpose, and audience can lead to misunderstandings. Since the goal of communication is understanding, conversational language is worth thinking about.

Here's a checklist to help you evaluate your own conversational language. Of course, you won't carry this with you, but it will help you consider how best to make your conversation as clear, economical, and graceful as any other communication.

- How well do you know the person to whom you are talking?
- How will your audience feel about your level of usage?
- Are you having a conversation which others might overhear?
- Is the conversation social or professional?
- Is there a time limit on the conversation?
- What level of usage would you prefer the other person use?
- Will altering level of usage alter your relationship to the other person positively or negatively?
- Is this conversation considered "private," or will each of you feel free to share it with others?

There are many other considerations, but the keys to choosing appropriate language are the keys we've already discussed to effective communication with any audience: reading the audience and empathy. If you understand the person to whom you are speaking, if you can put yourself in that person's place, you can choose language that will communicate clearly and effectively.



Chapter 4
Summary

Entire books are written about the use of language. It is impossible in one chapter to cover all the possible situations you are likely to encounter. The basics, however, aren't so complicated.

- The goal of communication is to negotiate a shared meaning.
- Words are our primary tools in communication.
- Word choice will depend on the situation, audience, and purpose.
- You should select a level of usage that is appropriate to situation, audience, and purpose.

When you select words, place yourself in the position of the listener. What words will best let the listener understand what you mean in a way that makes the kind of impression you intend?

Words are the primary tool in your communication toolbox. As with any tool, words must be used appropriately to get maximum benefit.

Remembering

1. Explain the difference between denotation and connotation.
2. Describe three ways of managing denotation and connotation in a communication situation.
3. Contrast standard, nonstandard, and substandard language use.
4. Identify the three components of style.
5. Describe three strategies in selecting language for use in everyday conversation.

Reflecting

1. Analyze the language in this chapter's "scenario." What are the key differences in choice of language? What are likely effects of the differences in choice of language? Identify and contrast specific word choice.
2. Select a word to which different people are likely to react differently. Use your understanding of demographics to make your selection and choose a word that might affect people differently based on age, gender, ethnicity, or other demographic elements.
   a] Describe the differences you assume to exist. Why would the differences likely exist? What differences are denotative? What differences are connotative?
   b] Explain how you might overcome miscommunication that could result if you used the word in a speech or conversation.
3. In small groups, brainstorm a list of words which might be interpreted differently by high school students and their parents. Which words are likely to cause serious misunderstandings? How can those misunderstandings be avoided?
4. Note the chapter's explanation of substandard usage. Write a paragraph summarizing the risks a communicator runs when using substandard English.
5. Look up the meaning of the word colloquial. Which parts of the definition are positive? Which parts suggest that a communicator should be cautious in using colloquialisms?
6. Review the two speeches given by the owner of the dry cleaners. The word choice is obviously different. From this list of italicized words and phrases, select ten and explain how each of the ten might alter the audience's perception of the speaker and topic. Which suggestions made in the chapter do these words and phrases ignore?

- Hi, folks
- pulled you out
- get-together
- real important
- big shake-up
- gal
- some lady
- backs up
- real good with people
- hotter and hotter
- cranked up the volume
- cussing
- carrying on something terrible
- head-over-heels
- wasn't hurt or nothing
- go down
- Well
- customers acting up
- by me, Shilpa Prakash at store #2 and Diane Turner at store #5
- First off, let's get a few things straight
- always beat the other
- we're not about to change
- abbreviation
- the L.E.A.R.N. thing
- like real
- and everything
- So how in the world

- gonna
- ladies like this—and guys
- opened my eyes
- lady was losing it
- because of like how loud she was and how she was cussing and stuff
- lady
- going off on her
- number one
- O.K.
- "I'm not gonna take this stuff"
- because they are the customer
- stuff
- you know
- couple of weeks
- complainers
- nice
- complainer over to you
- nice way
- don't have to take whatever people dish out
- Shilpa looked these things up on the Internet
- earmarks
- I get out to your stores
- stuff
- without them being out of line
- guys
- real happy
- will kill two birds with one stone
- bad apples spoil things for everybody else
- run this thing out
- set up
- You got any questions?

Reaching

1. Select a subject about which you feel strongly. Write one paragraph in which you describe the subject objectively. Write another paragraph which clearly discloses your attitude. In pairs, read the paragraphs to each other. Underline the words and phrases that communicate objectivity. Do the same for words and phrases that reveal your attitude.
2. As a class, brainstorm a list of phrases that have become clichés. After you've generated a list, review the list and determine which of the clichés are annoying, which you are tired of, or which form some kind of negative impression. Why do these clichés have these effects? What could you say instead of using these clichés?
3. Next, brainstorm words and phrases that are currently popular. Which are likely to become clichés? Why?
4. The Internet contains many sites designed to help students use language effectively. Using the following search terms, find sites that you might like to use in improving your language use: level of usage, word usage, diction, parallelism, jargon, denotation, connotation, wordiness. (These terms could also be the basis for a library search.)
5. Speak to a foreign language teacher in your school about use of idiom. Collect some idioms from languages other than English. Share these idioms (and their English translations) with your class.
6. Develop a questionnaire that will allow a person to evaluate language use. Read Speech A from the chapter to a group and ask them to rate the speech on your questionnaire. Read Speech B to another group. (If that's not possible, read Speech B to the same group.) Ask them to rate the language use. Compare the results. Explain similarities or differences.

Real Life

1. Many people who speak and write for a living keep a notebook of ideas, words, and phrases that can make theirc ommunication more lively and memorable. Begin your own notebook. As you hear interesting ideas, words, and phrases, note the ones that you would like to remember.
2. Sometimes one word or sentence is so important that ad agencies spend a great deal of time and money to choose just the right words. Brainstorm slogans that have been popular. Answer these questions about each:
   - What words (or combinations of words) did people find appealing?
   - If there was humor in the slogan, what was the humor?
   - Could you suggest ways of making the slogan better?
   - What similar ways of expressing the idea contain the same substance as the slogan, but the style is less appealing?
3. Based on your discussion of these slogans, create your own slogan for a product, topic, or movement. Present your slogan to the class and explain the use of language that make your slogan appealing. Use terms identified in this chapter plus any others you might have learned in other classes.
4. Select a sport, hobby, task, or job that you are very familiar with. Give a 3-5 minute speech about the jargon used in the sport, hobby, task, or job. The speech should accomplish two purposes with your audience: First, it should express your attitude toward your topic. Second, it should define at least three terms involved in the sport, hobby, task, or job.

5

Chapter Five
Application Nonverbal Communication

Key Concept

A very significant part of human communication does not rely on words. Nonverbal communication is a powerful part of almost all social and professional communication. It can make verbal communication more effective, it can sometimes undercut verbal communication...at times it can even replace verbal communication.



Chapter Objectives

- explain the importance of nonverbal communication
- identify and explain the elements of nonverbal communication
- identify the four spatial dimensions in personal interaction
- explain cultural differences in nonverbal communication

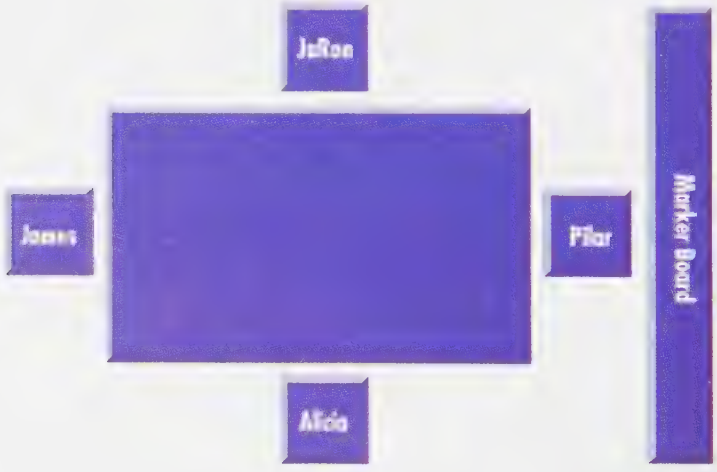
Key Terms

- credibility
- descriptive gestures
- emphatic gestures
- eye contact
- gestures
- mannerisms
- movement
- multi-channeled
- paralinguistic cues
- posture
- proxemics

In our communication model, we labeled "channel." The channel is the means of communicating a message. Writing and speaking are examples of verbal channels. Much of our communication, however, is conducted through another channel: nonverbal. Nonverbal communication doesn't use words. Instead it relies on gestures, movement, facial expression...even silence. Nonverbal communication is the creation of meaning without the use of words. Nonverbal communication is not best for expressing complicated, dense ideas. It is exceptional, though, at communicating attitudes and subtle shades of meaning. In business and social settings, communication is usually "multi-channeled." That is, the communication is conducted through both verbal and nonverbal means.

Scenario

The weekly staff meeting is in progress. The issue being discussed is "casual Friday," an office policy of dressing more casually on Fridays. As you read, note the importance of nonverbal communication (in this case, dress) to the group. Notice also the nonverbal messages sent during the discussion. Nonverbal communication is described. The discussion's participants are Pilar, who is the office manager; James, who is responsible for keeping the office on its schedule; Alicia, who is responsible for the computers and technology in the office; and JaRon, who communicates regularly with the sales people who turn in the orders. They are seated at a rectangular table with this configuration:



Pilar: (Looking down at her agenda while she speaks.) *The next item on the agenda is "casual Friday." James, this is your item. Tell us about "casual Friday."* (JaRon and Alicia turn their heads to look at James.)

James: (James—who has been taking notes—puts his pencil down and leans back. He looks at Pilar, who looks back.) *I think most of us have noticed that Consolidated Supply on the first floor of this building has "casual Friday" each and every Friday. Employees are allowed to wear jeans. No ties. No skirts or dresses required. They seem to like it really well. Alicia and I discussed this at lunch last week, didn't we?* (He glances toward Alicia.)

Alicia: (Alicia nods and looks at Pilar as she speaks.) *That's right. We noticed the difference when we went down to see their new file room. I didn't think much about it until I heard our own staff talking about it.* (She glances at JaRon. JaRon has his arms folded across his chest.)

James: (He leans forward, arms on table. He taps his finger as he speaks to emphasize his words.) *Our staff likes the idea, and we need to decide if we are going to follow suit...adopt our own casual day...or not.* (He shakes his head from side-to-side.) *Frankly, I'm tired of hearing everybody hint around about it. And I don't see the problem with a casual day once a week.*

Pilar: (She leans forward, matching James' posture. They are staring at each other across the table.) *I agree we need to discuss the issue. It is a real hot topic in the break room. Maybe we should list the pros and cons of having a casual day.* (She rises and goes to a marker board, preparing to write a list of the viewpoints the group brings up.)

James: (Looking around the table.) *Well, I'll start. I think a casual day is good for morale.* (He uses his thumb to indicate over his shoulder.) *Those people out there in our office work hard. Dressing down once a week would be a good morale builder. It would make Friday a lot more enjoyable* (he looks toward Alicia)*...for all of us, I think.*

Pilar: (Writing on marker board.) *OK. Morale builder.* (JaRon looks out the window and sighs.)

Alicia: (Pointing at the marker board.) *I agree. Morale is the key issue. Morale for everyone.* (She smiles broadly and looks at James.) *I know I'd have*

better Fridays if I didn't have to wear a skirt and hose. (JaRon looks down at his notepad. His arms are still folded across his chest. He scoots his chair back slightly.)

Pilar: (She's facing the marker board as she speaks.) *Any other pros or cons...other than morale?* (She underlines "morale" on the marker board.)

James: *That's the issue as far as I can see.* (He looks toward Alicia.) Don't you *think so?* (He's looking at Alicia, so he doesn't see JaRon grimacing and shaking his head. JaRon is frowning.)

Pilar: *OK. What about the cons?* (Turning slightly to face JaRon.) *JaRon, you've been quiet. What about cons? Anything you'd like to list?*

JaRon: (Unfolding his arms, he reaches for his notes and turns them face down on the table.) *I don't have anything to add, except for this:* (He enumerates his points on his fingers.) *First, we shouldn't be doing something just because Consolidated did it. We're in a completely different business. Second, we do just as much business with customers and sales staff on Fridays as we do any other day of the week.* (He turns his head to look directly at James.) *Friday isn't any different than Wednesday, as far as I'm concerned.* (He turns back to Pilar, putting up a third finger.) *Third, I think that casual dress sends the wrong message. Will our language be more casual? Our business methods?* (He pauses for a long time.) *And fourth,* (putting up his fourth finger) *I think Alicia and James have already decided what they want to do. I'm frustrated that their discussion over lunch wasn't held in this room at a meeting.* (He refolds his arms.) *I just don't think that's the way we should work.*

Well, it sounds as if JaRon is really upset. However, his comments shouldn't surprise anyone in the room. Didn't JaRon send a number of nonverbal messages that something was wrong? He looks out the window, he sighs, he folds his arms and moves away from the table, he frowns. Even if he had said nothing, we would know from watching him that something was wrong. His nonverbal behavior revealed his attitude. We don't know exactly why he's upset until he speaks, but we can tell that he is not happy with the discussion.

And what of the others? Notice how infrequently they look at JaRon. Notice how often James and Alicia look at each other. Without hearing any other part of the conversation, does it appear that James and Alicia are "in this together"

and that JaRon is "on the outs"? The dynamics of this group discussion are evident in the gestures, facial expressions, and posture of the participants.

So it is with most business and social communication. We often say more without words than we do with words. If that is the case, we need to be aware of the impact of our nonverbal communication and use it to clarify and enhance our messages.

And the topic of their discussion? It is also nonverbal communication. Certainly dress has to do with modesty and comfort, but it is also a nonverbal statement. As JaRon states, it "sends a message." Isn't that really the essence of communication? And so the entire discussion centers around communication. The discussion is an example of metacommunication: communication about communication. Obviously, it's important to the four people involved.

Nonverbal Is Important

If you have a carefully crafted verbal message, you might be tempted to consider nonverbal communication as unimportant. After all, verbal communication carries a huge amount of meaning. Words can do so much to make meaning precise and rich. But in oral communication, the nonverbal channel is always active. Even if you aren't aware of it (especially if you aren't aware of it!) nonverbal communication is affecting verbal communication, for better or for worse.



Nonverbal communication includes facial expressions, stance and posture, distance, eye contact, and gestures.

You cannot "not" communicate. This is called the "communication imperative."

In other words, audiences will attach meaning to all kinds of nonverbal behavior. Looking someone in the eye conveys meaning. Not looking someone in the eye conveys meaning. Speaking conveys meaning. Not speaking conveys meaning; therefore, even silence is a form of nonverbal communication. The communication imperative is a key concept when studying nonverbal behavior. Your nonverbal behavior will always be a factor in communication…even if you don't want it to be.

Nonverbal communication affects an audience.

Some researchers indicate that as little as ten percent of a message's importance comes from verbal communication. Can anyone afford to rely on verbal communication only?

Nonverbal communication can reinforce verbal behavior.

Audiences look for nonverbal cues that the verbal message is believable. For example, if someone says "I'm really interested in the topic," you expect eye contact, perhaps nodding.

Nonverbal communication can contradict verbal behavior.

In the example above, nonverbal communication could contradict verbal. If someone says "I'm really interested in the topic" while they are yawning, which message would you more likely believe? The words are contradicted by the nonverbal behavior.

Nonverbal behavior is important to trust and credibility. Credibility means worthiness of belief.

Because people have less control over their nonverbal behavior than over their verbal communication, we are more likely to believe a nonverbal message if it contradicts a verbal one. This concept is crucial. It means that if you want to be trusted, you must have nonverbal communication that is consistent with verbal.

Nonverbal can replace words.

The old saying is "a picture is worth a thousand words." How often have you seen someone trying to express their feelings and having trouble saying exactly what they want? In this case, don't we get more from a glance, a smile, a frown than from words?

Just as with verbal communication, we break down nonverbal communication into its basic elements. By doing so, we can speak more exactly about communication (metacommunicate) so we can improve our own nonverbal communication. Unlike verbal communication, there is no highly developed grammar that describes nonverbal, no dictionary of nonverbal. Still the elements of nonverbal communication can help us learn to use it to create more precise and more persuasive meaning.

Elements of Nonverbal Communication

Posture and Stance

Your posture and stance affect both you and your audience.

- For you, an erect posture (standing or sitting) can make you a better communicator. It can improve breathing and keep you alert.
- For your audience, posture and stance communicate a general attitude. For example, if you slouch in a chair or desk (even if you think it's because you're tired), others will likely see your posture as communicating apathy or boredom. On the other hand, sitting or standing with good posture creates a favorable impression. You will appear to be more a part of the communication.

Appearance

When you communicate a message, it really isn't possible to separate the message from the communicator. The way a communicator looks will usually help or hurt the message.

- Dress is one of the most important factors in appearance. Remember that different communication situations call for different levels of formality. Planning for effective communication means dressing in a way that will both put others at ease and fit the occasion.
- Cleanliness and grooming are also part of appearance. Not only do most people respond positively to others who are neat and clean, good grooming can make a speaker more expressive. For example, wearing hair out of the eyes allows for better eye contact.

Movement

Moving the entire body from one spot to another can also communicate. It can also make you feel more at ease.

- Movement helps you control distance. The distance between two people can communicate the level of familiarity, the degree of privacy, and other important messages.
- Too much movement can distract from a message and make a communicator look scattered, disorganized, or inattentive.

Gestures

Gestures are movement, too. But instead of movement of the body from one place to another, gestures are the movements of the limbs, body, or head. Gestures typically come in two types:

- Emphatic gestures allow a speaker to provide emphasis for the spoken word. Such gestures include shrugging, nodding, enumerating, pointing, etc.
- Descriptive gestures allow a speaker to describe something. Imagine using a flat hand in a palm-down position to show that something is flat or smooth. These gestures help a listener visualize what the speaker is talking about.

Eye Contact

Eye contact is looking at someone; more than that, it is two people looking at each other simultaneously. When two people look at each other, they acknowledge each other's importance.

- Eye contact is invaluable for interpreting feedback. A communicator who sees his or her audience sees the nonverbal communication that the audience exhibits.
- Most people feel that direct eye contact indicates honesty and earnestness.
- Eye contact also shows that you are not relying on notes to speak. Too great a reliance on notes can be interpreted as lack of sincerity or lack of confidence.
- Eye contact should include all listeners. For a large audience, eye contact might not include individuals as much as parts of the audience.

Facial Expressions

The expression on a person's face can be very communicative. You need only to look at someone whom you cannot hear to know how much a facial expression can communicate. You can often tell how a person feels by noting a raised eyebrow, a wrinkled brow, or a tight-lipped smile. Facial expressions add dimension to communication and can turn a very plain message into an interesting or entertaining message.

- A smile is an important part of facial expression. Of course, smiling is not appropriate in all communication situations, but smiling puts people at ease and indicates the pleasure you take in communicating with others.
- Often, you know little of your own facial expressions. Since many of these expressions are natural responses to the communication context, it is difficult to be conscious of all your facial communication. Since the naturalness of facial expression is important, too much facial expression can be seen as "mugging."
- Make-up is part of grooming, but it can also be part of facial expression. Use of make-up should be appropriate to the situation and should draw attention to the face in a positive way.

Paralinguistic Cues

Paralinguistic cues are the vocal clues such as volume, rate, or inflection that tell a receiver how to interpret spoken words. Paralinguistic cues helps a listener get meaning from how something is said as well as what is said.

- Volume: Raising your voice helps listeners interpret your use of words. Think of a simple sentence such as "this job is mine." How does the meaning change as the volume you use to emphasize different words in the sentence changes? *This* job is mine. This *job* is mine. This job is *mine.*
- Rate: By speeding up or slowing down as you speak words and phrases you can communicate eagerness, excitement, reluctance, care, and other attitudes.
- Inflection: You use inflection when you change the pitch of your voice. Pitch is the relative highness or lowness of voice. The most obvious use of inflection is the raise in pitch at the end of a question.

Imagine how much meaning can be added to words if all seven of these elements of nonverbal communication are working together.

Mannerisms

A mannerism is a distinctive behavior. If a person repeats the same nonverbal behavior many times, listeners come to identify that repeated distinctive behavior with the person. They can almost predict when the mannerism will appear. Some mannerisms are harmless, but mannerisms can also become distracting. When a mannerism distracts an audience's attention from the intended verbal and nonverbal messages, the mannerisms inhibit communication. Think about these frequently seen mannerisms and how they can hurt communication.

- playing with jewelry
- flipping hair, twirling it, or repeatedly moving it from the face
- holding hand in front of mouth while speaking
- "rolling" the eyes
- slouching
- the same hand gesture used repeatedly, such as stabbing with a finger

Space and Nonverbal Communication

One of the elements of nonverbal is movement. Movement allows us to control the space between ourselves. The distance between a sender and receiver (or receivers) carries meaning. Human beings' use of space, proxemics, is a cultural variable, so no rule covers every situation and every culture. In our culture, space can typically be divided into four categories:

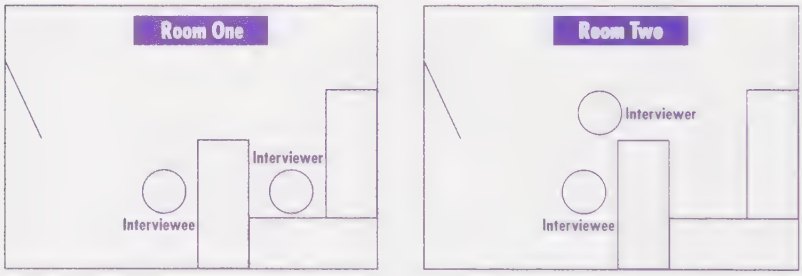
3 inches to 18 inches	intimate	• whispering a secret • sharing a very private feeling • usually between two people
1.5 feet to 4 feet	personal	• conversation among friends • usually pairs or very small groups
4 feet to 12 feet	social	• conversation at a party • group discussion in an office or classroom • larger groups, but groups without a designated "speaker"
12 feet to 20 feet	public	• almost all public speaking situations

If you consider how we use these spaces in our communication, think about a large group discussion you've participated in. Have there been times when pairs get closer to each other to share more private, more intimate information? Would this information have been appropriately shared across the room?

And what if we can't observe these guidelines? Think of the last time you were in an elevator with a group of people that you did not know. Where were people looking? Typically, people in an elevator are forced to move into personal space when they would prefer to be in social space. As a result, people look up at the floor indicator or down at their shoes. They are avoiding the embarrassment of looking at strangers within their personal space.

You can also consider space as you think about the arrangements chosen or enforced by people in a communication situation. If a public speaker is elevated on a stage or podium and kept distant from an audience, how intimate can a message be? If an interviewer is behind a desk, does the person being interviewed feel more or less at ease than if an interviewer is seated in a plain chair? Some people's offices are warm and inviting, promoting more personal communication. Other offices are less inviting because of lighting, arrangement of furniture, or other nonverbal features.

Consider these two arrangements for an interview:



Which would be perceived by the interviewee as being more friendly? If an interviewer wants to set up a room to make communication more familiar and easy, room two is a better option.

Interpersonal Insight—Nonverbal Communication and Culture



We all know that language varies from culture to culture: French is different than Spanish; there are two dominant forms of Chinese; southern dialect in the United States is different from northern dialect, and so forth. Just as language differs from culture to culture, so does nonverbal behavior.

The handshake is a good example. In the United States, the handshake is an expected part of social interaction. People naturally extend their hands when being introduced. Friends often shake hands when meeting. However, the handshake is not a worldwide custom. As you probably know, people from many Asian countries bow formally rather than shake hands.

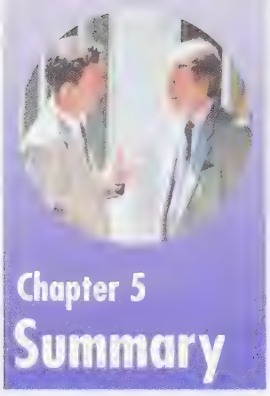
Proxemics will also differ from culture to culture. Whereas people in the United States view two feet within "personal" distance and reserve that distance for very personal interactions with people whom they know, other cultures view the same distance as more appropriate for social interactions.

The members from various cultures interact more now than ever before. While you cannot know the variations for all cultures, you can adopt two attitudes to help develop effective communication: tolerance and understanding. If you were in a different culture in which the handshake were not common, wouldn't you expect the people of that culture to tolerate your own custom? Would you not hope that they would understand that your nonverbal, while different, is natural for you? Just as you might expect tolerance and understanding, so you should extend it to members of other cultures.

To take a further step, you might prepare for interactions with members of other cultures. When Japanese business persons come to the United States, for example, they often learn our nonverbal communication customs. We can do the same when we prepare for interactions with others.



American Sign Language is an example of nonverbal communication.



Chapter 5 Summary

In interpersonal, group, and public communication, nonverbal behavior is a powerful tool which can improve communication or inhibit it. When well used, nonverbal behavior will help create understanding. Poor use of nonverbal can get in the way of effective communication. The nonverbal elements can be used by effective communicators to create the meaning they intend.

Remembering

1. Give two reasons why nonverbal communication is important to the creation of meaning.
2. Explain why audiences might place more faith in nonverbal communication than in verbal communication.
3. List the seven elements of nonverbal communication and provide an example of how each can alter or improve an audience's understanding of a speaker's message.
4. Identify the four principal spatial distances and the types of communication common to each.

Reflecting

1. Examine the seating arrangements in your classrooms. Decide which seating arrangements are most likely to promote communication. Explain why.
2. Assume you are decorating an office for your own use. Your goal is to create an office that will be warm and inviting while at the same time conveying authority. What decisions will you make regarding the following: size of room, furniture, arrangement of furniture, wall decor?
3. Brainstorm a list of famous people seen frequently on television, film, or video. What mannerisms do they exhibit? Are any of them annoying or distracting? Why?
4. View a speech or press conference on tape. Prior to viewing, assign people to watch for specific nonverbal behaviors. Watch and listen for at least five minutes. Review your lists in a group. Which nonverbal communications were helpful to the speaker? Which were not? Why?
5. Observe interactions of others in a social setting—perhaps at lunch. Discuss the nonverbal behaviors you see, including use of space.
6. Review the scenario that opens the chapter. There are several nonverbal clues that the discussion will result in disagreement. Imagine you are Pilar and you are responsible for handling the meeting.
   a] Identify the clues that reveal the problems that might exist.
   b] Suggest ways that you can alter the discussion so that it makes the difference of opinion more productive and leads to a positive discussion of the issue.

Reaching

1. Like the languages we use, nonverbal communication can differ from culture to culture. If you attend a multicultural school, seek out students from other cultures. Use the seven elements of nonverbal communication as a guide to ask them about the differences in nonverbal communication between their native culture and the culture they are now in.
2. There are many "dress for success" books, articles, and web sites. Research two or more and list the suggestions they make about clothing and makeup. Apply the SPAM model to your research and use it to share with your class the discoveries you make in your research.
3. Interior design and architecture are two careers that deal with public spaces. Research each career and show how the use of space is important in each. Bring pictures, web sites, or other examples to show the class.

4. Select a video or television program that features an on-screen host or narrator. Watch the video for 5-7 minutes, noting the use of nonverbal communication. Classify the nonverbal behaviors and evaluate the effectiveness of each in communication.
5. Look again at the "scenario" that begins this chapter. Playwrights use such descriptions of nonverbal behavior to develop character, demonstrate motive, advance plot, etc.
   a] With the help of a teacher or librarian, select a play or section of a play which contains such stage directions. Work in pairs to describe how the playwright's stage directions communicate motive, character, meaning, etc.
   b] Or...write your own "scenario" in which you use nonverbal behavior to develop meaning beyond what the words contain.

Real Life

1. Select an issue in your school or in the news. Divide into groups of 4-5. Conduct a discussion on the topic, sharing your opinions, giving information, etc. However, some groups should conduct the discussion while standing, others while seated in a circle, still others around a table. At your teacher's instruction, you might want to videotape your discussions. Note the differences between the seven elements of nonverbal you see in the standing group and in the sitting group.
2. Prepare a speech of 3-4 minutes. The speech should be about a small object that you can bring to the class. Using the object, demonstrate how something is done or how something works. (For example, you could bring a calligraphy pen and demonstrate how to use it.) Note how the presence of the object gives you something to do, making movement and gestures easier and more natural. Videotape your presentations. What gestures and movements do you use that help emphasize and describe?









Unit Two
Applications.Interpersonal Communication

Application.Interpersonal Skills 6

Application.Conducting an Interview 7

Application.Interviewing 8

Application.Communication and Technology 9

6 Chapter Six
Application.Interpersonal Skills

Key Concept

Throughout our professional and social lives, we encounter the same communication situations time and again. We can become better communicators by understanding what these situations have in common and which interpersonal skills to apply in the situations.



Chapter Objectives

- understand six standards for making interpersonal communication decisions: assertiveness, tact, courtesy specificity, relevance, and sincerity
- understand how business hierarchies affect interpersonal communication
- apply standards for interpersonal decision making to making introductions, requests, and apologies
- apply standards for interpersonal decision making to giving directions
- apply standards for interpersonal decision making to asking and answering questions
- apply standards for interpersonal decision making to conversation

Key Terms

- conversation
- peer
- protocol
- subordinate
- tact

Scenario

Pilar has asked James to visit with her privately to cover some complaints. The people in the office had decided to have a small breakfast each month to celebrate birthdays for anyone having a birthday during the month. James organized the meeting. He asked some people to bring in breakfast items, some to bring paper goods, and so forth. Pilar has received three complaints.

Pilar: *Please sit down. I'd like to visit with you. James, has anyone spoken with you about the breakfast last week?*

James: *No...other than everybody said it was nice to have a little socializing. Why? Is something wrong?*

Pilar: *I think we have a bit of a problem. Since the breakfast meeting, three members of our office staff have come to me. They think that the way the meeting was put together was somewhat biased.*

James: *Biased? How can a breakfast be biased?*

Pilar: *Exactly who did you ask to bring breakfast treats?*

James: *Well, let's see. I asked Diane, Claudia, Maya, and Teresa.*

Pilar: *Did you ask any of the men?*

James: *Oh...*

Pilar: *Do you see the problem? The women in the office think that you expected them to put the effort in to cooking up treats, but the men all got assigned paper goods. They feel, and I agree, that the responsibilities should not be divided by gender.*

James: *I didn't even think of that.*

Pilar: *I know, James. But the message was clear: Women do the cooking. Now, can you tell me exactly how you asked Diane and Maya to bring treats?*

James: *I happened to bump into them in the break room. I asked them if they'd bring treats. I guess they could have said "no," but probably they wouldn't have, since they didn't want to make a boss mad.*

Pilar: *Exactly. I think you see the problem. Maya even quoted you. She said you asked this way: "Would you girls mind bringing treats next Friday?" Is that right?*

James: *Probably. I don't remember exactly. That sounds right.*

Pilar: *James, the problem is calling them "girls." Both Diane and Maya are women. Diane is old enough to be your mother. They resent the term "girls."*

James: *Wow. I'm sorry I made them mad.*

Pilar: *Oh, James. They aren't really angry. They would appreciate a little more sensitivity around the office. And so would I. Will you make an effort to be aware of the equity issues in dealing with the women and men in the office?*

James: *Sure. I just didn't think. Should I call a meeting? Apologize? What should I do?*

Pilar: *I'll leave that up to you. Although I don't think a meeting is necessary. In my opinion, you should correct the oversight for our next breakfast. And maybe a private apology to Maya and Diane wouldn't hurt. James, this is important, but it's not the end of the world. Just be more aware of how everyone feels. OK?*

James: *OK. Thanks for the advice. I really appreciate your talking to me. And please…let me know if you see anything else I need to be aware of.*

Pilar: *You got it. Thanks for your understanding of the situation.*

How do you think Pilar handled this conversation? What would you have done differently? What about James? Did he get the point? How do you know? If you were his supervisor, would you be satisfied with James' response?

Repeated Interpersonal Situations

Just interacting with others daily places us in the same kinds of situations again and again. We meet new people. We introduce two strangers. We make requests. Because these situations repeat themselves, we might take them for granted. If we do, we can make social and professional blunders. In the scenario that started the chapter, James didn't think about his communication. As a result, he offended some of his co-workers and created a problem for himself.

This chapter reviews the communications skills required for repeated interpersonal situations. Specifically, it covers these tasks:

- making introductions
- making apologies
- giving directions
- making requests
- asking questions
- answering questions
- conversation

For each of these repeated situations, a communicator should remember to think about situation, purpose, and audience. These three considerations will determine the communication methods appropriate to each task. In some of these situations, there is protocol, or specific forms to follow. This chapter can give general suggestions about general situations, but each situation must be considered separately for effective communication.

Standards for Decision Making

We know when our interpersonal communication is effective because our interpersonal relationships are successful. Still, it would be helpful to know the characteristics of good communication when it comes to repeated interpersonal situations. Our communication decisions will be good ones when we consider the following standards.

Assertiveness. Assertiveness is the ability to express yourself directly and forcefully. Some situations (such as making an introduction) rarely require assertiveness. Other situations (such as making a request) frequently require assertiveness. To be assertive, a communicator should know precisely the message to communicate and the desired reaction from the audience.

Assertive communicators know after conveying their messages that they have stated exactly what they wanted to say. They do not let pressure or intimidation deter them from saying what they feel needs to be said. For example, if you disagree with what another person is saying, you have a choice: Do you express your disagreement or not? Sometimes, you will choose to ignore your disagreement because you don't feel it is very important. At other times, you will delay your disagreement to an appropriate time or place. However, if you delay disagreeing because you worry about the act of disagreeing, you need to consider being more assertive.

Pilar was assertive in her conversation with James. She was definite in what she wanted James to do. Consider her comments:

- They feel, *and I agree*, that the responsibilities should not be divided by gender. (She let's James know her position right away. She states that she agrees with the views of the people who complained.)
- James, *the problem is calling them "girls."* Both Diane and Maya are women. Diane is old enough to be your mother. They resent the term "girls." (Pilar gets to the point and makes her opinion known. She doesn't "mince words." She states exactly what she feels the problem is.)
- They would appreciate a little more sensitivity around the office. *And so would I.* (She let's James know what she expects.)

Tact. While Pilar is assertive when she talks with James, she communicates with tact. Tact is the ability to understand the difficulty of a situation and then do or say the kindest or most fitting thing. In terms we've already discussed, a tactful person analyzes the situation and audience, determines the purpose, and then chooses communication methods and strategies that will be as kind and understanding as possible.

Pilar is bringing complaints to James' attention. She is assertive, but she also shows respect for James' feelings. Consider how she does so:

- I think we have a bit of a problem. (Pilar shares the problem with the word "we." As supervisor, she knows that this is her problem as well as James'. She shows tact by joining him in discussing the problem instead of lecturing him.)
- Did you ask any of the men? (Pilar displays tact by asking a leading question and letting James draw the conclusion. In this way, James becomes part of the solution to the problem.)
- Will you make an effort to be aware of the equity issues in dealing with the women and men in the office? (Pilar has been assertive and made it clear that she thinks there is a problem. However, by placing her request

as a question rather than an order, she has nicely given James the opportunity to agree with her.)

- I'll leave that up to you. (She shows confidence in James, even if she disagrees with what James has done.)
- ...this is important, but it's not the end of the world. (She puts the problem into perspective.)

An effective communicator will balance assertiveness with tact. Remember: Tact involves being as kind as possible in a situation. While communicators should not be intentionally unkind, some situations don't allow a communicator to exercise much kindness. Kindness is often telling the truth, no matter how painful it is to hear.

Courtesy. Courtesy differs from tact in this regard: Courtesy is typically following a set of prescribed behaviors that stress the respect for individuals. Courtesy includes the protocols that govern behavior. In other words, tact follows only one rule—kindness; courtesy tends to be governed by many accepted rules of conduct. When Pilar asks James to sit down, she is showing courtesy. It is courteous to invite someone to sit during a conversation. When she and James thank each other, they are being courteous. That doesn't mean they don't genuinely feel gratitude, but it is courteous to thank someone for something they've done for you.

Simple rules of courtesy are the ones we were taught early in life. You could probably recite them from heart. Always say "please" and "thank you." Don't talk with your mouth full. Knock before entering a room. Stand when you are being introduced. Shake hands. These courtesies are the easy ones. They are generally accepted. If you follow them, you can't go wrong. Some communication situations, however, aren't so easy. In more complicated communication situations, you must rely on another kind of courtesy: understanding.

Specificity. The more specific our communication, the less room for misunderstanding. What would have happened if Pilar had simply told James he needed to be more sensitive? Would he have understood exactly what he needed to do? Probably not. By specifically detailing what had happened and showing James how he had erred, Pilar was able to communicate her message effectively.

Specificity means talking about something definite. For example, if you are making a request, the person you're talking to should know what you want or expect. If you are giving directions, the person receiving them must be clear about what they are to do. When communication "fails," it isn't so much a failure as a failure to be specific.



Interpersonal communication takes place in many settings in our daily lives.

Relevance. Interpersonal communication can often be judged on its relevance. Simply put, a message must relate to the context and to the communication that has taken place. That's not to say that you can never change the subject. Relevance means making your message relate to your situation, your audience, and your purpose. More important, your audience must perceive the relevance of your message. If you read the dialogue between Pilar and James, you will note that they are talking to each other about a single topic. They focus on that topic exclusively. That is appropriate relevance. If James had tried to change the subject, Pilar would have thought him uncaring about her criticism. If Pilar had changed subjects, James probably wouldn't have understood the importance of the criticism.

In a less formal, less focused conversation, James and Pilar could have wandered from topic to topic, but there would still need to be relevance. James and Pilar would want to talk about topics that would be relevant to the other.

Sincerity. All listeners judge a message on sincerity. A sincere message is honest and natural. A sincere message is one in which listeners believe that senders truly feel. Interpersonal interactions depend on sincerity. For example, if two people are speaking and one feels the other is not sincere, trust breaks down. If one of the people believes that the other doesn't really believe what he or she is saying, what is the point in continuing the conversation? How can a request be taken at face value?

Interpersonal Insight — Communicating in a Hierarchy



A hierarchy is a group of people organized according to authority or importance. A typical business develops a hierarchy, the complexity of which depends largely on the size of the organization. For example, a small business with an owner and a few employees has a very simple hierarchy. On the other hand, a business with thousands of employees will have managers, supervisors, vice-presidents, directors…each occupying a level of the hierarchy.

As you interact within a hierarchy, you will be called upon to communicate with subordinates, superiors, or peers. A subordinate is a person who is "below" you on the organizational chart. A superior is "above" you. A peer is equal in rank or authority. The relationship typically affects the communication between individuals.

The first principle to note in understanding communication in an organizational hierarchy is that individual interests are expected to be less valued than the organizational interests. That means that people within the hierarchy recognize that the existence of the hierarchy depends on making decisions which benefit the hierarchy. For example, self-expression is an important part of an individual's happiness. People need to express themselves freely. On the other hand, the organization sometimes depends on restricting free communication. An employee can usually criticize her boss only in certain ways or at certain times. To criticize inappropriately — while the criticism might be accurate — can hurt the organization.

Peer-to-peer communication is the easiest to understand. Since peers are roughly equal in rank or authority, peers communicate relatively freely. The bureaucracy provides many opportunities, both business and social, for peers to interact. The conversation is relatively free for a number of reasons:

- Peers have equal access to information. Therefore, they can speak freely.
- Peers have no power or authority over each other. Therefore, they feel the communication is somewhat "risk free."
- Peers share equal responsibilities. Therefore, they understand each others' position in the hierarchy.

Communication between a superior and subordinate doesn't have the same level of freedoms. The communication between them is somewhat more complicated. Without equal access to information, for example, the two might have a one-sided discussion. If the superior knows information that she is not free to share with the subordinate, she might be able only to listen without comment to a subordinate's remarks.

Do not make the mistake of believing that superior-subordinate communication is a one-way street. True, the subordinate is expected to respect the superior, listen to him, defer to his judgment, and trust his decisions. That is part of the status that comes with upper levels of a hierarchy. But good leaders, the superiors in the hierarchy, should be just as respectful, considerate, and trusting of subordinates. Effective managers and bosses are often ranked as good communicators because they respect their subordinates, listen to them, and trust them. Effective communication between superiors and subordinates does not erase the differences in responsibility and authority. However, it does not let responsibility and authority interfere with the creation of meaning. Instead, superiors and subordinates use their empathy to understand each other's roles in the hierarchy. Such understanding allows them to communicate as freely as possible in the hierarchy.



He Said, She Said, but does either understand?

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Do you remember the nursery rhyme that asked, "What are little boys made of?" and "What are little girls made of?" The answers were, "Frogs and snails and puppy dog tails" and "Sugar and spice and everything nice."

People who study communication believe the differences aren't found in what we're made of but in how we think, talk, and act, especially what we think is appropriate for one sex or the other. This is called "gendered" communication. While there are differences, there are also many similarities. Think about it. If men and women didn't have some things in common, there would be virtually no communication between us.

In the past few years, there has been a great deal of interest in "gendered" communication. Books such as *Men are From Mars and Women are from Venus* and movies such as *He Said, She Said* emphasize the differences. But it's important to note that the emphasis on differences doesn't mean that differences exist for everyone. There are exceptions to every rule.

So what are some of the common differences and similarities and how do they affect you?

1. Males tend to use more powerful language forms that get attention and make them seem more knowledgeable and capable. For instance, they are more likely to make statements about what they believe, such as "This is the best pizza in town."

   Females often add "tag questions" to their statements, such as "This is the best pizza in town, isn't it?" The "isn't it" might suggest that the person isn't sure that it is the best. Females are also more likely to use compound requests. For example, has your mother ever said, "If you don't have anything better to do, why don't you clean your room?" Do you clean it? No, you are likely to find something better to do. The first clause gives a person an out. Women are more likely to use this type of statement because they are socialized to be polite.

2. Males are more comfortable bragging about themselves or accepting praise. They aren't as likely to respond to a compliment with, "Oh, it was nothing," or "I couldn't have done it without my friends' help."

   Some people think women haven't broken the glass ceiling to become presidents of major corporations partially because they undersell their skills. In fact, one reason for wage differences between men and women of equal qualifications is that men are likely to ask for more money when they are hired.

3. Males are also more likely to use what gender communication expert Deborah Tannen calls "report-making language" that centers on facts, information, and getting the job done. Women are more likely to use "rapport-building language" which considers message content and the relationship between the people communicating. It is concerned with feelings as much as with facts. However, in the workplace, people are often more concerned with results.

4. Studies of students have shown that boys get more attention in the classroom and that girls' grades often drop in middle school and high school. Teachers often expect girls to be well-behaved and to know the information so they don't call on them as often. Boys tend to make their presence known by speaking out to get attention. This may make girls think that they aren't as well prepared or as smart as boys. Also, some girls don't want to appear to be too smart in front of boys.

Some teachers and counselors believe that girls simply aren't as good at math and science as boys, but math and science ability has more to do with personal skills than one's sex. If ability in any subject areas were based purely on one's sex, then there would be no female scientists and no male artists.

So should girls change the way they communicate and boys keep doing what they are doing?

Not entirely. There are some good things about feminine communication styles. For instance, if people are to get along, they need to think about how their words affect others. Research reveals that the most capable communicators know when to use masculine forms of communication and when feminine forms are better.

Observe people who you think are effective communicators and ask yourself why. Then listen to yourself or have others comment on the way you communicate and decide if you have picked the best style for the situation.

Communication isn't easy to master because it is more than just talking, but as with anything else, practice helps.

Making Introductions

Making interpersonal introductions is not only the courteous thing to do, it is often very important to developing effective communication. When people don't know each other's names, positions in the hierarchy, or role in decision making, they can't communicate well together.

If you are the person introducing two people in a business situation, you should provide the following as a matter of protocol:

1. Names—The most important piece of information is the names. Say the names clearly so each person can hear clearly.
2. Titles—The title of an individual will help place him or her in the hierarchy. Even if you are introducing two people from two different organizations, they would very much like to know where the other fits in his or her organization. Ordinarily, you would introduce the person who is lower on the hierarchy to the person who is higher. Be especially sensitive to titles such as "doctor" or "professor."
3. Relevance—If necessary, you should explain why the people are present. If they know why they are together, they can speak more freely.

Say, for example, you are introducing two people from your organization. This is a typical introduction.

> Kelly, I'd like to introduce Danita Powell. Danita is the assistant director of human resources. We've invited her to help us make some personnel planning decisions. Danita, this is Kelly Francis. Kelly is our service director. She will come into our meeting later this morning with a list of her needs for new hires.

This introduction is brief, but it helps the two get to know each other. Remember: Both people need to make communication decisions about each other. They can do so if you give them information to help them understand the situation and the audience.

Sometimes you will need to introduce yourself. If so, follow the same guidelines. Give your name, title (if necessary), and explain your role in the situation.

If you are being introduced, remember the following suggestions:

1. **Listen carefully.** Listen for the person's name, title, and reason for being present.
2. **Make a "name note."** If you are good with names, just remember who you've been introduced to. If you aren't good with names, make a note right away or tie the name with something familiar that will enable you to recall it later.
3. **Make eye contact with both the person being introduced and the person you are being introduced to.** This is courteous. It also begins building an interpersonal relationship.
4. **Shake hands.** Offer your hand and shake in a firm and friendly manner.
5. **Smile.** In most situations, a smile will be taken as evidence of good will.
6. **Speak.** Typically, it is courteous to say something such as "pleased to meet you" or "my pleasure." "Hello" is often good enough. However, if you want to initiate a conversation immediately, provide an opening for comment, such as, "I'm pleased to meet you. I've heard so much about your work. I look forward to getting your advice."

Making Apologies

We're all human, so we all make mistakes. Whenever we do, we will probably need to apologize. Whenever you hear an apology, what do you look for? Probably first on your list is sincerity. We can forgive people almost anything if we believe that they sincerely recognize their error and are sorry for it. Here are some suggestions for offering and accepting an apology.

1. **Name it and claim it.** When you are apologizing, specificity is helpful. Rather than just say, "I'm sorry," it is sometimes helpful to name it (cite what you've done wrong) and claim it (own up to your responsibility).
2. **If necessary, offer an explanation.** State briefly why the mistake was made. People whom we have wronged or disappointed often want to know what happened.
3. **Offer to make it right.** If the error is correctable, offer to correct it. If it is not, note what you will do in the future to be sure it won't happen again.

4. **Keep it brief.** While you might feel the need to go on, the apology is for the other person. Respect their time. Get to the point.
5. Above all, be sincere.

Here's an example of a brief apology.

> Maya, I'd like to talk about what happened last week before our breakfast. I'm very sorry I referred to you and Diane as "girls." It was a thoughtless comment. Please accept my apology and my assurance that I will be more sensitive in the future.

How do you accept an apology? Briefly and graciously. Sometimes, you cannot forgive and forget, but the act of apology should be recognized.

> I appreciate that you took the time to talk to me about that, and I appreciate your apology.

Giving Directions

When you give directions to others, you are attempting to transfer knowledge and skills to them so they can accomplish a task. Sometimes, these messages are very formal, such as speeches, training sessions, etc. Still, there are plenty of chances to give directions in interpersonal situations as well.

As a model, think about giving directions to someone about how to get from one place to another. If someone asks you how to get from a hotel to a restaurant, you will probably think of the following: First, how to keep your directions simple. Second, how to express the directions clearly. Third, how to know if your directions are understood. Simplicity, clarity, and intelligibility are the three things you should keep in mind when giving any kind of directions—from filling out forms to performing a complex task.

1. **Begin by communicating the goal.** If you are giving directions on how to get to Winslow's Restaurant, you first consider where Winslow's Restaurant is. Similarly, if you want to give directions on using a spreadsheet to average a group of numbers, you (and your listener) must know what your goal is…averaging a group of numbers.
2. **Know where you are starting.** If the person to whom you are speaking doesn't know how to open the spreadsheet, you'll have to begin there. If your listener knows how to perform other spreadsheet functions, you'll start later in the process to give directions.
3. **Break the directions down into steps.** If you tell someone everything at once, they will likely get confused. By communicating in steps, you offer smaller quantities of information, bite-sized steps that people can understand.

4. **Check for understanding.** Look at the person to whom you are speaking. Does he look as if he understands? Ask if your directions are making sense. If you aren't being understood, be prepared to go back and re-explain. This step means you take measures to increase feedback.
5. **Don't talk down.** To talk down to someone is to treat them as inferior or unknowing. When you are in a position to give directions, respect the person to whom you are speaking. Be a helper. If they feel you see them as ignorant, they will be less likely to listen and more likely to resent your communication.

Making Requests

Everyone needs help. In our social lives, we seek advice and ask favors. In our business lives, we depend on others to supply information or perform tasks. None of us is totally independent. When we ask someone for something (information, assistance, cooperation, etc.), we should understand our purpose and analyze situation and audience.

1. **Determine whom to ask.** The first step in making the request is knowing who is likely able to help you. Who has the power? The information? The time?
2. **Determine an appropriate level of assertiveness.** A request can come as a question (Would you please get me the cost estimates for the new salaries?), a statement (I would like you to get me the cost estimates for the new salaries), or a command (Please get me the cost estimates for the new salaries). Which is appropriate? Which would you like to hear if the request were being made of you? Certainly we must sometimes give commands and orders, but most people respond better to requests and statements. Moreover, your position in the hierarchy determines whether you are even in a position to make commands. Notice, too, that tact plays a role in determining assertiveness.
3. **Determine an appropriate level of specificity.** Your request could be very general: "Would you please get me the cost estimates for the new salaries?" However, you want your request to be productive. It is considerate to give people enough information so they can meet your request without having to read your mind. For example, if you want something special, say so: "Would you please get me the cost estimates for the new salaries? I'd especially appreciate the graphs you used at Tuesday's meeting and the comparisons you made to last year's salaries." If you don't provide the extra information, you might be in a position to make another request and another imposition on the person's time.

4. **Determine the best situation.** Make your request in an appropriate time and place. Should you make the request in front of others? Should you wait until the person is less busy? Think about how the person receiving your request will feel and select the time and place that will make them feel good about receiving and honoring your request.
5. **Determine a deadline.** If you have a time frame, share it. In many cases, you'll only have to give a very general idea—"sometime this week would be fine." Often, however, you'll be on a deadline. If so, determine an appropriate level of assertiveness and communicate your deadline: "I'd like to have the data by Monday so I can prepare for Tuesday's meeting."

Asking Questions

Asking a question seems to be the easiest thing in the world. You simply figure out what you want to know and ask. Right? Most of the time, asking a question is that simple…if the question is "Where can I find the pencils?" or "What channel is it on?" Some questions, however, are tougher. Asking questions, just as any other interpersonal task, requires skill.

1. **Assertiveness.** Sometimes, we are reluctant to ask a question. We worry: "Will I look stupid? Is my question appropriate?" At other times, people might not seem open to questions. Asking questions requires some assertiveness. You can be more confident in asking questions if you value your own questions. If you listen to others and study your subject, you won't ask "stupid" questions. If you feel someone is unapproachable, ask your question in a situation where they can devote time to answering. Even if you are nervous about asking, having confidence that your question is important will help you be assertive.
2. **Tact.** Be diplomatic in asking questions. For example, if you are asking someone a very difficult question—one to which he or she might not know the answer—ask when others aren't present. If your question might seem to challenge a person's authority, let them know that is not your intent.
3. **Courtesy.** There are some rules that people usually follow when asking questions. For example, don't "butt in." Wait for an appropriate opening for the question. Use "please" to ask and "thank you" to respond.
4. **Specificity.** Ask the question in a manner that allows someone to understand exactly what you need to know. This is trickier than it seems. The entire premise of questioning is that you don't know something. If you are asking a question, whomever you ask must understand what you don't know. Sounds complicated…and it is. Your question should contain enough information to make the person answering comfortable.

5. **Relevance.** Some of the specificity issues will be resolved if your question is relevant. A question can be relevant in several ways. It can relate to the situation, the person you're asking, a shared task. Above all, you should ask a question that is one the person you are asking can reasonably be expected to answer. If the relevance needs explanation, provide the explanation instead of letting the other person wonder why you are asking.
6. **Sincerity.** A sincere question is one which you truly want to know the answer to. The person you are asking should feel as if her answer is important to you.

Think of this simple question: "Deliece, I'm working on the schedule for next week's meeting. Would you please tell me how long Mr. Talcott takes to make his section of the new employee presentation?" In this simple, 26-word sentence, the questioner shows several characteristics of a good question:

courtesy .....The questioner uses "please."
specificity ....Deliece knows precisely what the questioner needs to know.
relevance.....Deliece knows precisely why the questioner needs to know.



Giving directions requires taking the audience's prior knowledge into consideration.

Interpersonal Insight — Strategic Questioning



Some questions are far more challenging than others. Have you ever heard someone ask a question to which they already know the answer? They are probably using questions as a strategy. Strategic questioning is asking questions with a purpose that goes beyond getting information.

- The helping question — If you are listening closely to someone make an explanation, you could recognize that another piece of information or another kind of explanation would help people understand better. In that case, you might ask a question to help bring out the information you think will help further understanding. Of course, to help, you must know that the person you are questioning knows the answer.
  Example: "The material on college graduates is very interesting, Tracy. I think people might even appreciate it more if they knew the source. *Where did this information come from?"*
- The rhetorical question — When you ask a question for which there is no answer or to which only one answer fits, you are asking a rhetorical question. A rhetorical question is used to make a point, not really to uncover information.
  Example: "Recent college graduates report they are receiving more job offers than ever. They state that the salary offers are higher than ever. *Has there ever been a better time to begin a career?"*
- The challenging question — Sometimes you might question someone to challenge their position and make your own point. Even when you challenge, you should still attempt to be tactful and polite.
  Example: Ms. Parker, I listened very carefully to your presentation, and — while I agree with most of your conclusions — I can't help but worry that the new salaries offered are still favoring men over women. *Have you analyzed the difference between men's and women's starting salaries? Are you saying that our better job market is reducing the difference?*
- The leading question — When you ask a question to elicit the response you want, you are asking a leading question. In short, you are "leading" the person to the answer you want. You could want the answer for any number of reasons, all of which are strategic.

Answering Questions

The other side of the question is answering. Knowing what makes a good question will help you provide a good answer.

1. **Tact.** Respond to a question in a way that respects the individual who is asking. Remember that asking a question sometimes requires some courage. You can help a person ask more questions by being tactful.
2. **Courtesy.** Sometimes you will want to thank a person for asking a question, especially if it's a strategic question or a question that helps you make a point you want to make.
3. **Specificity.** Answer a question in a way that is useful. Specific answers are better than general answers. Specific answers help the questioner.
4. **Relevance.** Be sure your answers relate to the question asked. Provide complete and specific information, but don't provide more information than necessary. Your answers can be more specific and more relevant when you know your subject.

Conversation

Conversation is difficult to study. One conversation varies so much from another. Conversation with one person can be completely different than with someone else. Sometimes you want to talk; sometimes you want to listen. Some people even think that conversation is an art. While there might be art to conversation, there are also skills that can be learned.

What is a conversation? If you think back to conversations you have, you'll probably recall these qualities:

- Conversation is oral. That is, conversation takes place out loud between two or more people.
- Conversation is spontaneous. Because it is oral, it is immediate. Messages are composed "on the spot." No one "scripts" a conversation.
- Conversation is informal. Certainly some conversations are more formal than others, but generally conversation follows few rules other than those of courtesy. When conversations become more formal, they develop into interviews, panel discussions, and so forth.

If you put these qualities together, you come up with this definition: Conversation is a spontaneous, informal spoken exchange of messages.

One key element in conversation is its oral nature. Saying that conversation is "oral" or "spoken" might mislead us into thinking of ourselves as talkers instead of listeners. To be a good conversationalist, you must be a good listener. If you aren't a good listener, you'll not be able to be a courteous, tactful, relevant, sincere, or specific conversationalist. Why? Without listening, you don't know what to talk about. Listening enables you to be responsive to the other person. Remember the importance of listening as you think about these qualities of effective conversation.

1. **Relevance.** Effective conversation maintains a relevance or logic of its own. There is a thread that runs through a conversation. Listening helps a good conversationalist move gracefully from one topic to another. Comments follow from one to another.
2. **Tact.** Conversations can cover difficult and demanding topics. Good conversationalists make an effort to allow others to feel comfortable speaking. A good conversation minimizes embarrassment. The conversationalist reads the "audience" (other members of the conversation) and helps them speak by listening and by diplomatically directing the conversation into areas beneficial to all.

3. **Courtesy.** A good conversationalist does many things out of courtesy. For example, good conversationalists do not interrupt. They are patient when a topic becomes less interesting to them. They make eye contact. They speak in language that other people understand. They don't use language that embarrasses or offends. A good conversationalist doesn't attempt to do other things while talking or listening.
4. **Sincerity.** A good conversationalist is sincerely interested in listening and speaking to others. When they listen, people feel important. When they speak, people feel that the message is important. Good conversationalists convey their sincere interest in others with appropriate nonverbal behavior: leaning forward, eye contact, and so forth.



Chapter 6 Summary

Some interpersonal situations repeat themselves so often that we can learn certain protocols for handling them successfully. These situations include asking questions, answering questions, giving directions, apologizing, making introductions, and participating in conversations. Effective communicators improve their communication by ensuring that their communication meets these standards: assertiveness, tact, courtesy, specificity, relevance, and sincerity. Because these situations are so common, they are important for anyone in social and professional communication.

Remembering

1. Identify and explain six standards for making interpersonal communication decisions.
2. Explain how business hierarchies affect interpersonal communication between peers and between subordinates and superiors.
3. List five suggestions for improving your role in introductions.
4. List five suggestions for making apologies.
5. List five suggestions for giving directions.
6. List five suggestions for making requests.
7. List five suggestions for asking questions.
8. List four suggestions for answering questions.
9. List four suggestions for holding effective conversations.

Reflecting

1. How good are you at performing these interpersonal tasks? Grade yourself with this scale: G=Good, N=Needs Improvement, U=Unsatisfactory. Justify your grade with an explanation or example.
   - making introductions
   - making apologies
   - giving directions
   - making requests
   - asking questions
   - answering questions
   - conversation
2. How do you feel when you talk to a boss, manager, or other person in a superior hierarchical position? Why do you feel this way? Explain what people in superior positions can do to help others communicate better with them.
3. In groups of 4-5, ask each person to select someone who explains complex subjects well. You might select a teacher, a coach, a friend, or a family member...anyone who is good at making others understand. Review the suggestions for giving directions. Using your choice as a model, show how he or she makes people understand.
4. Whom do you really enjoy speaking with? Repeat activity number three, but in this case, choose a good conversationalist. Use your model to show what makes a person a good conversationalist.

Reaching

1. What typical interpersonal tasks does this chapter miss? Write your own section providing suggestions on improving communication decisions for the task.
2. Talk show hosts are supposed to be great conversationalists. Some are, but some are not. Select a talk show host you consider to be a great conversationalist and one you think is a poor conversationalist. Use the information in this chapter to explain the differences.
3. Some novels and plays are based largely on conversation. With the advice of a dramatics instructor, literature teacher, or librarian, select a play or a passage from a play or novel containing conversation. Determine if the conversation is realistic and judge it by the standards identified in this chapter.

Real Life

1. Practice introducing two people. Invent situations and characters. Follow the criteria in this chapter.
2. Become an observer in a conversation. Keep track of who speaks and who seems to be listening. Take notes. Track the topics that the conversation covers. How does the conversation move from one topic to another? How would you evaluate the conversationalists?
3. Interviewers are known for asking good questions. Record and watch a portion of an interview with a celebrity. Record the questions that the interviewer asks. Discuss each question as a class. Why are they asked? Do they get an interesting response?

7

Chapter Seven
Application.Conducting an Interview

Key Concept

Knowing how to conduct an interview can help in two ways. First, it can help you communicate with another person so you can gather important data for decision making. Second, it can help you when you are interviewed, because you will know what to expect. Good interviewers develop good communication skills specific to many types of interviews.



Chapter Objectives

- understand the role of the interviewer
- develop effective interpersonal interviewing skills
- create effective questions for interviews
- understand legal restrictions on interview questions
- identify types of interviews

Key Terms

- closed question
- interview
- leading question
- open question

Scenario

There is a job opening in Pilar's department. Since Alicia is the supervisor for the position, she is doing the interviewing. Alicia is a little concerned, since she's never had the total responsibility for interviewing anyone. She has developed a job description with essential functions. She knows the pay scale. She has advertised the position and accepted applications. However, since she's never been an interviewer before, she has several questions. Pilar has asked her to meet with someone from human resources. In preparation for the meeting, Alicia has written her questions and e-mailed them to the person with whom she'll meet.

- How do I start the interview?
- How do I prepare good questions?
- Are certain kinds of questions better than others?
- How do I finish up an interview?
- How do I avoid asking inappropriate questions?
- Do I record the interview?
- How will I know when I have the right answers to the questions?
- What will the person expect from me?

Alicia is probably more worried than she needs to be. She's been through interviews with others, so she knows some of the interviewing protocol. Still, some people are much better interviewers than others. She can become a good interviewer through study and experience.

What Is an Interview?

An interview is a special interpersonal or group situation. It is like a conversation, but more highly structured. It is typically dominated by questions and answers, with one person or group providing the questions and the other person or group providing the answers. The goal of an interview is to produce useful information that will aid in decision making.

Before You Interview

While Alicia is worried about the interview itself, her questions show that she realizes there is a lot of work before she ever meets somebody to interview. If the interview is for a job, then she'll need to describe the job fully. If the interview is for her own information, she'll need to research the topic before she can develop questions. If she is interviewing someone who is leaving her organization, she'll want to know what other people typically ask and how she can make the person feel at ease.

Interviews will differ according to the situations in which they are held: job openings, job resignations, counseling, and so forth. The purpose of interviews will change somewhat from situation to situation, but all interviews have this in common: they are designed to gather information. The person being interviewed is the audience. The interviewer will adopt different interviewing strategies as situation, purpose, and audience change. There are many different types of interview situations, but all require similar skills.



Counseling can take the form of an inteview.

Communication Management—Types of Interviews



While job interviews come to mind most frequently when someone hears or reads the word "interview," there are other types of interviews in which you are likely to be involved. In fact, you will probably experience other types of interviews far more frequently than job interviews. If you think of an interview in the broadest sense of a series of questions and answers for the purpose of obtaining information, then you can begin to think of all of the instances in which you have already been interviewed or may have conducted an interview if you have a part-time job. For example, if you return merchandise to a store, you will be asked a series of questions about the return. If you are planning for college, you might have spent time with a guidance counselor who asks you questions about your interests as a way of helping guide you to a college that meets your needs. If you witness a traffic accident or were in one, the police officer asks a series of questions to try to determine how the accident happened and who was at fault. All of these are daily examples of interviews. The following chart categorizes interviews and briefly describes their purposes.

Type	Purpose
Employment-Related Interviews	To secure employees, to orient them to a job, to appraise their job performances, and to learn why an employee is leaving.
1. Job Interview	An interview or series of interviews to select a person to fill a position within a company or organization.
2. Instructional Interview	To inform new employees about company policies and procedures and about the details of performing a job. This type of interview can also occur when changes are taking place within an organization and employees are learning new job skills.
3. Appraisal Interview	To give feedback to an employee as to how well a job is being performed and to set goals to be achieved prior to the next appraisal.
4. Exit Interview	To learn why an employee is leaving a job. To ask the employee for suggestions to improve the working environment or the position.
Counseling Interviews	To assist individuals who are in need of personal and professional advice. This type of interview is conducted by individuals trained to perform a particular type of counseling. School counselors, psychologists or psychiatrists, members of the clergy, social workers, employment counselors all assist individuals in determining what their choices are in solving a problem or dealing with a personal crisis.
Informational Interviews	To gather information for purposes of research, news gathering, investigations, medical treatment, or problem solving.
Focus Group	A specialized type of information gathering interview that questions a group of people rather than an individual. This type of interview is used by marketing firms to test consumer's reactions to products or advertising, by political consultants to shape campaign messages, and by a variety of organizations seeking information for planning or problem-solving purposes.
Persuasive Interviews	To motivate an individual or group to accept a product or idea. The most common form is a sales interview in which the salesperson asks questions to assess a client's needs and presents options for the client to purchase. Persuasive interviews can also be used at the organizational level to implement change.

Conducting the Interview

Effective interviewers discover a comfortable format for themselves. If they interview a great deal, they probably have a series of stages or steps to get themselves and the person they're interviewing into a productive frame of mind that allows free exchange of messages. These are the typical steps that an interviewer will go through:

Nesting. An interviewer begins by greeting the person being interviewed. A warm greeting includes good eye contact, a firm handshake, and a smile. Nesting welcomes the person into the interview situation. It typically takes very little time, and it can have some lasting benefits. Here are typical nesting behaviors favored by some interviewers:

- Offer the person a seat. The person might not feel comfortable otherwise. In addition, offering a chair allows the interviewer to set up the physical relationship in the way he or she thinks is best.
- Offer to take the person's coat. It is awkward to hold a coat throughout an interview.
- Offer a soft drink or coffee. Usually the person being interviewed declines, but the offer shows thoughtfulness.

Previewing. An interviewer will often begin by sharing exactly what's going to happen. This preview of the interview will help the person being questioned be more at ease.

- Sketch out the interview itself. For example, an interviewer might say, "I'd like to do three things today. First, I'd like to explain our hiring process. Second, I'd like to get to know you by asking you a few questions. Third, if we have time, I'd like to give you the chance to ask me some questions if you have any.
- Overview the process. In some interviews, the person being questioned could be curious about the entire decision-making process. If the interview is for a job, when will the decision be made? What's the next step? If it's an exit interview, what happens to the information? Who will see it? When? When the person being questioned knows these details, they can feel better about answering questions. In addition, the interviewer will likely get better information.

Interview body. This is the question-and-answer part of the interview. The interviewer asks questions designed to elicit information. Ideally, nesting and previewing have prepared the person being questioned. Here are some suggestions for managing the questions.

- Start easy. Don't make the first question a "zinger." The first question eases the person into the rest of the questions. Some interviewers start with, "Tell me a little about yourself." This question is non-threatening. However, a more precise question will keep the person from spending too much time. For example, "Let's begin by reviewing your experience. Tell me a little about your last job."
- Don't digress. It's easy to get into a conversation that pulls you away from your purpose. While the tone of the interview is conversational, it is not really a conversation. Conversations are usually free-flowing. In a conversation, any party can change the subject. Interviews are much more controlled. If you aren't gathering the data you need, remember that you are controlling the interview and politely return to productive questioning.
- Don't telegraph. If you have an answer you'd really like to hear, don't "telegraph" your expectations to the person being questioned. For example, if you ask, "How did you feel about your new boss?" don't light up if that person gives you the response you expect. If you do, you might be encouraging the person to say what you "light up" to rather than what's really on her mind.
- Be encouraging. While you don't want to telegraph what you want, you can be encouraging in many ways. Listen closely. Maintain eye contact. Nod to show you're understanding. Simple things such as "I see," "I understand," "Good point," all encourage the person to speak...and that is the basis of the interview.

Allow questions. When you've come to the end of your questions, allow the subject of the interview to ask you questions. These "reverse questions" accomplish several tasks.

- They give you more data. Even though the person is asking you questions, you are getting data from their questions. For example, if you are conducting a job interview and the person asks you if your organization has a management training program, you now have more data on the person and his or her interests.
- They help you sharpen your skills. If the people being interviewed repeatedly ask about a topic, perhaps you should consider making that part of your nesting, previewing, or questioning.
- They provide closure. A person being interviewed likes to feel closure. They would like to leave with as few questions as possible. A short question-answer period helps them feel better about the interview.

Courtesy exit. Just as nesting helped the interview begin, a courtesy exit helps it end. Like a good ending to a movie or a speech, the courtesy exit finishes everything up nicely. Courtesy exits can include the following:

- Expressing gratitude. Let the person know you are thankful for the interview.
- Allowing time to gather. Give the person a chance to get his or her coat, pick up forms, etc.
- Reinforcing the next step. If a news interview will be published in the paper, let them know when. If the job decision will be made in a week, let them know how they will be contacted. If the information will be passed on to someone else, let them know how.

Question Types

There are two major categories of questions: open and closed. An open question is one that allows the interviewee to take the answer any number of directions. In responding to an open question, an interviewee provides insight for the interviewer about the way he or she perceives job responsibilities, describes personal strengths and weaknesses, or defines a problem. The amount of detail and the directness of the answer also give an interviewer information that is useful in fulfilling the interview's purpose. An example of an open question is: "Why do you think you are having trouble with math?" This type of question would require the respondent to define the nature of the problem and provide insights as to whether or not the problem is one of ability, interest, teaching and learning style, or time management. In a counseling interview in which a question such as this would be asked, the counselor could also learn something about the student's perception of responsibility as a learner.

Open questions allow an interviewee's personality, ways of thinking, and communication skills to be displayed. They provide information beyond what is merely factual. However, they also take time. Some interviewees might keep talking about other subjects and make it difficult for the interviewer to cover everything if time is limited.

The other general type of question is a closed question. This is a question that is very directed and usually requires a simple "yes" or "no" or a specific type of information such as title of last position held. An example of a closed question is: "How many hours a night do you spend studying math?" This type of question allows the interviewer to get a profile of the student's study habits. This question also suggests that the person asking has some specific causes for the student's problem in mind and is going to explore the ones that are most likely to be the source of the problem. For example, if the student studies two

hours each night but is still having trouble, then the solution does not lie in attention to the class. The counselor or teacher can then explore how the time is used.

Depending on the interviewer's purpose or the amount of time in the interview, the interviewer will select the appropriate type of question to get the best information possible. Usually interviews include a combination of open and closed questions. The answer to a closed question or a series of closed questions often leads to an open question. This is called an inverted funnel sequence since it begins narrow and then gets broad. A funnel pattern begins with broad questions and then asks specific questions based on the answers. Questions are either primary or secondary. Primary questions are the first in a series that begin a line of questioning on a topic. Secondary questions, also called follow-ups or probes, build on the answers.

In wording either open or closed questions, there are some pitfalls to avoid. Questions should be neutral. If you have watched courtroom shows on television, you will have noticed that opposing attorneys or judges challenge some questions because they are leading the witness. In other words, the question is asked in such a way that the desired answer is suggested. Leading questions are asked outside the courtroom as well. However, they should be avoided. An example of a leading question is: "Don't you think it's the student's responsibility to adjust to the teacher's style since the teacher can't adjust to every student's learning style?" This question is problematic for a couple of reasons. First, it shows a bias on the part of the interviewer that is likely to prevent development of a helpful solution for the student. Second, it is likely to make the student withdraw from giving needed information because the student will assume that the person isn't really going to be helpful.

Another problem type of question is a double-barreled question. This type of question is actually two in one, such as: "What is the major problem facing high school students today and how do you think schools, parents, and society should address the problem?" This question will lead to a very long answer, and the interviewee is likely to forget all of the details in answering it. It is better to divide it into two questions with appropriate probes in between.

In phrasing questions try to begin with a verb or with the five w's and an h: who, what, when, where, why, and how. This structure will force you to ask a question rather than make a statement.

Strategic Questioning

As you decide what to ask, don't limit yourself to one kind of question. Most questions are designed to gather knowledge (what does the interviewee know?), uncover beliefs, and predict behaviors. Let's assume you are interested



Interviewing requires good notetaking and listening skills.

in knowing about how a person will relate to other people in the office. The easy way would be to ask, "How will you relate to others?" But doesn't that question answer itself? Most people will say, "I really relate well to others." Did you get the information you need? Here are some other ways to ask about knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors.

Hypothetical question. "Sometimes people in a work environment get pretty talkative. Assume one of your co-workers is constantly talking to you about things not related to work. The conversation is getting so persistent that it interferes with your work. How would you handle that situation?" This open-ended question presents that person with a problem and asks how he or she would solve it. The question will likely produce information that you could use to predict behavior.

Invitation question. This type of question invites the interviewee to talk about a subject. Whether he or she chooses to do so is up to him or her. For example, if the interviewer asks, "What is your ideal job situation?" the interviewee could choose an answer that includes positive working relationships. If the interviewee doesn't include that information, that is data for decision-making. Perhaps the interviewee doesn't believe relationships are part of an ideal situation.

Follow-ups. A follow-up is usually an open, planned question that comes after a closed question. For example, if you ask, "Do you work well with other people?" and the interviewee says "yes," follow up with "Tell me about a team project in which your skills contributed to that effort." The follow-up is really the important question and the opening questions focuses the attention on the subject. This question asks for an understanding of the skills of teamwork.

Communication Management—Prohibited Questions



It is also useful to know some of the questions that job interviewers typically do not ask. Since anti-discrimination laws prohibit hiring on the basis of such factors as marital status, age, disability, gender, race, etc., many interviewers are trained to avoid questions that will lead to these topics. Here's a list of the laws that affect interviewing:

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin
- the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA) protects men and women who perform substantially equal work in the same establishment from sex-based wage discrimination
- the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) protects individuals who are 40 years of age or older
- Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits employment discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in the private sector, and in state and local governments
- Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities who work in the federal government
- the Civil Rights Act of 1991 provides monetary damages in cases of intentional employment discrimination

The interviewer, as a result, will likely not ask questions such as these:

Question	Why it won't likely be asked	What would be asked instead
When did you graduate from high school?	This is like asking about age.	Tell me about recent schooling you've had in (name job area).
I noticed you are expecting. When are you due?	This is a question about physical condition and family status.	Are there any reasons you could not fulfill the essential functions of this job?
Do you have children?	Asks about family status.	Are there any reasons you could not work overtime two to three times per month?
Is your surname Hispanic ?	Requires discussion of ethnicity.	None.

Of course, a person being interviewed is free to bring up any subject he or she chooses, but the interviewer must follow the law. One good step to help comply with the law and produce good job interview results is to prepare a thorough job description with a list of the job's essential functions. The description can help guide the preparation of questions.

Justification question. An interviewer could ask the interviewee to justify or defend a position. For example, the interviewer could establish a belief and ask the interviewee to agree or disagree with the belief. Then, the interviewee could explain the answer. In our example, the interviewee could ask a question this way: "We recently spoke with an employee who said that she worked better when she liked her work partners. Do you agree with that point of view?" After the interviewee agrees or disagrees, the interviewer can ask for an explanation.

Making a Record

When an interview is over, you'll want to have a record of responses. There are four ways to create and keep a record.

The first way—one that is not recommended—is to rely solely on memory. Too often, an interviewer gets confused. Interviewee's answers become mixed up. If the purpose of an interview is decision making, memory faults could produce the wrong decision.

The second way is to take notes. Taking notes helps keep track of the questions asked and the answers given. Notes aren't necessarily word-by-word quotations, but they do record the basics of an answer.

The third way is a note form. A note form can be reproduced for multiple interviews. Because it is prepared before the interview, it can include places for names, important information, notes, etc. It can also list the questions, so the interviewer doesn't miss anything.

The fourth way is to record the interview. Recording is beneficial for two reasons: You will have a complete record of the interview. You will be able to share the interview with others. However, a recorded interview has some drawbacks. The presence of a recording device could inhibit your interviewee. In addition, it usually takes a little time to set up recording...it must become part of your nesting process. In addition, listening to an interview from a recording does take time. Still, recorded interviews are obviously the most reliable form of storing the information.

A Good Interviewer

With all this to keep in mind, it's easy to see that a good interviewer is more than someone who asks questions. If you want to be a good interviewer, you should develop the following attitudes and skills:

Prepare. Good interviewers prepare for their interviews. They know the kind of information they want and they prepare questions to get that information.

Listen. Good interviewers do more than ask questions. They listen closely to the answers. You already know that there are levels of listening. Good interviewers raise their listening level from purely informational to critical listening. They hear in one answer more than you might get from reading a written response to a question.

Empathize. Good interviewers know what it's like to be on the other side. They remember being nervous. They know how it feels to be asked a difficult or personal question.

Be thorough. Thoroughness depends on preparation, but it also is a type of discipline. For example, if you are interviewing someone for a job, the same basic questions should be asked of all interviewees. Why? As math teachers say, how can you compare apples and oranges? If you know the job experience of one candidate and not another, how can you compare the two?

In small groups, select a job that you are going to interview for. Brainstorm a list of questions that you would like to ask. From the list select the five best questions and explain your selections.



A sales interview requires an understanding of the customer's needs.



Chapter 7 Summary

When you are an interviewer, you should remember the interview's purpose. Usually an interview helps you gain information on which you can base a decision. To gain the information, you should structure the interview so that you establish a productive relationship with the person you are interviewing. Interview questions can be closed or open. Strategic questioning relies on hypothetical questions, invitation questions, follow-ups, and justification questions. If the interview is a job interview, you'll need to avoid asking inappropriate or illegal questions. Interviewers also think ahead to how they will record the information uncovered in the interview.

Remembering

1. What are the general characteristics of an interview, including its purpose?
2. What are the two major classifications for questions? Give an example of each.
3. Identify three kinds of strategic questions.
4. List and describe three different types of job-related interviews you are likely to experience.
5. Explain what a counseling interview is and situations in which you might experience this type of interview.
6. Identify the kinds of questions that are off limits to a job interviewer.

Reaching

1. Watch one of the Sunday morning news interview programs (or any other type of televised interview). Record the questions asked. Determine what kinds of questions are used and evaluate the success in getting good responses from the interviewee.
2. Counselors are usually trained interviewers. Arrange for your counselor to come to class to answer questions about interviewing. As a class, prepare for the interview by assembling questions. Use the various kinds of questions and strategies identified in the chapter.

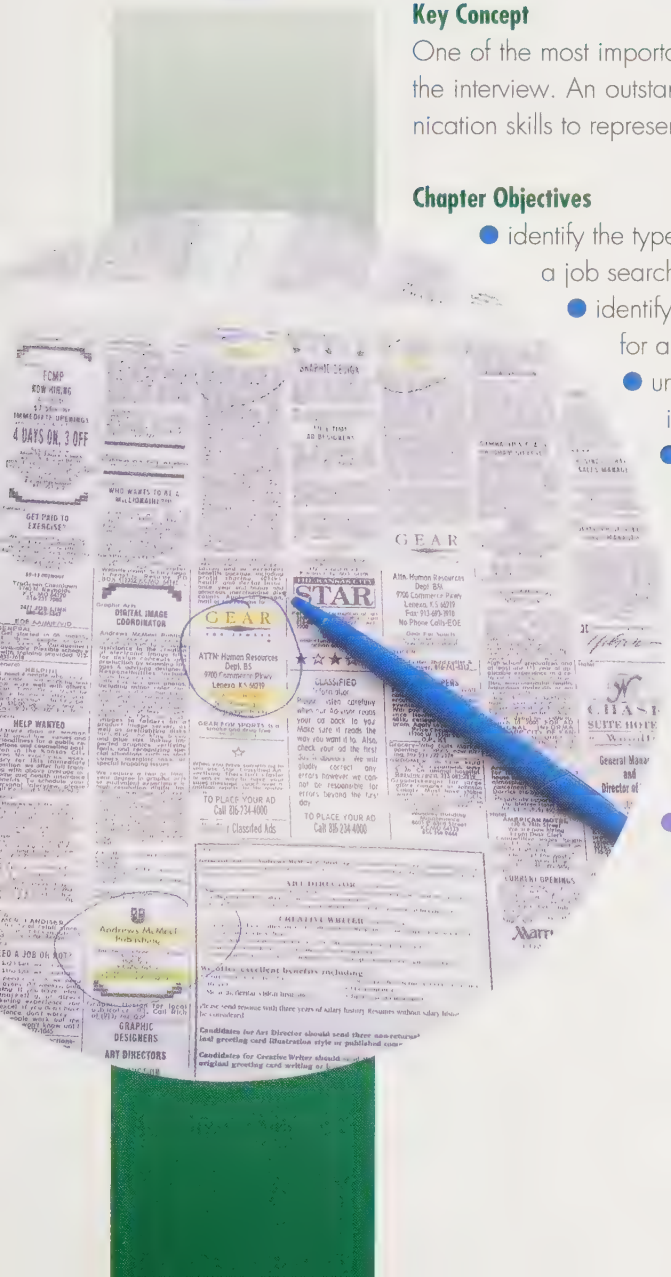
Reflecting

1. Explain the advantages of starting an interview with open-ended questions. Explain the advantages of starting an interview with closed questions. Under which conditions is one type of structure preferable to the other?
2. Some questions involving race, gender, religion, and other topics are poor questions because they ask about topics that are not legal bases for employment decisions. Research the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines. Present to the class the topics and questions that are not recommended and the questions that are acceptable.
3. How should nonverbal feedback from an interviewee affect questioning strategies? Think about nonverbal communication in a job interview, a counseling interview, and a sales interview.
4. Good interviewers don't "wing it." They have prepared questions and they typically ask the same basic questions to anyone applying for the same job. Explain why this is an advantageous interviewer strategy.

Real Life

1. Interview someone who does counseling work. Find out how the person prepares for a session. Ask questions specifically related to question structure, role of feedback—both verbal and nonverbal—and difficulties in conducting this type of interview.
2. Think of a situation in which you were the interviewee. Write an evaluation of the person who interviewed you based on what you now know about good interviewing strategies.

8 Chapter Eight Application.Interviewing



Key Concept

One of the most important—and challenging—communication opportunities is the interview. An outstanding job interview is the result of using good communication skills to represent yourself in the best possible way.

Chapter Objectives

- identify the types of job interviews typically encountered in a job search
- identify ways of preparing yourself and your interviewer for a successful interview
- understand the current rules about topics to be covered in a typical interview
- apply phone etiquette to interviewing and business situations
- identify traits that interviews look for and how to communicate those traits effectively

Key Terms

- convention
- group interview
- nonverbal communication
- résumé
- screening interview

One of the most challenging and important communication situations is the job interview. When you look for a job—especially a job that you see as part of a career—you look at each interview as a potential turning point in your life. The person who interviews you has likely interviewed people dozens of times, perhaps even hundreds! Preparing to stand out among the many interviews requires communication skills that you adapt to this special situation.

For the purpose of this chapter, we define an interview as an interpersonal or group interaction designed to gather from an individual information to be used in an important decision. This chapter will focus primarily on the job interview.

Scenario

This exchange takes place in Alicia's office. Pilar and Alicia are discussing whom to hire for a new opening in the office. They need someone to run the "help desk," a job that requires a person to answer phones, field questions on using the company's hardware and software, and refer difficult questions to technology specialists. Alicia began with twelve applications. She interviewed six people. She has narrowed her group of possible candidates to three.

Alicia: *I had six pretty good interviews. Everyone submitted an impressive résumé and has had some kind of job experience with technology.*

Pilar: *That's good news. Tech positions are hard to fill.*

Alicia: *These six screening interviews revealed three really good candidates. The other three I really can't support.*

Pilar: *What was wrong?*

Alicia: *One of the candidates knew a great deal about technology. She has used personal computers extensively. She knew Microsoft products well. But she used so much jargon that I don't think I should put her on the help desk. Another just wasn't very articulate. I would be really reluctant to have her solve problems over the phone. That last one just wasn't a match for our office. He came off as distant and unfriendly.*

Pilar: *You're comfortable with the others?*

Alicia: *So far. They answered my questions about computers very well. They were affable. Had good language skills. I've already done reference checks on all three. The reports from previous employers were good. I'd like to get all three back in for a final interview.*

Pilar: *Sounds fine to me. What will you be looking for?*

Alicia: *At this stage, I'm convinced by résumés and screening interviews that they have technical knowledge. I'd like to let them each meet me again, with James. He can help decide how well each person will get along with the rest of the staff. I'll also ask them to give a brief talk on using an office product. Maybe a five-minute mini-lesson on developing a template. The three basic questions I'll ask will center on customer service, record-keeping, and flexibility. James is working with me to firm up the questions.*

Pilar: *Sounds great. Let me know if I can help.*

Pilar and Alicia are doing what most employers do: planning for interviews that will reveal important information on which to base hiring. They are planning on two things that most employers plan on:

- Most of the important information used to hire will be based on communication—an application, a résumé, and/or an interview.
- Employers want the interviews to be successful. If employers can have a successful interview, they can make a hire. That means that they can solve their problem and start training a new person.

SPAM and the Interview

As with other communication opportunities, an interview can best be understood by considering situation, purpose, audience, and method. While each interview is unique, interviews generally share some things in common:

	Situation	Purpose	Audience
General Interview	An employer is looking for someone to fill a position.	To inform the interviewer of your qualifications and convince him/her to consider you for the position.	A manager or other decision-maker. Often a "human resources" official.
Screening Interview (also called a "preliminary interview")—this is the kind of interview that (Alicia) conducted with her first six applicants.	An employer has a large number of applications and is interviewing to narrow the pool of applications down to the most likely candidates.	To "stand out" from the other candidates and give the interviewer information to convince him/her that you are a good match for the position.	Often, a human resources official who will do this preliminary interview.
Group Interview—this is the type of interview Alicia has in mind when the three finalists come back for a second interview.	Usually, the pool of candidates has been narrowed to a few who are likely to be hired. The candidates are interviewed by a number of people in a group setting.	To show that you have specific talents and specific personal characteristics that will make you the best person for the job.	Usually this interview occurs with specific managers and co-workers for the specific position.
Finalist Interview	Usually, the employer knows the person he/she wants to hire. This interview is to finalize the decision, clear up any outstanding issues, and (perhaps) make a job offer.	To clarify for yourself the employment situation and to affirm with the employer that you are a good match for the job.	This interview could be with a specific manager or with a representative from personnel (human resources).

Each of these interview types requires the person being interviewed to think and prepare a little differently. The methods of communication used vary from interview to interview.

What Are Interviewers Looking For?

So what do interviewers want to see in a job candidate? The answer will vary from job to job, but some basics are common.

What interviewers look for...	What they ask...	What they'd like to see...
Education/ Training	• Tell me about your training in the (skill or job). • What skills have you trained for that are applicable to this job? • Have you had experience with (skill, software, technique, etc.)? • Please describe the re- sponsibilities of (this job or position). • Tell me how you would (perform a specific task).	• Specific answers are best. If an interviewer knows that job, he or she will know exactly what skills the job requires. Don't just say "I've had training as a bookkeeper." Instead, say something like, "I have had two years of high school accounting and I've used software packages like Quicken. My current community college enrollment includes business practice."
Experience	• Tell me about your last job. • What job experiences have you had that relate to the job for which you are applying? • Tell me about a time when you had to solve a particular kind of problem (interviewer identifies).	• Be prepared to relate your previous experiences to the job for which you are applying. If the previous jobs aren't really related, emphasize how they prepared you to work with people, to seek advice, or other general characteristics. If possible, be specific. Specificity does two things: First, it shows the interviewer that you understood previous jobs and that you understand the one you are applying for. Second, it gives the interviewer a mental or actual note that will help you as he or she compares all the applicants.

Personal Habits	• How would you organize yourself to begin the day? • Tell me about your ideal work environment. • What would you do if a call for assistance came and you had no idea how to respond?	• The interviewer wants positive habits to emerge: You know how to organize tasks. You seek advice when appropriate. You don't waste time. You are neat. When interviewers give you an opening to talk about your positive traits, they expect you to do so without excessive pride or arrogance.
Character	• Tell me about your previous employer. • What would you do if you knew someone at work was falsifying records? • What do you consider to be the traits of an outstanding employee?	• The interviewer would like to see you talk about your values. Will you "trash talk" a previous employer? If so, what would you say if he or she hired you? Are you honest? Do you think that characteristics such as honesty, loyalty, discretion, and pride in work are important? • Above all, interviewers want to see that you are sincere. Anyone can say the right things, but do you mean what you say?

Personality	• Almost any question can lead to your disclosing your personality. That part is really up to you.	• Let your personality show through. Be yourself. It is usually helpful to relax and smile, when appropriate. If one of your answers leads to some amusement, that's OK. Some appropriate humor is usually a good idea. • Let the interviewer see you…at your best.

Good answers typically have these characteristics: Good answers are responsive, sincere, and specific.

Responsive Answers

An answer is responsive when it really addresses the question asked. For example, assume that an interviewer has asked, "What would your friends at work say about you if I asked them to describe you?" The first answer below is responsive. The second is a poor answer.

Responsive

My friends at work would tell you three things. First, they would say I'm well organized. Everyone comments that I always know where things are in the office. Second, they would say I know my job. In my current position, everyone comes to me when something is wrong with the computer or when a new problem comes up. Third, I think they'd say I have a good sense of humor. I enjoy working, and it shows when I get along with other workers.

Not responsive

I know what you mean. My friends talk about me all the time. They really think I work hard, but no one seems to appreciate that. When people talk like that, you can tell that something's not right in the office. In fact, most of my friends won't even talk in the office because they are worried what my boss will say. That's one of the reasons I'm looking for a new job.

If these were the only answers you had, which candidate would you select? Remember that the interviewer has an agenda and that each question has a purpose. By being responsive to the question, the first candidate turned the question into a plus. The second candidate not only didn't help the interviewer gather the information he or she wanted, she hurt her chances by talking poorly about her employer and by failing to focus.

Moreover, responsive answers tend to be brief. One of the hazards of being off topic is wasting the interviewer's time. If that happens, you seriously damage your chances of getting a job.

Sincerity

Sincere answers are answers that you truly believe. Much of what we term "sincerity" is generated by what we see and hear. In other words, the person who gave the responsive answer won't make a good impression if the interviewer does not think the answer is true or genuine. Nonverbal communication is communication that relies on gestures, facial expressions, and other visual clues instead of words. Assume that you heard responsive answers, but observed the following behaviors. Which answer would you believe?

Behaviors that tend to communicate sincerity	Behaviors that do not communicate sincerity
Direct eye contact	Not looking at the interviewer
Animated, appropriate gestures	Emotionless, flat physical delivery
Fluent, smooth speaking	Halting, unsure speech

It might not seem fair to you that eye contact, gestures, and fluency build a belief in sincerity. Fair or not, that is the case for most people. Why? Direct eye contact is interpreted by most people as evidence of honesty and sincerity. People commonly assume that a person who is avoiding eye contact is hiding something. A flat, unexpressive voice suggests lack of enthusiasm or passion for the subject being discussed.

Specificity

Specific answers allow an interviewer to understand your answers in depth. It's one thing to say, "I have experience." It's another thing entirely to say, "I worked three years at Franklin's in the shipping department handling all outgoing mail, both postal and FedEx." Notice how the second answer has more "punch," more content? Something is specific if it is concrete, definite, or precise. Compare a specific answer to a general answer as an interviewer might. Assume the question is "why are you thinking about leaving your current position?"

Specific

I am really happy with my current job. I have a good supervisor and some great friends. Recently, however, I've received training in public speaking and presentation software. I've used my training a little at work for orienting new employees, but I'd like to develop my skills and get into a position where I worked more in presenting information to people and helping them understand things. I think this job offers me more chance for personal and career development.

General

Well, I guess I would just like to get a job that helps me use my skills.

In this case, briefer is not better. The first answer gives the interviewer information useful in making a decision. In the second example, the interviewer doesn't know what skills the candidate wants to develop.

The Process

While every company hires in its own way, the process is often similar for different jobs in vastly different fields. The purpose of any interview process is to move from a large number of applications to the candidate who is "just right" for the position. The process will likely look something like this:

Letter of application	A letter—often accompanying a formal application—which introduces you to a prospective employer. Also called a "cover" letter, because it "covers" an application.
Application	A formal document (supplied by the prospective employer) which asks you to supply written information.
Résumé	A formal document (supplied by you) which provides a prospective employer with written information.
Paperwork review	A review and comparison of the paperwork supplied through letters, applications, and résumés. This stage requires the prospective employer to select—based on paperwork, usually—the people who will be asked to interview.

Screening interview	An interaction designed to gather from an individual information to be used in determining who the best candidates are.
Final interview	An interaction (possibly with an interviewing team) designed to gather information to be used in determining who will receive a job offer.
Job offer	An official offer from an employer to come to work.

Another way to look at the process is from an employer's perspective. An employer might look at the hiring process like the inverted pyramid below. Simply put, the employer is looking to eliminate some people from the job search process and to select others until only a few (or only one!) remains.



So the questions remain: How can you use your communication skills to be sure that you are one of the people who makes it to final interviews? How can you succeed in those final interviews? You know that not every part of the interview process is communication. Someone might be looking for five years of experience. Communication cannot give you those five years, but communication can help you promote the experience you do have. Another employer might be looking for a special degree or certification. Communication cannot give you that degree or certification, but it can help you sell the skills and talents you have.

One key to making good communication decisions is to remember this saying: You never get a second chance to make a good first impression. Whether in writing, on the phone, or in person, you must make the kind of impression that moves you to the next level.

Making Your Letters Memorable

Often, your first communication opportunity with a prospective employer is a letter. If so, you must make the letter memorable—in a positive way. Remember the situation: An employer is likely to get many letters in response to an advertisement. Your letter is your representative to the employer. A good letter could mean an interview. A poor letter can mean a loss of opportunity for further communication. The easiest thing to do is remember the formal requirements of a business letter.

- Your letters should be written on quality, 8½" by 11" paper.
- Avoid brightly colored paper. Gray, beige, and very light pastels are acceptable. When in doubt, use white. Be sure all the paper in your mailing matches. If you use gray stationery, use gray for your résumé.
- Use a word processor (or type) your letters. Don't hand write a letter. If you don't have access to a typewriter or word processor, go to a copy center. Copy centers have both available.
- Single-space your letters. Double-space between paragraphs.
- Use a simple, attractive font with a readable size. In most cases, Times New Roman, size 12, is a good choice.
- Use a simple, readable arrangement of business letter parts.

Note: Forms for business letters might vary. What follows is a traditional, full-block business letter. Your English, speech, and business instructors may suggest other letter formats to follow.

1.	Date	Type the date about 1"-1½" from the top. Date should be flush with the left margin. Avoid abbreviations. Separate the day from the year with a comma.
2.	Your address	Be sure the reader can respond to you…even if the envelope is discarded. Type your address completely 3-4 lines below the date. Type flush with the margin.
3.	Inside address	Type the name and the full address of the person to whom you are writing. It's always best to address a letter to a specific person. If you are unaware of the person to whom you are writing, use a title (for example "Director of Personnel") or no name. The inside address is typed 3-4 lines below your address. Type flush with the margin.
4.	Salutation	Two spaces below the inside address, type the salutation, or greeting. It should be followed by a colon. If you do not know who will be reading your letter do not use "Dear Sir" or "Sirs." Type flush with the margin.
5.	Body	Begin the body two lines below the salutation. Paragraphs may be indented. Single space, but double space between paragraphs. Attempt to center letter on page if you can. A one-paragraph letter is usually unappealing. Try to separate content into two or three paragraphs.
6.	Complimentary Close	Let the reader know that your letter is over…and follow the conventions of letter-writing…offering a courteous close. "Sincerely" and "Yours truly" are common. Type flush with left margin two lines below the body.
7.	Signature	Always sign your letters. Leave four lines below the complimentary close and type your name. Sign in the space. Your signature says a great deal about you, so sign clearly and in ink.

January 19, 2002 ——— 1

Farrell Richardson
1029 Carlton Avenue ——— 2
Abilene, TX 76543

A-1 Construction
200 E. Main ——— 3
Lincoln, NE 88888

Dear Mr. Hanna: ——— 4

I am replying to your January 15 advertisement in the Lincoln Sentinel for a customer service representative. I believe I have many of the qualities you have outlined in your ad, and I would appreciate consideration for the position. ——— 5

As you will note from my enclosed résumé, I have worked with construction materials for five years both in sales and ordering. My previous employment has been with hardware suppliers. During college, I spent my summers working construction in the Lincoln area. With experience in both sales and use of construction materials, I look forward to working with customers and builders in addressing their needs and solving their problems.

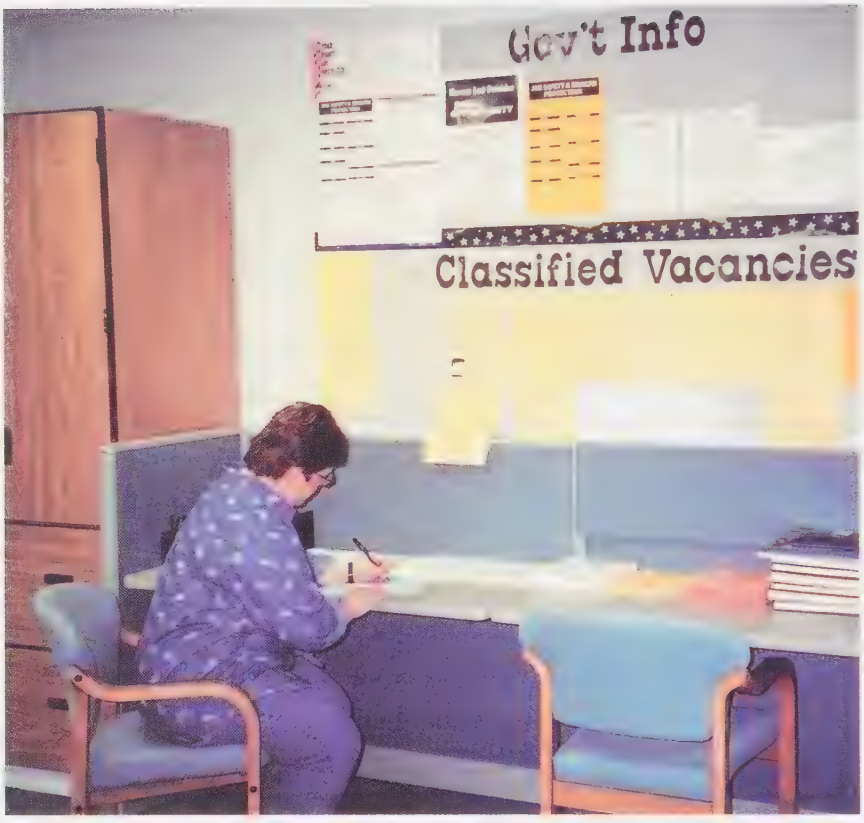
I would appreciate the opportunity to interview for the position. Although I live in Texas, I would be happy to speak with you on the telephone or to schedule a trip to Lincoln. I have noted with interest your company's recent growth, and I hope my education and experience could make me a good candidate for your position.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely, ——— 6

Farrell Richardson ——— 7

Your letter and application are the first impression someone has of you—make it a positive one.



The Gatekeeper: Personnel Departments

Many times—especially with larger companies—applications and preliminary interviews are handled by someone from a personnel department, also called a "human resources department," or "HR" for short. A representative from human resources might review letters, take calls, administer tests, do screening interviews, and select candidates who will go forward to a more detailed interview.

When a person from human resources performs these functions, he or she is known as a gatekeeper. That is, the human resources officer will do much of the preliminary work designed to eliminate unsuitable candidates. The reason is simple: A person with an opening usually can't interview every candidate who applies. The gatekeeper will send on only those applicants whose paperwork and interviews look good.

Remember: Your letter can make the difference between getting an interview and getting a "thanks-for-the-interest" response. Candidly, many cover

letters read similarly. Often, a good letter gets you to the gatekeeper's early interview without much consideration beyond that. A poor letter, however, will usually mean that you will never have a chance for an interview. Avoid the common pitfalls of a poor letter:

- spelling mistakes
- sloppiness
- sentence fragments
- run-on sentences
- poor organization
- poor word choice
- weak tone (attitude seems poor)
- generally, any mistake your English teaches point out in compositions.

The cover letter can serve another really important function. If it's written well, it can focus an interviewer's attention on strengths you have. Consider the sample letter earlier in this chapter. The applicant's middle paragraph invites an interviewer to ask specific kinds of questions.

If the interviewer reads the letter, some questions will naturally flow from it. In other words, the applicant has made his first impact by "guiding" the questions that might be asked by the interviewer to areas that the applicant thinks are strengths for him.

As you will note from my enclosed résumé, I have worked with construction materials for five years both in sales and ordering. My previous employment has been with hardware suppliers.	The applicant would probably like to be asked about specific job experiences.
During college, I spent my summers working construction in the Lincoln area.	The applicant would probably welcome questions about construction experiences and knowledge of building and construction in the area.
With experience in both sales and use of construction materials, I look forward to working with customers and builders in addressing their needs and solving their problems.	The applicant apparently thinks he has some qualities that would make him successful working with clients and customers.

Make Your Application Count

A "cover" letter introduces you and your résumé or application. We'll cover résumés later. For now, think about what you can do with your application. When an employer has an application process, then the application is probably pretty important. There are several reasons why you should be very careful and complete when filling out an application.

- Applications provide necessary demographic information (name, address, social security number, phone number, etc.). Just because you've included these things in another form doesn't mean that an employer will use your materials. Most offices prefer to use their own applications.
- Many applications contain key questions. Failure to answer and sign off on your answer might mean not getting an interview. For example, if an application asks "have you ever been convicted of a felony," failure to answer could mean not getting a job.
- If an application asks for background, experience, references, or other job-related data, that is a good indication that the employer thinks this is important information. Be complete and accurate in your answers.
- An on-line application is just as important as a paper application—maybe more important. An on-line application is one that is filled out over the Internet or on a kiosk or station with a computer terminal. The data from these applications might be "dumped" into a database. If a large company searches the database for someone with particular qualities, your application must be complete and accurate to be included in that search. (Applications are also being "scanned" electronically for storage. This puts an extra value on neatness and completeness.)
- Misrepresentation—or lying—on an application is usually sufficient reason for being fired. Take care that an application that helps get you a job does not later cause you to lose the same job.
- Typing an application helps legibility. It also makes a good impression. Copy centers usually have typewriters and computers for your use.
- Like the cover letter, a well-prepared application can focus an interviewer's attention on areas you would like to talk about.

An application might be the first impression of you. Use all your communication skills to make the first impression a good one.

Résumés

A résumé can be used to supplement an application or to take its place. With many high level jobs, technical jobs, and highly responsible jobs, résumés are preferred over applications. A résumé is a summary of education and experience submitted as part of the application process. All the suggestions that apply to letters and applications also apply to résumés. But since résumés are so important, they deserve special consideration.

Since you create your own résumé, you have more creative input into the impression it makes than you do with an application. A résumé gives you a great opportunity to get past the gatekeeper and to set the stage for a successful interview. Résumé material also helps move the interview in a direction that can be advantageous to you.

There are many formats for a résumé. You can find excellent examples working with your teachers, using the library, or searching the Internet. This brief example will help you see how important a résumé can be.

1.	Personal Information	Be sure to include the various ways that an employer can contact you. Be careful when including work numbers. You could be embarrassed (or worse) if someone tries to schedule you for a job interview by talking with your current employer.
2.	Objective	Keep it simple. Don't exclude yourself from positions by being so specific that you appear to be looking for something very precise. This is especially important for people just starting the first job search.
3.	Education	Keep this section brief, accurate, and relevant. The example doesn't include high school, which is not unusual in the employment world. Be sure to include degrees and certifications that are relevant.
4.	Technical Information	A technical section is becoming more important as more jobs require computer use. If you are applying for a technical job, this information should appear early in the résumé. If not, it should go later.
5.	Experience	Job experience is always important. Including job titles is a good idea. Brief job descriptions also help an employer understand your background.
6.	References	You might want to list references, but frequently applicants say "available on request." If you don't include references on your application, be prepared with a typed list to supply immediately if asked.

Mary Gatewood
877 East Grand Avenue
Fort Worth, TX 66666
355-992-7657 (home)
355-887-9384 (work)
email: mgate23@mail.bvc.net

1

OBJECTIVE To obtain a challenging position that will allow me to use my technical skills and interpersonal skills to further the goals of a growing company while advancing my own training in technology and customer service.

2

EDUCATION Killigrew Community College
St. Louis, MO
Associate Degree: Technical Literacy
May 1999-December 2001

3

Davis Technical Academy
St. Louis, MO
Microsoft NT Certification
May 1998-May 1999

4

OPERATING SYSTEMS Microsoft NT
Windows (98, 2000)
MacOS

SOFTWARE Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access)
FoxPro
WordPerfect
Pagemaker
Photoshop

EXPERIENCE May 2000-present

5

Advance Computer, Inc.
St. Louis, MO
Responsibilities: Hardware and software sales; advising customers on set up of computers and hardware; advising customers on software installation and troubleshooting.

May 1997-May 1998
Student Technology Facilitator
Fairview High School
St. Louis, MO
Responsibilities: Set up and troubleshooting personal computers and hardware for student use; installation of software; training student aides on library computer systems.

REFERENCES Available on request.

6

With word processing software, you can tailor a résumé to meet the needs of an employer. Think of SPAM. Adjust your objective if necessary. Include more of your high school experience if it is relevant (for example, four years of Spanish). Follow these hints:

- If possible, keep your résumé brief, one or two pages.
- Select appropriate paper. Paper that matches your cover letter is attractive (gray, beige, and very light pastels).
- Make use of "white space." Notice in the example how the paper doesn't look crowded or busy.
- Don't "pad." In this case, a person is looking for a technical job. Saying that hobbies include horseback riding and model building doesn't help the employer.
- Consider adding other sections, if relevant. These sections are common on résumés: hobbies, professional involvement, community involvement, awards and recognition, publications, skills.
- Always carry spare résumés to job interviews. If someone needs a résumé, you'll have an attractive copy on hand. People won't have to rely on photocopies.



A handshake is a real key to understanding character.

Interpersonal Insight — Phone Etiquette



The telephone is an important part of your job search. You must be available on the phone to make appointments, even to interview on the phone. To present yourself as an appealing candidate, know how to make a good phone impression. (Few candidates realize it, but a phone conversation with an assistant or secretary can make a great deal of difference. Secretaries, for example, often let their bosses know if a job applicant is rude or hard to understand. They will also report back on candidates who are polite, well-spoken, and friendly. Never make a mistake of talking to a secretary without considering him or her as an important part of the hiring process.)

The phone is another channel for communication. All the suggestions that apply to face-to-face contact apply, with some modifications.

- Choose an appropriate place from which to call. Never make a job call if there are distracting or unusual noises. Not only will the listener be put off, you will find it harder to concentrate.
- Choose a good phone. Some radio phones have poor reception. If possible, choose a phone you have experience with.
- Always identify yourself. If you call and ask to speak to someone, a good receptionist or secretary will ask your name anyway. Be polite and say, "Hello. My name is Dennis King. I would like to speak with Peggy Coopman if she is available."
- Just because you are on the phone doesn't mean you should be sloppy. Don't eat or drink while you are talking...it interferes with clear speech.
- Be prepared with pencil and paper. Keep your calendar or appointment book handy. If someone asks you to make a note or an appointment, you should be prepared. Don't make them wait.
- Be concise, to the point. Most employers don't have time to spend on pointless conversation.
- If you have a phone interview, treat it as you would an in-person interview. Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted. Listen carefully. Try to imagine your interviewer on the other end of the phone line. Speak to the interviewer as if she or he were in the room with you.

If you "act naturally" on the phone, you'll be a more effective communicator. Smile when you speak, and your voice will likely sound more appealing. Gesture as you speak. Express yourself and you become a personality on the phone.

The Formal, Face-to-Face Interview

The goal of the letters, calls, and applications is to get a face-to-face interview. When you do get the chance to meet your interviewer, unawareness of interview expectations, conventions, and strategies can waste a good opportunity. Expectations, conventions, and strategies will vary with situation and audience, but there are enough common characteristics of interviews to make some reasonable suggestions.

To know what your interviewer expects in an interview, you must use empathy...put yourself in the place of the interviewer. What will the interview expect to see and hear? How can you best meet or exceed those expectations? This is simply another form of reading an audience. For example, an interviewer who wants to hire someone to answer telephones and assist in the office will probably expect the following:

- an outgoing person who is friendly
- a person with clerical skills, but not necessarily those of a trained secretary
- a person with a pleasant voice
- a person with good command of language
- a person who enjoys helping others
- a person who likes to talk on the telephone
- a person who can handle several tasks or conversations at once

If you were interviewing for this position, how can you best meet these expectations?

In your interview, you'll likely want to draw attention to your capabilities in this area. Don't forget: The interviewer will help you out. Questions asked by an interviewer often telegraph his or her expectations. Assume the interviewer asks "Are you well organized?" The question in itself reveals that the interviewer is interested in organization as a basis for choosing someone for the position. If you anticipate that organizational ability is an expectation of the interviewer you can rehearse an answer in advance. You might be a terrifically well-organized person, but an unanticipated question can catch you "cold." Anticipating the question will allow you to come up with an interesting example of your organizational skills, maybe even a story of how your skills have helped you.

Don't worry if you don't anticipate everything. Anticipating your interviewer's expectations is not a foolproof idea. It would be foolish, however, to fail to anticipate the very things your interviewer will be interested in.

Expectations	Conventions	Strategies
Expectations are the things that an interviewer expects to see and hear based on the nature of the job and the employer. For example, a person interviewing for a secretarial job at a law office has different expectations than the person interviewing for a welder in a body shop.	Conventions are the social expectations that arise from the interview situation itself. Conventions don't vary much from job to job. Whether a job is a secretarial job or a welding job, it is a convention that the candidate will introduce himself/herself and shake hands.	Strategies are those communication choices selected by the candidate to represent himself/herself in the best light. Strategies will vary according to the situation, purpose, and audience.

Conventions. A convention is a behavior—like a tradition or a custom—that is widely used to shape the interactions we have. It is like an expectation; recognized conventions are expectations we have for each other in specific situations. It is different in interviews because expectations will likely shift, depending on the job available, the urgency of the situation, and other factors. Conventions usually are constant; they change little from interview to interview. These are some of the conventions of interviewing:

Convention	Why?
Showing up on time (or early!) for an interview	Promptness is a characteristic all employers value. The old saying is that "time is money." Promptness shows that you respect the other person's time. (Showing up early gives you time to prepare for the interview—go to the restroom, check your grooming, etc.)
Introducing yourself	The letter, application, or résumé has already preceded you. Introducing yourself when you meet the interviewer is a sign that you recognize the importance of interpersonal communication and politeness. Given the choice of hiring someone polite or someone impolite (with the same qualifications), whom would you hire?
Shaking hands	Many people—interviewers included—consider a handshake a real key to understanding character. A handshake that is too forceful seems aggressive, intimidating. A handshake that is too weak indicates lack of resolve or enthusiasm.
"Small talk"	There won't be much, but it can be important. Some interviewers call this "nesting." It is making the candidate feel comfortable. Your response to small talk will also reveal how comfortable you are in informal interactions. If an interviewer asks "did you have any trouble finding my office," he or she is likely engaging in small talk to structure a slightly awkward time between meeting and starting the interview. An inappropriate response to such a question is a "red flag" to an interviewer that the candidate doesn't recognize simple social conventions.
Eye contact	In most social and professional interactions in our culture, looking each other in the eyes facilitates conversation. A conventional interview (if it's not on the telephone) is usually face-to-face in someone's office or other private area. If a candidate doesn't look at the interviewer, the interviewer is likely to mistrust the answers he or she gets. And while eye contact is a convention, staring is not.
Dress	Typically, a candidate will dress up for an interview. Dressing up will depend on what one is interviewing for. When interviewing for an office job, appropriate office wear is "dressing up." When interviewing for a job involving physical labor, an interviewer won't likely expect a shirt and tie or hose. The interviewer will expect neat, clean clothes. If clothes aren't neat and clean, will the candidate's workplace be neat and clean?
Grooming	A well-groomed person says to the interviewer: "I care about my appearance. I respect you and this job enough to prepare physically for it." Interviewers are impressed by people who are well-groomed. Candidates who are not well-groomed might have trouble being heard, simply because the interviewer is more involved with appearance than with listening.

There are more conventions than those on the list. To prepare for an interview, you must prepare for the kinds of conventions that interviewers are used to seeing. If you are going to stand out, be sure you stand out for something positive.

Interpersonal Insight — The Handshake



The handshake is a time-honored means of greeting each other. In past days, the handshake was meant to show another that you possessed no weapons and meant no harm. Later, it became a social convention that provided safe physical contact and showed politeness. Even in the 20th century, handshakes were given by men to men.

Today, however, everyone shakes hands. It's an expected part of social interactions, regardless of gender, class, or occasion. The handshake communicates friendliness and observance of social convention. It helps put others at ease. It is as much a part of communication in the business world as the phone call or the e-mail.

A good handshake will have these qualities:

- The whole hand is involved, not just the tips of the fingers.
- The palm is vertical, thumb on top. Even women no longer shake hands with the palm down.
- The grip is firm, but polite. A limp or loose grip (the wet fish grip) is almost universally seen as a sign of weakness. A hard grip will be resented as too aggressive or intimidating.
- The up-and-down "pump" is not exaggerated in degree or number. A few pumps (1-3) are sufficient. Anything more is seen as "glad-handing" and is usually sustained too long for most people's comfort. Unless you are very close friends, hanging on to another person's hand longer than 1-3 "pumps" is usually perceived as too intimate.

Remember: The point of a handshake is to meet social conventions, put yourself and others at ease, and express openness and friendship. If you remember these qualities of a good handshake, you can make this social convention work for you and never work against you.

Strategies. Strategies are those communication choices selected by the candidate to represent himself/herself in the best light. A strategy is within the control of the candidate. Expectations are in the mind of the interviewer and can only be influenced by the candidate. Conventions are part of social behavior. Strategies are the behaviors that the candidate can alter.

For example, if you believe your education is your strongest quality in vying for a job, you might adopt a strategy of answering questions in a way that returns the interviewer to a consideration of your schooling. On the other hand, if your experience is your strength, you can attempt to emphasize that characteristic in your answers to questions.

Whenever you think about adopting strategies for your interview, don't forget the number one strategy: Be yourself. First, it's always easier to be yourself. Second, it's honest. Third, you don't want to get a job that really doesn't

suit you or that will not help an employer. Being yourself is always the key...but be your BEST self. Observe the conventions, meet expectations, develop communication strategies, but do these things in a way that allows you to be true to yourself.

Metacommunication and the Interview

Preparing for interviews means anticipating interview questions, adapting to the interviewer's responses, and reflecting on your past successful and unsuccessful interviews.

	Anticipatory Metacommunication	**Adaptive Metacommunication**	**Reflective Metacommunication**
	You can anticipate some of the important expectations and questions of the interviewer. Anticipating means preparing.	While the interview is proceeding, precision listening allows you to find out more about the interests of the interviewer. By responding to these interests, you can be sure the interviewer has the kinds of information needed to make a decision.	After each interview, you get a very direct type of feedback. You DID get the job, or you DID NOT. Reflecting on what is and isn't successful allows you to make the next interview better.
Skills required	Empathy—anticipating the feelings and interests of the interviewer. Self-analysis—understanding your own strengths and weaknesses.	Listening—knowing what exactly is being asked and why. Thinking "on your feet"—being able to adapt and adjust to the topics advanced by the interviewer. Questioning—Don't be afraid to ask the interviewer, "Would you like to hear more about that?" or "Is that what you had in mind?	Recall—being able to recall the details of an interview after the fact. Flexibility—being willing to change behaviors that don't work.

Activities to prepare	Anticipatory Metacommunication	Adaptive Metacommunication	Reflective Metacommunication
	Ask friends to suggest questions. Ask yourself questions you think could be asked and work out answers. Review your own paperwork for things you can pull into the interview. Think about examples of your work that you can bring into the interview.	Become an active participant in all kinds of discussions. Classroom discussions aren't interviews, but they will help you "think on your feet."	Talk to others about your interviews. Ask for advice. Listen to their experiences and compare them to yours.

The Standard Questions

Many interviewers have favorite questions that they feel will be useful in getting candidates to talk about themselves. You'll never know them all, but you should be prepared for some of the questions asked by many interviewers. (If you know people who have interviewed at the same business where you are interviewing, you can even ask what kinds of questions were asked.)

Here are some typical questions and some suggestions for answering.

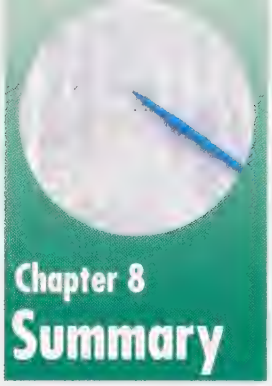
Question	Suggestions
Why are you interested in a position with us?	• Research your employer so you can answer intelligently. • Acknowledge the benefits to you of working for the employer, but don't forget to talk about the contributions you can make to the employer.

Question	Suggestions
What are your three most outstanding characteristics? (What are your three most important strengths? What strengths do you have that make you a suitable candidate for this job?)	• Be prepared. Go into an interview knowing your strengths. • Tailor your strengths to the expectations of the interviewer. If one of your strengths is working well with others, talk about that strength in terms that the interviewer is interested in. • Ask others how they see you. They can often come up with ideas that you don' think of. • Don't brag, but be positive. If you can't praise yourself in a job interview, when can you?
What is your greatest weakness?	• This question comes up a lot. Know yourself. You have weaknesses, but don't harm your own interview by being too critical. • Answer honestly, but don't go into a great deal of detail unless you're asked. • Some "weaknesses" are also strengths. For example, if your weakness is lack of experience with the computer you could say, "I'm not very good on the computer." Or you could say, "I am interested in improving my computer skills. I would be very interested in any training or development in that area." The second answer is honest, but it also turns the interviewer's attention toward a strength: Your willingness to learn.
Tell me a little about yourself.	• This is often an opener. Sometimes it's meant as a "nesting" question. Don't include irrelevancies, such as your high school sports interests or your mother's background. • Use the answer to focus the interview on areas you'd like to talk about.

Question	Suggestions
Why did you leave your last job? (Why are you considering leaving your present job?)	• Prepare to answer this question. It can be of great interest to your interviewer. • Be honest. The interviewer is likely to do a reference check. • Don't be afraid to mention that you are looking for financial improvement or career advancement.
Are there any questions you'd like to ask me?	• Often this is a conclusion to an interview. Be prepared to recognize that it's a clue that the interview is drawing to a close. • Come with questions that show your interest in the company and the job.

Other Factors

The more you learn about communication, the more you will understand how your voice, mannerisms, language, and other factors affect interviews. Throughout this text, you will learn about these topics and many others. We will return to the interview as a means of understanding and practicing sound communication choices.



Chapter 8 Summary

Just as with any communication situation, situation, purpose, and audience are the bases for communicating effectively in an interview. There are many kinds of interviews, among them general, screening, group, and finalist. Interviewers look for such characteristics as experience, education, training, and personal characteristics. For this reason, it is possible to anticipate—and prepare for—interview questions. The job interviewee should be familiar with the various conventions of interviewing. Job applicants can set up good interviews with effective letters, applications, and résumés.

Remembering

1. Other than a "general" interview, identify the three types of job interviews typically encountered in a job search. When would you likely encounter each of the three?
2. Identify ways of preparing yourself and your interviewer for a successful interview.
3. List three questions that are likely to be asked in an interview (other than demographic information).
4. List three questions that will likely not be asked in an interview and say why.
5. Identify qualities that most interviewers look for.
6. List and define the three qualities of a good interview response.

Reflecting

1. Eye contact tends to lead listeners to believe you, to think you are sincere. Why do you believe this is true?
2. In small groups, select a job that you are going to interview for. Brainstorm a list of questions that you would like to ask. From the list select the five best questions and explain your selections.
3. Compare the contents of this chapter with the previous chapter. How can putting yourself in the interviewer's place help you perform better on interviews?

Reaching

1. Divide into groups of three. Each group should prepare a "Do" and "Don't" interview. Select one person to be the interviewer. The other two will be candidates. In the "Do" interview, model the appropriate behaviors that will help the candidate land a job. In the "Don't" interview, display as many negative traits as you can.
2. Arrange for a guest speaker who actually interviews many people yearly. You could find someone in your school district, a local business person, a representative of a personnel agency or other interviewer. Interview the interviewer. Using material in this chapter, test his or her opinions about the suggestions in this chapter. Before the speaker comes, brainstorm questions and sharpen them to find out the information you'd like to know.
3. With the assistance of your teacher or librarian, find an on-line application. Rather than fill it out on-line, print the application and share it with the class.

Real Life

1. Everyone knows stories or anecdotes that are revealing about their experiences, education, character, and other traits that employers are interested in. Brainstorm a list of incidents that you have been involved with that might help you land a job. From the list, select one incident and prepare it for sharing with the class. Be sure you can share the incident in 1-2 minutes.
2. Prepare your own résumé. If you have access to a word processor, change its appearance with various fonts, arrangement, use of bold or italic characters, etc. Hold a "beauty contest" in which a committee judges the résumés. As a class, explain why one résumé is better than others.

3. Visit a number of local employers. (You might want to divide up some of the employers so that you don't visit one employer multiple times.) Ask the employer for a job application. Photocopy the applications. Select two to fill out. If you have access to a typewriter, try to type one and hand write the other. What areas of the application were difficult? Can you spot opportunities to draw an interviewer's attention to your most positive characteristics?
4. As a class, generate a generic checklist to help evaluate an interview. Be sure to include the qualities and characteristics emphasized in this chapter.
5. Set up mock interviews. If you choose to interview each other, divide the class into two sections. Allow each section to generate six questions. Interview in pairs, exchanging roles of interviewer and candidate. Videotape your interviews and watch them together. Critique yourself and ask others to critique you. Use the checklist developed in #4.

9

Chapter Nine
Application.Communication Technologies



Key Concept

New communication technologies such as the Internet, voice mail, cellular telephones, pagers, faxes, and two-way video have changed the way we live, learn, and work. Each of the new technologies permits us to communicate with more people regardless of where we are. While technology has made the world smaller, communication more rapid, and access easier, it has also created a new set of problems and new issues regarding the proper use of all of the new "gadgets" available to us. Knowing how to communicate using technology is important for anyone coming of age in the Twenty-First Century, and the key to using the technologies effectively is sensitivity to situation, purpose, audience, and methods.

Chapter Objectives

- identify the major communication technologies
- understand the proper way to use technology
- identify the limitations of technology
- identify the advantages and disadvantages of technology

Key Terms

- conference call
- emoticons
- information overload
- spamming
- speaker phone
- teleconference

Thus far this book has discussed the importance of communication in our lives and the need for us to have communication. It is apparent that communication is all around us, and that one of our goals as communicators should be to improve our communication effectiveness. This chapter, however, takes a somewhat different approach. While there is no denying the need for and importance of communication, it is also possible to have too much of a good thing! To show you how this can happen, consider the following typical office scene.

Scenario

James has been out of the office for three days. He is busy trying to catch up on his work. He bumps into Pilar as they both are getting their morning coffee.

James: *I can't believe how much business has piled up in three days!*

Pilar: *I know what you mean. By the way, how are you feeling?*

James: *Much better. The days off helped, but now I'm swamped. I just checked my voice mail. Twenty-two messages! My assistant has eight messages she's taken by hand.*

Pilar: *Sounds like you've got a day's work ahead of you.*

James: *And that doesn't begin to count my e-mail. I answered most of it this morning, but there are still ten messages waiting. You know, sometimes I think it was better before electricity.*

Pilar: *Well, I'm not so sure…*

James: *And to make matters worse, my cell phone repeatedly rang while I was home sick. I was even talking with my pharmacist when his cell phone went off. You just can't get away from it all.*

Pilar: *James, I'm glad you're feeling better. I know things pile up, so we'll all pitch in to help.*

James: *Thanks...I guess I'm going off on a rant. It's just that communication technologies have grown so fast that it's hard to get used to. Ten years ago, only important people had pagers. Now I've got a pager, a cell phone, voice mail, e-mail...and each one deserves attention. I'll be all right.*

Pilar: *Let's get some coffee and sit down to divide up some of these messages.*

James is right. Communication technologies make communication easier—and more difficult—than ever before. Communication technologies make life itself easier because they make it possible to communicate with anyone anywhere any time we want. Urgent issues can be dealt with immediately. They make it possible to increase the information we have. Decisions can then be made on the best data available. But with all these conveniences come some new challenges. We need to learn to deal effectively with the technologies. Communication will improve as we learn to manage the new technologies that keep us in touch with the world around us.

Technology—A Double-Edged Sword

Technology has created multiple new channels for communication. Some of them, such as video conferencing or real time video streaming on the Internet, bring people closer together. We can see the full array of verbal and nonverbal messages even if a person isn't physically in the same room with us. Other forms of technology can create information overload—too much information to process at any one time.

How many times have you been in the middle of a phone call only to have to make a decision about responding to call waiting? Have you ever been in a movie theater just as the punch line is about to be delivered when someone's cell phone goes off? Do you find your e-mail message box filled with jokes you have received from at least ten other people, and each message includes a long list of everyone who received it?

Every convenience can create an inconvenience. As Pilar and James acknowledged, modern communication innovations that have swept the world in the past ten years provide easier means of communicating. However, they have also created stress and a sense that one can never really escape work. Even in our private lives, answering machines and cellular phones can become intrusive. Whether you become a slave to these conveniences, use them to disrupt others, or use them effectively to communicate is a matter of understanding the limitations of each and their proper usage.



This chart lists some of the advantages and disadvantages of new communication channels. What others can you add?

Advantages of Communication Technologies

- We don't have to sit by a phone to get an important message—voice mail and remote access give us freedom.
- Children can have access to their parents or vice versa anywhere, any time through use of a cellular phone.
- Doctors and other professionals who are on call can be paged with a vibrating pulse rather than an audible buzz.
- Students in a small high school in a remote part of a state can receive instruction in a wide variety of subjects via two-way interactive video.
- E-mail allows us to send documents from one part of the world to another almost instantaneously.
- Chat rooms provide an opportunity for individuals who can't leave their homes to have human contact.
- Fewer meetings and phone calls are necessary because many decisions can be made or information conveyed via e-mail.

Disadvantages of Communication Technologies

- People expect immediate responses to voice mail and e-mail when it is sometimes impossible to find the time.
- We can never fully escape work unless we leave all of our "gadgets" behind. Upon return, catching up is time-consuming.
- Technology creates more communication, often about minor or unimportant things, just because people are accessible.
- Privacy is threatened through the use of portable and cellular phones, e-mail, and the Internet.
- Technology can disrupt face-to-face meetings and affect the quality of that communication.
- Technology may actually cause us to spend less time communicating with friends and family in person.
- Technology can actually be a physical or health hazard—distracting drivers, creating repetitive motion disorders and causing eyestrain.

Telephones

It might seem strange that this book includes a section on how to communicate with a telephone. Everywhere you look, someone is using a phone of one type or another. You have probably been talking on a telephone—toy or real—since you uttered your first words. But just as communication, in general, is something we shouldn't take for granted, neither is communication via the telephone.

From a communication perspective, telephones create considerable potential for interference. Since you can only hear the person, the nonverbal message cues you have are limited to paralinguistics. Interpretation of messages is naturally limited. Since you can't see the person on the other end, it is also more likely that you are not giving full attention to the conversation. Portable phones and cellular phones make it possible to talk and do any number of other things. Since we don't give full attention if we are multi-tasking,

listening is impaired. There is more opportunity to miss important information. The availability of call waiting on personal phones and hold buttons on business phones also creates the potential to give the appearance of rudeness or to actually be inconsiderate. When using the phone you should follow some basic guidelines:

1. **Reduce interference.** Keep background interference such as CD players, televisions, and noises caused by multi-tasking (washing dishes, for example) to a minimum. Turn town the volume or move to another room. If you are engaged in an important task when you get a call, ask if you can call back, and do so as quickly as possible. Remember your audience. The person on the other end of the phone deserves an opportunity to hear you well enough to listen effectively.
2. **Get the whole message.** When taking messages, either at home or at work, for someone else, be sure to repeat the caller's name, ask for spelling if you don't know it, repeat the person's phone number, and ask when the best time to call would be. Try to have pen or pencil and paper near every phone. You are a go-between for the intended audience—the person who isn't home or in the office. Thus, you have a responsibility to deliver the message correctly.
3. **Respect the caller's time.** If you have caller ID, tell the person who calls you that you are on the other line. Ask them to call you back in a specified amount of time or ask when you can call back. Make the conversation as brief as possible. If the call is an emergency or one that you have to take—someone with whom you have played phone tag for hours—return immediately to the first person and explain your situation. Find out when you can return a call. Whatever you do, don't start a second conversation and leave the first person holding indefinitely. This is especially true if the first call is long distance.
4. **Develop a system.** If you work in an office and have multiple calls coming in, develop a system to prevent one person from holding for more than a minute. How do you do this? When a call comes through while you are talking to someone, inform the person that you have to take another call. When you answer the second call, say "hello," "good morning," or "good afternoon." Announce that you are on another call and need to put the person on hold. If you know that the first call is going to take a while, ask the second person to either call back or give you a number. Whatever you do, don't keep either person holding indefinitely. After putting the second person on hold, wrap up the first conversation as quickly as possible. Think about how you want to be treated when you are being asked to hold, and treat others in a similar fashion.

5. **Use voice mail appropriately.** Voice mail is one step further detached from personal conversation so it is even easier for us to forget about the audience. When leaving a message on voice mail, speak slowly and loudly. Give your name, reason for calling, and state your number slowly. Many people rush the phone number, which is the most important part of the message. Also include the best time to return the call. Once again, keep your audience in mind. If your purpose for leaving a voice mail message is to make sure you receive a return call, then the number needs to be clear. When recording an outgoing message, you should also think about the person who is calling you. Make the message short and to the point. While it is fun to have a message that sets you apart, don't make it a long message. Most people want to leave their message and move on if the person they are calling isn't answering. If the amount of time available for an incoming message is short, let callers know that in your outgoing message. Include your phone number to alert people if they mis-dialed.
6. **Let the tech work for you.** When you are having a meeting in your office, don't answer the phone unless you are expecting an important call. If you are expecting a call, forewarn the person in your office that you might be receiving a call. If the call is of a private nature, ask the person if they would mind stepping out for a few minutes. The best strategy, however, is to let voice mail take over, or, if you have a secretary or assistant who sends calls to you, ask that person to hold your calls and take messages or send them to voice mail.

All of these suggestions are common sense, but it is amazing how many people, both at home and at the office, don't use good phone etiquette or forget how much potential for interference there is when using a telephone. If you keep in mind the purpose for using these technologies and that you want to satisfy both your communication needs and those of your receiver, or audience, then you will make appropriate choices.

Another communication issue that involves telephones in the workplace is the conference call or teleconference. A conference call is a means to have a group meeting with individuals who are in many locations. The call is arranged through a special operator. The number to call to arrange a conference call is found at the front of a telephone directory. The person who arranges the call gives the conference operator the names and phone numbers of all individuals, including the organizer. At the appointed time, the operator calls each individual and introduces the name of the person who is joining the conversation. Once the operator has all parties on the line, the operator leaves the call, and the meeting begins.

A telephone can also assist in conducting a group meeting is through a speaker phone. A speaker phone is usually built in to a telephone or is a special attachment with a microphone and speaker than enables a person to have a conversation without holding and speaking into a receiver. The speaker phone is usually used when there are several people at one or both ends of a two-way call. The speaker phone enables a person or a group who cannot attend a meeting in person to be a part of the discussion. Teleconferencing is a more sophisticated form of this technology. Through the use of television cameras and microphones connected to phone lines at both ends of the conversation, parties can both see and hear one another. In many rural school districts, entire courses are taught through this method. Some of you may be taking classes this way.

If you are involved in a conference call or a teleconference, here are some helpful hints to follow:

- Speak more loudly than with a typical call. On a conference call with multiple parties, volume is sometimes affected. When speaker phones or teleconferencing equipment is used, it is often difficult to place microphones close to everyone.
- Take turns speaking. Unlike a multi-party discussion in person, it is more difficult to separate out voices and hear everything if people are speaking over one another.
- Eliminate as much background interference as possible.
- Be aware of the location of the camera and make sure you are looking into it when you are speaking so that the audience at the other end can have the full benefit of the technology.

Pagers and Cellular Phones

Many of the communication problems created by pagers and cellular phones are related to situation—when and how should they be used? Some individuals, such as doctors, social workers, or other individuals who respond to emergencies or who are "on call," find pagers an occupational necessity. They could mean the difference between life and death. For most of the rest of us, they are a convenience for ourselves and people with whom we need to communicate on a regular basis. However, they don't necessarily have to be a twenty-four hour attachment to our lives.

Most pagers alert someone to a call through the sense of touch rather than hearing. They use short vibrations that are not audible and don't interrupt other conversations or activities. Cellular phones, however, have an audible ring that can be disruptive and annoying to others around you depending on the situation. Another element of situation to consider when having a cell

phone accessible is whether or not you are going to be in a situation if a call comes in that allows you to have a private conversation if it is necessary. Since most cell phones have voice mail, it is better to check it periodically rather than to interrupt you and others.

E-Mail

E-mail and chat rooms have revolutionized communication in recent years. The limitations of time and distance don't exist. We can send an e-mail from home in Texas or California at 4:00 p.m. to someone who is sleeping halfway around the world knowing that the person will find it the next morning. This capability of the Internet has made the context of time less problematic for international communication. It has also provided an inexpensive ways for families and friends who are spread across the country to remain in touch. E-mail has many advantages including its low-cost, immediacy, reduction in paper messages, increased access to many individuals who are not physically close, and creation and storage of communication records that would not be retrievable if they had occurred face-to-face or via telephone.

Real time conversations enhance the two-way flow of communication even if the verbal-only channel is somewhat restrictive. It is possible to create a sense of tone through some standard messages used with e-mail. For example, the message line can provide information that says, "For immediate action!" Some e-mail systems have red flags that can be placed alongside a message to indicate importance. The standard e-mail punctuation marks, known as emoticons, suggest such things as:

happiness	:-)
sadness or displeasure	:-(
wink	;-)
surprise	:-o
laughter	:-D

E-mail messages tend to be less formal than other written communication, especially for non-business purposes. Even in business settings, it can be less formal than a memo, or it can use standard memo form and formality depending on the purpose and audience. For example, a message regarding a company policy sent to all employees from a manager would be in a formal structure. However, a message between two peers who are exchanging information to complete a report would be less formal and similar to an oral conversation. Even though most e-mail is less formal, don't become too casual. Pay attention to spelling and grammar. Many e-mail systems have spell check capability so take advantage. Given that some e-mails in business settings are

converted to paper records, you don't want to have someone circulating a message that implies you are sloppy.

E-mail has made it possible to break the boundaries of the organizational chart introduced in Chapter One. Many executives make their e-mail addresses available to everyone in the organization and encourage upward communication. This enables a person at the top of an organizational chart to create a greater sense of community within the organization. Some individuals, however, have an assistant read and screen the e-mail so that the CEO deals only with the most urgent messages or those from select individuals. The assistant is likely to provide a summary of all e-mails received and responded to with a standard, agreed-upon response. Other messages require personal attention and are left unanswered by the assistant.

Knowing that individuals other than the recipient might have access to e-mail messages, it is important to emphasize one very important fact about e-mail: E-MAIL IS NOT PRIVATE COMMUNICATION. Anything you send to anyone can be forwarded with a touch of a button. You will never know who has read your message. Most systems allow for access and interceptions. Organizations usually have rules about e-mail use and make it clear that anything sent through the company e-mail belongs to the organization. E-mail can become major evidence in disciplinary actions or even legal proceedings. Thus, business use of e-mail should not be viewed the same way as that with your friends. To provide some degree of privacy, don't give your password to anyone, and when you aren't at your computer, turn your e-mail off.

When constructing e-mail messages and making use of the medium, keep these suggestions in mind:

- Keep messages short and to the point.
- Spell check and use appropriate grammar.
- Answer e-mail as frequently as possible.
- Check e-mail periodically throughout the day.
- Use a subject heading in the appropriate line.
- When sending an e-mail to a long list of individuals on a regular basis, establish a list-serve to avoid having names of all recipients appear on everyone's message. Long lists of unnecessary information require a receiver to scroll to get to the actual message. Another option is to use a blind carbon copy. If you do this, however, you should let recipients know that this is going to a group so that recipients don't think they are the only recipient. You can do this by using memorandum form and beginning the e-mail with TO: Name of group.



Our lives are filled with numerous technological devices.

- Unless you are responding to specific sections of an e-mail, such as questions that you need to answer, don't include the message to which you are responding within your message. Some e-mail systems have limited space. Unnecessary information on an e-mail can create problems for the recipient by taking up unnecessary space. If you are responding to an e-mail with a specific list of questions, answer each question individually, skip a space to separate your answer from the next question and proceed this way until all questions are answered. Delete any extra information from the e-mail you received.
- When sending attachments, find out first what retrieval capabilities the recipient has and whether or not the person can open the attachment.
- Don't engage in "spamming" or sending a message, such as a joke, to everyone in your address book. Some e-mail systems have anti-spamming monitors built in that will reject delivering your message if the number of recipients exceeds a certain number.
- One special form of e-mail that is gaining popularity is the chat room. There are chat rooms available based on people's interests or hobbies. Others serve as support groups for individuals suffering from a particular type of medical condition. Still others are ways to promote development of relationships. While chat rooms can reduce loneliness for individuals who have little opportunity to react with others, they also have many potential dangers.



Chapter 9 Summary

Technology is as much a part of our lives as is communication. The combination of the two has changed the way we send and receive messages and live our lives. All of the new technologies have tremendous power to link us closer together with individuals around the world, but they also have potential for abuse, overuse, and poor communication practices that do not consider the needs of the audience. As with any other form of communication, communicating through technology requires that you consider the situation, purpose, and audience before deciding if the channel is the most suitable. It also requires that you adapt your message to fit the technology.

Remembering

1. Identify the major communication technologies used in personal and professional contexts.
2. For each technology discussed in the chapter give at least two guidelines for proper use.
3. Identify at least two limitations of each technology.
4. Identify at least two advantages and two disadvantages of each technology.

Reflecting

1. Technology has changed the world and the way we communicate. How has it changed your life at home or at work?
2. What problems have you experienced using one of the technologies discussed in the chapter? How did you address the problem? After reading the chapter, how would you have responded differently?

Reaching

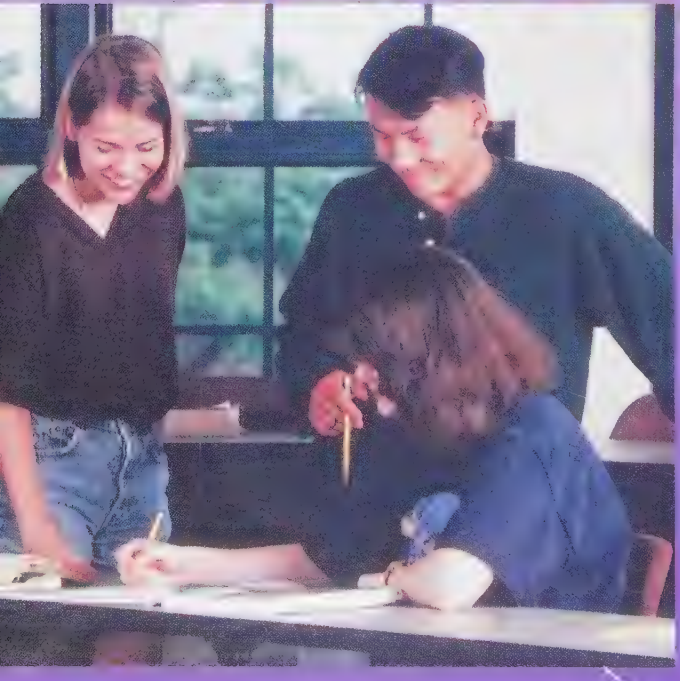
1. Locate an article in a news magazine, professional journal (these are found at college and university libraries), or in an on-line publication that discusses e-mail chat rooms. Summarize the research or comments made about these discussions. Based on the research, prepare an analysis of the pros and cons of being involved in chat rooms.

Real Life

1. Write and tape a phone message for your family phone.
2. Prepare a pet peeve speech of three to five minutes on something you dislike about communication technologies. Be sure to include suggestions for improving communication.









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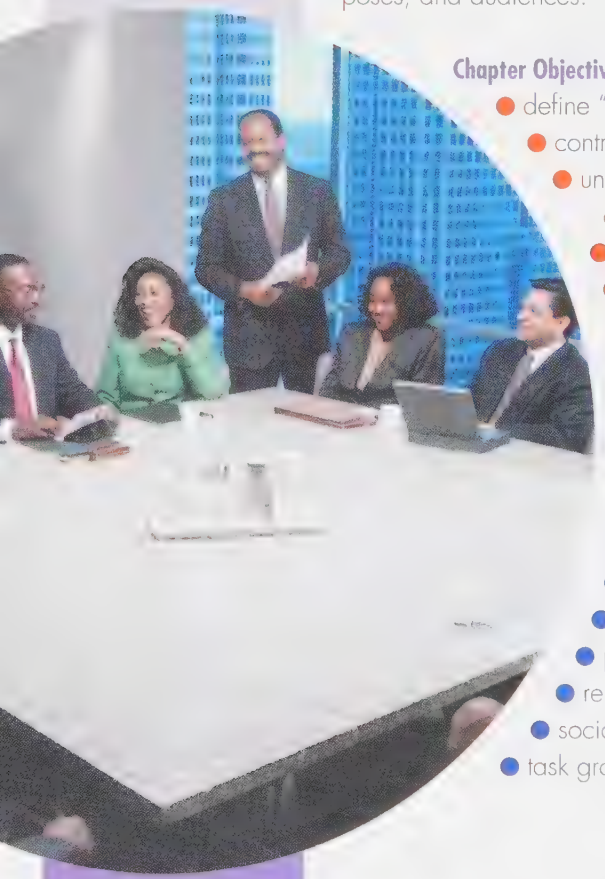
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10 Chapter Ten
Application.Group Types and Functions

Key Concept

We function in groups so frequently that we take group communication for granted. If we want to talk about group communication, we must know what groups are and how they function. Analyzing groups will help us make sound communication decisions, because each group type has different situations, purposes, and audiences.



Chapter Objectives

- define "group"
- contrast formal and informal groups
- understand the role of group norms in making communication decisions
- identify kinds of groups
- explain advantages of committee work
- identify purposes of groups

Key Terms

- enforced membership
- formal group
- group
- group norms
- informal group
- norm
- panel discussion
- representative group
- social group
- task group

Scenario

Pilar manages a branch office. She has just received an e-mail from her supervisor, who is responsible for four offices in the area. Her supervisor has spoken to managers several times about the growing size of their organization. Pilar knows that he feels more and more removed from the daily work in the offices. His e-mail contains his effort to address this problem. Put yourself in Pilar's place. How would you feel after reading this e-mail?

TO: All Branch Managers
FROM: Greg House
RE: Establishment of advisory council

As all of you know, I have spoken several times of the growth in our organization and the problems that it presents to management. The growth is certainly welcome, and I thank each of you and all your staff for helping us reach our goals. Still, I feel that I have lost touch a bit with the daily activities of the branch offices. I asked for your advice, and you let me know that more frequent communication with me would be helpful to you, as well.

As a result of your advice, I am forming the Tri-City Regional Advisory Council (TRAC) to improve communication among us all. I need your cooperation in getting this group going. I'll send you a detailed memo early next week, but here are the main points.

- I see TRAC's major purpose as improving our regional communication. The group's specific mission statement will be developed during our first two to three meetings.
- The group will be composed of two members from each branch office (eight people), and three people from the regional office. I'll be one of the regional representatives. I am asking you to choose the two members from your offices.
- The group will begin meetings at the downtown Marriott. I've asked Sue Denny to come out from Seattle to help us through some team-building exercises.
- We will begin our meetings next month, with a three-hour meeting every two weeks until the mission statement is developed. The group will decide its own meeting schedule after that.

My follow-up memo will contain more specifics. I trust your advice, and I think the establishment of TRAC will really help us all. I think we will be "on TRAC" to handle our growing business.

Please call or e-mail if you have questions or concerns. Thanks for your help in addressing this need. I appreciate all the advice, and I hope TRAC will be with us for some time to come.

It seems that Pilar's supervisor has great hopes for his newly formed group. Would such a group be successful? Would it solve the communication problems in the organization? Will people enjoy the group? The answers to these questions will of course depend on the people in the group. But the answers will also depend on whether the people in "TRAC" learn to function as a group. Effective group communication is more than getting a number of people together in the same room. It begins with group formation.

We communicate in groups more often than we know. Although we take groups for granted, they are an integral part of our lives. Think about these statements as you reflect on the roles groups play in your life.

- A family is a group. A family at a dinner table conducts a group discussion.
- Even two people can be a group.
- Business organizations use work groups daily. The larger the organization, the greater the likelihood that employees will work in one or more groups every day.
- Contemporary business practices place greater emphasis on group interaction than ever before.
- Many times, individual action is limited in effectiveness. As the old saying goes, two heads (or three, or eight, or twelve) are better than one.
- Groups give us a sense of belonging.

These are just a few of the statements we can make about groups. Groups can function only as well as the group members communicate with each other. If we want to be personally and professionally successful, we should study group communication.

What Is a Group?

A group is more than several people together in the same place at the same time. We can build a definition one fact at a time. As we do, notice how Pilar's memo from Mr. House addresses group needs.

A group is...	Explanation	Illustration
...a number of people...	Groups are composed of two or more people. A group can be two people (a dyad), three people (a triad), or more, as long as the other characteristics are present.	TRAC has eleven members.
...who participate in face-to-face interaction with each other...	This is the key factor in determining if a group exists. Members of a group must be able to speak directly to each other. For this reason, groups can't get much larger than 20. Above a certain number, members can't interact directly.	Eleven members are few enough to allow face-to-face communication. Mr. House has established initial meetings which allow sufficient time for group members to begin interacting.
...who have group norms and values that determine an individual's behavior...	A norm is a standard, model or pattern that is considered normal for a specific group. A group must share some standards for behavior. If they do not, the group can dissolve, or members who do not follow the group's standards leave the group. The group norms might be as formal as rules and by-laws, or as informal as unstated expectations that emerge from the group's interaction.	All members of TRAC will be united by at least one common bond: They all work for the same company. As they meet together — and as they work with a person on team-building — they will establish their own "rules." They will have ways to determine how and when to take breaks, how to make their opinions heard, and many other things.
...who share common interests or goals...	Members of a group must have something to keep them together. They have the same hobby, or the same goals, or the same employer, or something else that keeps them together. A bridge group shares an interest in bridge. A neighborhood watch group shares an interest in keeping the neighborhood safe.	Mr. House has a goal in mind: He wants to improve communication. However, he is smart enough to know that common interests and goals can't usually be imposed on a group. He has set up time to allow the group to set its own goals, in the form of a mission statement.
...and who see themselves as a group.	This is like saying, "A group is a group if its members say it's a group." As silly as this sounds in a formal definition, it's true. People can meet together daily for a month and communicate with each other. But if they don't perceive themselves as a group, they will never function as well as they could.	This is the unanswered question. After a month or two, how will the members of TRAC feel about being part of the effort? Will they feel as if they belong? As if they are doing important work? As if they truly are sharing a common task? If so, TRAC has a good chance of becoming an effective group.

As you can see, being in a group means much more than just being together.

In this chapter, we will discuss various ways of identifying and categorizing groups. We do this because it is one means of applying SPAM to group discussion. Private and public groups, for example, provide the communicator with two distinct situations. A communicator's purpose in a social group will be different than the same communicator's purpose in a task group. By understanding the type of group you are participating in, you can make good decisions about your communication.

Formal and Informal Groups

The idea that groups have "norms" is very important. A norm is a "standard, model or pattern regarded as typical for a specific group." Any group that has been together for a long time is likely to have many group norms, some of which can be fairly rigid. Groups in the process of forming spend some time establishing norms, which become expectations for behavior and can even become criteria for joining the group.

Think of a social group—say, a group of employees who eat lunch together every day. Here are some of the group norms that even such an informal, seemingly inconsequential group could develop:

- Group members eat at the snack bar or salad bar so they don't have to wait in the cafeteria line.
- Group members talk only about non-work topics.
- Group members always sit close to the door.
- Group members always sit in the same location around the table.
- Group members defer to the most senior employees in discussion.

The group could work within these norms daily and never acknowledge the norms verbally. That is, they could informally develop a set of behavior patterns, follow them closely, enforce them on members of the group, and do so entirely through nonverbal communication.

Formal groups have norms, too; but the norms of a formal group are likely to be verbalized. Imagine, for example, that the same group that eats lunch together daily in an informal group also meets every two weeks as part of an employee group. The norms for this meeting will certainly be different, and these norms might even be written down for everyone to know and follow:

- A particular person puts together an agenda for the meeting and runs it.
- Anyone who will be late must call to let someone know.
- Everyone must bring paper and pencil to the meeting.
- Everyone will get an opportunity to share what is happening with his or her job.
- No criticism of other departments is allowed.

- Whoever brings up a problem must bring at least one proposed solution to start the discussion.

These norms could be part of the group's "rules" or "bylaws." They might have developed over time, or they could be the product of set-up work accomplished when the group first formed.

Why are norms so important? Imagine if you were newly introduced to either group. How would you know how, when, and what to communicate? Sensitivity to group norms allows you to communicate effectively. Understanding group norms is very much an example of "reading an audience." If you don't know the expectations of the group, your communication will be based only on guesswork.

How can you overcome the problem? The first rule is to *listen.* We've already learned that there are levels of listening. Listen to a group critically, and you will probably notice the norms that have developed. You can tell who speaks when. You can determine how people express themselves. The second rule is *ask.* Most groups, even very informal ones, have a norm that allows new members to "break in." Perhaps you will want to ask your question of another group member when you are both away from the group, but in most groups you are allowed to ask. The third rule is *watch.* Observe how others function in the group. Pay close attention to group members who are successful and follow their examples. Avoid the errors made by less successful group members. The fourth rule is *research.* Some formal groups have minutes, even recordings. If it is important that you function effectively in the group, take time to read the group's own documents.

There aren't usually established norms for every behavior in a group, but the more formal the group, the more likely that there are larger numbers of formal norms. Instead of thinking of groups as "formal" and "informal," think of "degrees of formality." This means that all groups have some formality; otherwise they could not be groups. Think about where groups you belong to might fit on this continuum. (NOTE: This chart represents tendencies only. Every group is formed in its own context and works within its own norms. This chart contains some of the differences between formal and informal groups.)

	Very formal	Somewhat formal	Somewhat informal	Very informal
example	• jury • public meeting of an elected group	• weekly office meeting • interest or hobby group	• employee lunch group • card club	• TGIF party • chat sessions
language	tendency toward standard oral			tendency toward standard and nonstandard
leadership	tendency toward formal titles and assigned duties			tendency toward various people casually filling roles as needed
group size	tendency toward a fixed size or range			tendency toward a loose, varying size as situations or issues and change
time	tendency toward regular meeting times and lengths			tendency toward irregular meeting times
order and organization	tendency toward use of rules, such as parliamentary procedures, agenda, taking turns speaking, etc.			tendency toward following commonsense rules of polite society

As this chart demonstrates, the key difference between formal and informal groups is the presence and absence of hard-and-fast norms. That is not to say that informal groups don't take norms seriously; many informal groups very definitely do. But formal groups are more likely to have more rules officially noted and approved by the group.

What happens when a group member violates a group norm? Groups might choose to ignore the violation, but groups do their own policing of group norms. Other group members could use such subtle, nonverbal means as facial expression to expression disapproval. Some groups will ostracize a member who has violated a group norm. To ostracize is to remove from the group, permanently or temporarily.

Task and Social Groups

You might notice from the examples above that groups can also be classified as task or social. While task groups tend to be more formal and social groups tend to be more informal, that rule is not hard and fast. Moreover, many groups serve both functions for group members.

A task group forms around a job to be done or a problem to be solved. Imagine that the local Chamber of Commerce wants to attract more businesses into its city. If the Chamber of Commerce appoints a committee to study the issue and make recommendations, that group is a task group. Task groups often will form around multiple tasks. This is especially true of long-term task groups, groups that have an existence apart from one issue or job. Sometimes, a group will form to solve one particular problem and will be so successful at solving the problem or meeting individual group members' needs that it will last beyond the problem or issue that originally caused it to form.

Task group members often place a high value on group members who are focused, informed, and involved. Norms for task groups should promote working toward solving the problems or issues of the group.

Social groups are much different. They form around the needs of the individual members for belonging, attention, entertainment, or other social need. If a group of mothers form a "mother's day out" group, they might discuss their children or the neighborhood happenings. More likely, such a group provides a much needed break, some relaxation, and some adult conversation for people who are with young children all day. Even if they did not share information about children and the neighborhood, the "mothers day out" group would probably continue to meet because it meets the social needs of the mothers.

Members of a social group develop norms that help them meet social needs. For example, if a local hobby group (say a group of model airplane enthusiasts) really wants to enjoy themselves, they won't develop norms that emphasize parliamentary procedure and highly formal meeting locations. If they do, the group changes; any members whose social needs aren't being met by the group will then leave the group for a more entertaining alternative.

Many groups function both as task and social groups. The group might organize itself around a task or purpose, but group members find belonging in the group and desire it to continue. For example, many professionals belong to organizations of other professionals in the same line of work. These organizations provide chances for the professionals to meet together in small groups. Accountants meet with accountants, dentists with dentists, retailers with retailers, plumbers with plumbers, and so on. While the stated purpose of these groups can be to further individual group members' understanding of their profession, the groups also provide social outlets for members. The members have dinners,

tell stories, develop friendships. This kind of group is both task and social in nature. In truth, all task groups will have some social dimension, because people will naturally begin to use the group to meet their own social needs.

Public and Private Groups

You an also divide groups into public and private. A public group often meets in front of an audience or has minutes published to others interested in the group's work. A private group meets in private, away from others. Public groups include school boards, water commissions, public hearings, and other—usually formal—groups. Private groups are the rest of the groups that we typically belong to.

A subcommittee can be both a public and private group. While it will usually meet in private, members of a subcommittee report back to the committee on their progress. Their minutes or their recommendations become public in a report to the larger committee.

When a group meets in public, it is likely to function differently than it does in private. Because other people are watching—people who aren't always aware of all the communication that has gone on among the group members—the public group often adopts more restrictive norms than the private group. Moreover, the give and take of a private group might seem confusing and disorganized to an observing audience, so a public group will likely have a written agenda and a set of rules.

Voluntary and Enforced Membership

Social groups are almost always voluntary; we become group members because we want to. If we stay, we stay because we want to. Other times, especially in formal task groups, membership is not voluntary. Enforced membership is membership required of someone who otherwise might not choose to be part of the group. Enforced membership is usually the result of a job or position that a group member holds. For example, if a group meets to discuss pay raises for employees, a member of the payroll staff might be asked to attend. If the request comes from the payroll supervisor, the member of the staff will probably feel that he or she has little choice about belonging to the group.

You should be aware of members of groups who have been required to attend. Their attitudes might be different from those of other members. They might be reluctant to participate. They might need to be familiarized with group norms. Helping that enforced member will not only help the member feel better about participation, it will also help the group run more smoothly.

And what if you are the involuntary member? You should begin by determining why your presence is required. Are you there to provide information? To keep

tabs on the group's progress? To represent your peers? Once you figure out why you are there, you can communicate with other group members more effectively. You can also determine how your reason for participating will fit with group norms. Will you be asked to speak out on only certain issues? Will your presence be required at all meetings? These and other questions can be the beginning of turning enforced membership into productive participation.

Communication Management—Group Functions and Individuals' Needs



As noted in this chapter, groups can take many forms: public or private; task or social; voluntary or enforced; formal or informal. The group's form will depend on its function, and groups can serve many functions. One convenient means of thinking about group functions is to think about how the group meets the needs of the individuals within the group. As you participate in a group, you can find what function—or functions—the group serves. When a group exists, it will meet one or more of these purposes. Can you think of other individual needs met by a group not listed here?

Individuals' needs	Group contribution to meeting the individuals' needs.
Belonging	A group can give individual group members a sense of belonging, of being a part of something. Belonging is a social need that we all feel. It is so strong that—if it is not met—it will compel us to seek out a group to be with others. Families often help us meet the need for belonging, but so can clubs, interest groups, and cliques.
Accomplishment	Simply put, there are many tasks that an individual cannot perform alone. Groups can exist when they allow individuals to accomplish goals. An individual might want to change a local law, but also might feel powerless alone. By becoming part of a group, the individual can feel accomplishment (and, by the way, a sense of belonging). A group can exist to help individual members make money. For example, an investment group is a learning group: Members learn about how to invest their money. But the motive that draws the members together is profit. Similarly, a group of sales people could form a group to accomplish a specific task, but the motive would still likely be profit.
Therapy	Sometimes individuals become members to meet highly personal emotional needs. For example, across the country many groups help people deal with grief. Others help members with substance abuse problems.
Learning	A learning group satisfies individual needs for acquiring new knowledge and skills. Book clubs give members an opportunity to discuss what they've read. Cooking groups allow members to share recipes and techniques. Sometimes a group of professionals, such as dentists or accountants, become members of local groups to help build their knowledge and skills. One common learning group exists on-line as well as in traditional group meetings: a user's group. People who use a piece of software sometimes meet regularly to learn more about using the software. This, too, is a learning group.



Even groups of friends who get together to socialize develop group norms or expectations of one another.

Specialized Groups

Some groups—usually task groups—have very specialized functions. They are groups created for public reasons. They have specific functions. People who serve in these groups might have little in common other than the group itself. These groups might last for a long time, but they are often short-lived, lasting only as long as their task is relevant.

The Representative Group. Anyone who has been in an organization for very long is familiar with the committee. A committee is a task group, but beyond that, there are few commonalties from committee to committee. They can be big or small, formal or informal, public or private. One thing they do tend to have in common is that they are composed of representatives from other groups.

A representative has special communication responsibilities. If you are asked to serve on a committee to represent others who have similar interests, a

similar job, or similar demographic qualities to you, you have been asked to speak for others. A group made of representatives should develop a group norm that allows all participants to speak frankly and to represent views of others, even if those views aren't really their own.

If you are a member of a representative group, you have the responsibility that comes with leadership. Even if you aren't a leader of the representative group, you are functioning as a leader for the group you represent. As such, you will likely be asked to report back what has happened, carry the views of others to the meeting, and generally keep up on the group's task so that the people you represent don't have to. (In the "scenario" that began this chapter, the TRAC group was a representative group. It was formed from members of the branch offices who represented their offices at the regional level.)

The Panel Discussion. A panel discussion is a task group which holds its meetings in public. Panel discussion members are usually selected because of their knowledge or opinions on a specific topic. They also could be representative of others. Panelists usually meet in a scheduled, advertised, public forum and hold a discussion for the benefit of observers. In many cases, the panelists know each other and have been through the same discussion before. The key feature of the panel discussion is that it is held for the benefit of other people who are not in the group.

A panel discussion is typically organized and run by a chairperson or moderator. The moderator typically prepares by researching the topic and the participants. He or she will have a list of questions or topics that will help move the discussion along. The moderator assures that everyone is heard and that the discussion progresses in a manner beneficial to the audience. Panelists might prepare information or statements, but don't prepare formal speeches. Instead, they react to the comments of other panelists and to the questions of the moderator.

If you are chosen to participate in a panel discussion, you should determine why you are on the panel. If you are there to represent the views of a group to which you belong, your obligation is to know those views and be prepared to state them and defend them. If you are on the panel because you have specialized knowledge, your obligation is to bring the most reliable, current knowledge you can. Remember: The panel discussion really exists for the observers. Still, you will want to make a favorable impression on your audience. Decide who your audience is. The people watching? The people you represent?

Here's a general outline that panel discussions typically follow. The responsibility for following the outline lies with the moderator, but panelists also have an obligation to help keep to the outline and maintain the time schedule.

I. Introduction
   A. Background or importance of topic
   B. Statement of topic
II. Introduction of panel members
   A. Names and titles or positions
   B. Areas of expertise
III. Major issues to be considered
   List four or five key questions to be used in guiding the discussion. For example, if the discussion is on education, the major questions could be:
   A. What are the critical issues education faces today?
   B. What are the most important innovations that could address these issues?
   C. How will education in the next 10-20 years be different than education today?
   D. What can individuals do to increase the effectiveness of the education system?
IV. Discussion by panel members (Allow members to respond to the major questions. Allow them to interact, if time allows.)
V. Summary and questions
   A. Summarize views on major issues
   B. Call for and field questions
VI. Conclusion
   A. Briefly summarize what has been accomplished
   B. Thank panelists and audience

The Symposium

A symposium is similar to a panel. It is formal, public, and usually meets one time; however, some symposia are ongoing, such as symposia on arts or criminal justice. Unlike a panel, a symposium does not focus on informal discussion among panelists. The topic and rationale for selection of members is similar, but in a symposium each member has a prepared speech or presentation that conforms to a time limit. Members of a symposium usually address a question or topic from varying perspectives. Often, the presentations are in the form of a direct response to a question, and the symposium participants take turns answering the question. At the conclusion of the presentation, audience members or a moderator addresses questions to the panel members.

Because a symposium is less interactive than a panel discussion, the typical outline for this type of group is simpler. A moderator is responsible for the structure.

I. Introduction
   A. Background and importance of topic
   B. Statement of topic
II. Introduction of symposium members
   A. Names, with titles or positions
   B. Area of expertise
   C. Topic or title of presentation
III. Presentations by symposium members
IV. Questions from audience
V. Conclusion
   A. Summarize view on major issues
   B. Thank symposium members and audience

Who Is the Audience?

If you are in a group, who is the audience? As part of a group, you have an audience with you: the other group members. As you make decisions about your communication, you'll want to consider who they are and what you would like to accomplish with them. But are there other members of your audience?

If you are in a representative group, you have a constituency. A constituency is a group represented by one of its members in another group. If you represent your constituency, they are part of your audience. You will at some point be held accountable by them for the role you play in the group.

Don't forget that public groups have an audience. You can communicate with other group members in a public setting, but others will be observing. You must decide if they, too, are part of your audience. You must also decide if your purpose in communicating involves the public observers.

Communication Management—Why So Many Committees?



Sometimes it seems that everything in an organization is done through committees. Committees are task groups that can take a number of forms. Some are very formal; others are not. Some last a long time; others meet only once. Whatever form they take, they are an important means of getting things accomplished within an organization. Why are committees so popular? There are good reasons for establishing committees. There are also some bad reasons. Here's a list of the common motives for establishing committees...both good and bad.

Good Reasons for Establishing Committees	Bad Reasons for Establishing Committees
"Two heads are better than one." Committees can bring together people with various talents and experience.	*"That's the way we always do it."* Some organizations establish committees habitually, whether the task is best handled in a committee or not.
"Let's hear from everyone." Committees can bring together representatives of different groups so that all viewpoints are represented when solving a problem.	*"Let's talk it to death."* Sometimes committees will meet and never really make a decision. Talking has a purpose, but sooner or later, the committee needs to feel as if it is meeting its purpose.
"Share the work." Committees can divide a large workload among several people. That way, just a few people aren't burdened with all the work.	*"Share the blame."* Sometimes an individual will promote a committee solution so he or she will not have to take responsibility for a decision.
"Shared decision-making means buy-in." Committees provide involvement. When people feel they have been involved in making decisions, then they will be more likely to support the decisions.	*"The committee can be a 'rubber stamp.'"* If a committee is formed merely to approve a decision that's already been made, everyone wastes time.
"Committees save time." A committee can work more smoothly and efficiently than a larger group, saving time and resources.	*"A committee will delay the process until we can figure out what to do."* Believe it or not, some people would use the committee process to delay a decision.



Chapter 10 Summary

We are all involved with groups all day long, so much so that we take groups for granted. But if we stop to think about the definition of a group and think about the various types of groups we participate in, we can use that knowledge to make good communication decisions. Just being aware of group characteristics can be helpful to communicators. As you work in a group, ask yourself these kinds of questions as a starting point for making good decisions.

- Groups allow face-to-face interaction. How can direct communication help the group succeed?
- What are the group's norms? Are they helpful in meeting the group's purpose? How can I communicate effectively while observing the group norms? Should I attempt to change the group norms?
- What common goals or interests do the individuals share? Are there goals and interests that overcome differences?
- Does this collection of individuals see themselves as members of a group? If not, how can we build togetherness and cooperation?
- Is this a formal group or an informal group? How can I adapt my communication strategies to the norms of the group?
- Is this a social or task group? Is it both? How can I best serve the needs of the group while meeting my own individual needs?
- Is this a public or private group? Do I have an audience outside the participants in the group?
- Am I supposed to represent someone else or some other group of people? Does my communication accurately reflect their opinions, beliefs, and attitudes?

Remembering

1. Using the chart that defines "group," write your own definition that contains the same key points.
2. Explain the differences between a formal and an informal group.
3. Define "norms." Explain the kinds of norms groups develop that can influence communication decisions.
4. Explain the differences between a task group and a social group.
5. Explain the differences between a public and private group.
6. Identify the functions that groups serve. Focus your answer on how groups meet individuals' needs.

Reflecting

1. Make a group inventory for yourself. List the groups you are a member of and identify two or three characteristics of each. Share your list with classmates. Make generalizations about the kinds of groups you belong to now. Make predictions of how your group memberships might change as you get older.
2. Often, formal groups write down their rules or norms. Social groups do not. Still, social groups have norms and enforce them. Explain how social groups enforce norms. Share an instance you know about in which a person either changed behavior to conform to group norms or voluntarily withdrew from a group because of group norm expectations.
3. Groups use a variety of means to help individuals view themselves as part of a group. Think of a team as a group. What kinds of tactics do teams use that other kinds of groups can use to develop a spirit of cooperation and teamwork?
4. Observe one of the panel discussion that usually are broadcast on Sunday morning news programs or on C-SPAN. Pay special attention to the roles played by the individuals. Based on what you see, determine why you feel the individuals have been invited to participate in the group.
5. Invite a school counselor to speak about the role of a counselor in support groups.

Reaching

1. The word "formal" sometimes carries a negative connotation for young people. Brainstorm the advantages of formality for a group. What advantages do formal task groups have over informal task groups?
2. Attend a formal meeting of the local board of education, city council, or similar group. Write a summary of the communication that takes place, paying special attention to the impact of the public, formal nature of the group.

Real Life

1. Class meetings are group meetings. Some teachers prefer formal groups with norms established by the teacher. Others prefer less formal groups with few norms established by the teacher. Hold your own group discussion to determine which class format is more likely to lead to learning. Identify advantages and disadvantages of each approach.
2. Put together a panel discussion or symposium. Use the outlines provided to guide your preparation and presentation.

3. As a small group, research a therapy group such as Alcoholics Anonymous, a group for widows and widowers, or other support group. What kinds of norms does the group establish. How does it function? Each member of the group can bring his or her opinions to a learning discussion about therapy groups.

11

Chapter Eleven
Application.Group Member Roles

Key Concept

For groups to function successfully, group members
In task groups, these jobs center on addressing issues and
all groups, group members must meet certain social norms that help
stay together and function effectively. At the same time, group mem
play their own personal roles, some of which help the groups, some
do not. Each of these roles is evident in communic



Chapter Objectives

- identify group member roles
- analyze the impact of task roles on group dync
- analyze the impact of maintenance roles c
  dynamics
- identify the most common self-centered rc
  often hinder group dynamic
- explore the role of empathy in furthering
  functions
- explain how nonverbal behavic
  communicate group member roles

Key Terms

- group dynamics
- group member roles
- group task roles
- group maintenance roles
- self-centered roles

Scenario

The four supervisors in the office—Pilar, James, Alicia, and JaRon—have to put together a committee to make recommendations for improving customer service. Pilar has asked each for a list of names of people to serve on the committee. She will chair the committee herself, and she would like to add five more people, for a total of six. She has asked James to review the list of names with her and make selections.

Pilar: *Thanks for staying late. I really need to get the committee set up and going. I'd like our first meeting to occur late next week.*

James: *No problem. I think customer service will really improve if we get some good recommendations. Who's on the "recommend" list?*

Pilar: *Here are the names. Everyone recommended Lori Sand. You and I both listed Dave Hill. JaRon and Alicia listed Jason McIlvain and Keri Dominguez. Then there are Lindsey White, Justin Geraci, Keesha Pullman, Katie Volin, Marty Arnez, and Mike DeNoon.*

James: *Wow. Some list. Are you comfortable with all of these folks?*

Pilar: *To be honest, I don't want to select Marty Arnez. She's so negative. Every time I've worked with her we always hear about how things were so much better at her last job. Unless you see some reason to keep her on the list, she's out.*

James: *I agree. What about starting with Lori, then? She is really good with customers and all the staff respects her. She has good insight, and really knows the company well.*

Pilar: *Fine. Do we have someone who can keep us organized? Take minutes, prepare agendas…things like that? How about Keesha?*

James: *Good idea. She was the organizer for the holiday party, and it went off without a hitch. In addition, her workload is light right now, so she'll have some spare time.*

Pilar: *What would you say about Mike DeNoon and Jason McIlvain? They both asked to be on the committee.*

James: *They work well independently, but I don't think I'd take them both. They work in the same area and they tend to team up in a way that's not good for a committee. In fact, they often are having their own conversations. Jason will use every opportunity to tell stories and waste time. If you pick one, I'd go with DeNoon. He has a lot of opinions about the organization, and he's pretty easy to work with when Steve's not distracting him.*

Pilar: *Okay, then. Lori, Keesha, Mike...who else? I'd like someone who can keep things moving. What about Katie Volin? She has such a sense of humor that everyone likes working with her.*

James: *I'm okay with Katie. In addition to her sense of humor, she listens really well and always asks for information before making a decision. Lori has the information, but Katie will help you get her to participate. Two more. What about Dave and Keri? I haven't worked with Dave very much, but his way of working with customers is outstanding. And Keri just came over from the southeast office. It would be good to get her insight on how things work over there. Besides, they are both so easygoing that working with them is pleasant. And—as good as Lori is—she gets a little stressed sometimes. They could make the committee more relaxed.*

Pilar: *Okay. That's the list then. I'll run it by JaRon and Alicia. Thanks for the advice. This committee is important, and I certainly want to get it started on the right foot.*

James and Pilar just built their own "all-star" committee. They selected people that they thought would make the committee an enjoyable, productive group. How did they make their selections? Note that they asked about the ways people typically functioned in groups. They asked about task roles, social roles, and personal (or self-centered) roles.

You've all heard of an "all-star" team. Such a team combines the best athletes from a number of teams into one team with the best player possible at each position. An all-star baseball team has the league's best pitcher, catcher,

shortstop, etc. Such teams are fun to watch. Every player knows just how to contribute.

A group has "positions," just as a football or basketball team has. These positions aren't established by rule. Group positions—or group "roles"—emerge out of necessity. Groups must have certain roles filled or the group doesn't function well. Unlike a baseball team, which always has a shortstop and a pitcher, members of groups often serve in roles as needed, switching roles as needed, and modifying the group arrangement to suit the group's and individuals' needs.

If you were putting together an "all-star" task group, what roles would you want played? Who would you want to play them? Knowing what the typical group roles are helps you answer these questions, and one more: When you are in a group, what roles can you play to help the group succeed?

Defining Group Member Roles

As you watch groups of all kinds function, you tend to notice that some communication behaviors are present in successful groups. Researchers who study groups also note that when these behaviors aren't present, groups are less likely to succeed. A group member role is a pattern of behavior that tends to emerge in all groups. There are no rules about these roles. There are no scripts that group members follow. There is only research that shows these roles will tend to emerge. Not every group exhibits every role, and more than one person can play the same role. In fact, people can switch in and out of roles during group interaction. These group roles fall into two categories: task and maintenance.

Group dynamics is a term that includes how group members work together, how a group solves problems, how personal interactions develop, and so forth. Understanding group member roles helps us understand how groups work.

Task Roles

A task role is really a set of communication behaviors that helps the group solve a problem, address an issue or generally perform its task. Remember that a task group has a clearly defined purpose or goal. (If they don't, one of their first jobs is to develop one!) That's not to say that members of task groups don't have fun or enjoy themselves, but that isn't their primary purpose. A task role is defined in terms of the task group's purpose or goal.

The following chart identifies eleven of the task roles that can usually be seen in well functioning task groups. (The group member roles in this chapter were first identified by John K. Brilhart.*) It's important to remember that one person can provide more than one kind of behavior. (There are eleven roles; if one person couldn't play more than one role, then a group of five could only supply five of the roles.) Moreover, one role can be assumed by more than one group member. The purposes of this chart are:

- to build insight into how groups work
- to develop a vocabulary for talking about groups
- and to identify communication skills you can bring to a group to make it more successful.

Effective Group Discussion (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm C. Brown Co. Publishing, 1967.



All groups require certain tasks to accomplish the goal.

Task role	Influence on group dynamics	Verbal cue that role is met...
Initiator	Proposes new ideas, new goals, procedures, methods, solutions.	"I've got an idea. Instead of looking at the way we are doing things now, let's look at how things would be done in an ideal situation."
Information seeker	Asks for facts, clarification, or information from other members. Suggests that more information is needed before making decisions.	"I'd still like to know what other companies do. Keri, how did you guys over at the southeast branch do it?"
Information giver	Offers facts and information, personal experiences, and evidence. The information must be relevant and accurate.	"I read an article in the paper this week that said that Hispanics spend more money with firms that have Spanish-speaking employees."
Opinion seeker	Draws out convictions and opinions of others, or asks for clarification of positions or values involved in the discussion.	"Mike's comments really need to be developed. Mike, explain how you feel about handling customer complaints that have been forwarded to you."
Opinion giver	States own belief or opinion; expresses a judgment.	"All our decisions consider the customer."
Clarifier	Elaborates on ideas expressed by another, often by giving an example, explanation, or illustration.	"They register the concern, give it a number, enter it into the computer and assign it to someone."
Coordinator	Clarifies relationships among facts, ideas, and suggestions; suggests an integration of ideas and activities of two or more group members.	"If we take Keri's ideas another step, they could really fit well with Mike's. Do you two think you can work out a system that incorporates both ideas?"
Orienter	Makes sure the group is focused on purpose or goal, defines position of the group, summarizes or suggests the direction of the discussion.	"Will these ideas really make us better at what we do? Our discussion up to now has been about us. Shouldn't we care about how our customers feel?"
Energizer	Prods the group to greater activity or to a decision; stimulates activity; warns the group to act while there is still time.	"We've talked about the help desk idea at two previous meetings. If we're going to set it up, we'd better do it now, while we're re-doing the phone lines."
Procedure developer	Offers suggestions for accomplishing ideas of others, or handles such tasks as seating arrangements, setting up the computer, handing out papers, running copies, etc.	"We need to have more communication outside the meetings. What if I get the minutes out via e-mail so we don't have to wait until our next meeting to see them? And if everyone will give me an e-mail address, I'll make a directory for the whole committee."
Recorder	Keeps written record on paper, chart or blackboard; serves as group's "memory."	"Could you restate that? I think we should record that comment word-for-word."

Group Maintenance Roles

The second group of roles assumed by group members is "maintenance" roles. One way of thinking of maintenance role is to use the term "group building." These behaviors help establish and maintain positive, cooperative relationships and a group-centered orientation. You can think of group maintenance roles as the lubrication for the engine. The engine is the task roles. Busy getting things accomplished, these roles might ignore the social and personal dimension of the group. "Friction" can develop. The friction can even threaten the group's ability to meet the task demands. By assuming group maintenance roles, members communicate positive social messages that help everyone get along.

Group maintenance role	Influence on group dynamics	Verbal cue that this role is being met . . .
Supporter	Praises, agrees, indicates warmth and solidarity with others, or goes along with them.	"Great idea, Mike. I think that's really the key. You've captured the real essence of the solution."
Harmonizer	Mediates differences between others; reconciles differences.	"Now wait a minute. Katie's opinions and Pilar's aren't that far apart. They both want what's best for the customer, and they both see the need for handling problems rapidly. Just because they have different approaches doesn't mean there's a problem."
Tension reliever	Jokes or brings out humor in a situation, reduces formality and status differences, relaxes others.	"I'm glad Keri and I are on the same side. With as much experience as she's had handling rough customers, I think she qualifies for the purple heart and the medal of honor!"
Gatekeeper	Opens channels of communication, brings in members who otherwise might not speak; sees that everyone has a fair chance to be heard.	"We've heard from everyone here except Keesha. Keesha, what will your work group say about Keri's idea?"

Task and Maintenance Together

As you can tell from the verbal cues, task and maintenance can work together. For example, an opinion giver could express herself in a humorous way which relieves tension. A gatekeeper might also be an opinion-seeker. In fact, anyone who is doing a good job of assuming a task role will judge the impact of what they say and do on the group's social dimension. Even expressing a good opinion might not help if it is expressed in an offensive or combative way.

Also, these charts give only the verbal cues of the roles that are being assumed. Don't forget that nonverbal will also play an important role. A tension-reliever might assume the role by smiling. An energizer might motivate the group by leaning forward and using animated gestures. Deeds are often more important than words if you are trying to be an organizer or a harmonizer.

Communication Management—Evaluating Group Performance



You can use your knowledge of group member roles to improve your communication in groups, but you can also use it to evaluate and understand group performance. In other words, you can use group member roles to guide your understanding of group dynamics.

Remember: Group dynamics is a term that includes how group members work together, how a group solves problems, how personal interactions develop, and so forth. When a group is successful, we assume that the "dynamics" of the group are good. When a group fails, we assume the opposite. But knowing that one group is working well and another poorly doesn't help us much. We must know why. In future chapters, we'll learn about other aspects of group performance. For now, consider group member roles. If you observe a group that is functioning well, you can likely describe the group's strengths by analyzing how the group performs task and maintenance functions.

In the chart that follows, you can see how tracking group member roles can help you determine why a group works...and why it doesn't. Assume that this six-person group is a task group that seems to make headway but often doesn't get along. They might spend too much time squabbling to make progress. Assume that this chart records group members' contributions over a short period of time. Each mark represents a comment or action that fits in the designated role. What conclusions can you draw about their group dynamics?

	Benjamin	Tommy	Debbie	Ernesto	Fay	Gerald
Task Role						
Initiator	///					
Information seeker		//				
Information giver	/			//	/	
Opinion seeker		///	//			
Opinion giver	/			//		////
Clarifier			///			
Coordinator		/				
Orienter	///					
Energizer	/	/				/
Procedure developer	/			/		
Recorder			/			
Group Maintenance Role						
Supporter			/		/	
Harmonizer						
Tension reliever						
Gatekeeper	/					

What do you notice? First, note that Fay seems to be very withdrawn. She hardly participates in any of the group's task or maintenance activities. Finding out why could be a first step in improving group dynamics. Second, who is functioning as a harmonizer or tension reliever? It seems that no one is. Perhaps this is a clue to why the group doesn't get along—no one is paying attention to the lighter side of things and helping reduce friction. What other ideas can you draw from this data?

Self-Centered Roles

Sometimes, group members will assume roles that don't necessarily relate to the group. A group is a collection of individuals, and individuals will sometimes play more selfish roles. Often these self-centered roles will meet the needs of the individuals while harming the task or maintenance dimension of the group. Their influence on group dynamics is often negative. A partial list of self-centered roles is given on the next page.



A person displaying self-centered behaviors can cause group members to stop listening.

Self-centered role	Influence on group dynamics	Verbal cue that the self-centered role is assumed...
Blocker	Constantly raises objections, insists nothing can be done, repeatedly brings up the same topic after the rest of the group has disposed of it. Can cause delay in the group and frustration in others.	"I don't know why we're even talking about this. These kinds of plans never work. We'll be back doing the same old thing in three months."
Aggressor	Deflates status of others, expresses disapproval, jokes at the expense of others, expresses ill will or envy. Can cause tension and anger.	"That is the stupidest thing we've discussed yet. If Keri thinks that sort of thing can work, she is as crazy as some of the customers we meet."
Recognition seeker	Boasts, calls attention to self, relates irrelevant personal experiences, seeks sympathy or pity. Can cause impatience and digressions from the group's task.	"Look, I've been working in this field for twenty years. I remember a similar problem back in the '80s. Now, that was a decade full of opportunity. If some people had listened to me back then, we wouldn't be in the shape we're in now..."
Confessor	Uses the group as audience for hearing about his or her mistakes, feelings, and beliefs irrelevant to the group task; uses the meeting to "get things off his/her chest." Can cause delay and can divert group energies to sympathetic responses or to frustration.	"I don't know about the rest of you, but I feel it's pretty tough to treat customers politely all the time. As you know, I've been going through some pretty tough times with my husband, and when we are fighting, I seem to carry it into the office. I'm sorry. I know I can be hard to get along with sometimes, but that's just how I feel."
Class clown	Displays a lack of involvement in the group task by making jokes and cynical comments, horseplay, and ridicule. Can cause group delays. Can also distract, resulting in lack of concentration from group members. Clowns might try to disguise themselves as harmonizers or tension-relievers.	"If this meeting doesn't get moving soon, I'm sending out for pizza. Maybe you gals can yak about customer service on an empty stomach, but this guy is only interested in the kind of customer service that comes with extra cheese and pepperoni."
Dominator	Tries to run the group by giving directions, ordering, flattering, and interrupting; insists on his/her own way. Can alienate others. Can cause power struggles in the group.	"I really don't think what the rest of you think. I think it's time to vote. The rest of you can talk more if you want to, but I think we need to vote...secret ballot will be best."
Special interest pleader	Speaks primarily for the interests of a different group, acting as its representative to the detriment of the group process. Can drag the group into unproductive discussions. Can cause frustration if the same issues come up again and again.	"I'll never support anything that puts more work on the secretarial staff. I know the rest of you think that it's not a problem, but secretaries are the ones who really do the work. You can't just ignore the people who do all the work for less pay than most of the other employees get."

Interpersonal Insight—Empathy and Group Roles



One of the most important skills in group discussion is empathy, the ability to understand and identify with the feelings of another. While you are participating in the group, you are adding what you can to the group's task and maintenance needs. At the same time, you should be putting yourself in the place of other members. They, too, are filling roles. If you can understand what they are doing and how they are feeling, you can make it easier for them and for the group.

Imagine that you are in a group and you see someone attempting to say something.

[S] Consider the situation. How is the group going? Does the group need to hear more information or opinions? Is anyone else helping the person get into the discussion? How is this person feeling at the moment?

[P] Think about your purpose. Do you want to get the person heard? Do you want to make the group more open?

[A] The members of the group are present, and you might have another audience more removed. How will the audience respond if you try to get the person heard? How do they feel about the group and about the process so far? (Use your empathy for them as well as for the other person.)

[M] What method will you use to get the person heard? You could use verbal or nonverbal methods. Assuming you choose a verbal method, here are some roles you might want to assume, at least temporarily:

- Gatekeeper: "I think it's important that everyone is heard. Can we hear from some people who haven't spoken yet?"
- Information seeker: "I wonder if there are any facts or data we're missing. Anyone have anything to add?"
- Opinion seeker: "I think Keesha has something to say. How do you feel about this issue?"
- Procedure developer: "Maybe we can get more information out if we go around the table and ask everyone to share his or her feeling about the topic. That way, no one will be left out."

These are some of the roles you might consider assuming, if you use your empathy to understand how others feel. Of course, your empathy might tell you that someone would be embarrassed if you call them by name. If so, you might use a more generic, anonymous comment.

Empathy can even help you deal with group members assuming self-centered roles. If someone is seeking attention, ask yourself "Why?" How are they feeling? If someone criticizes them openly, how will the remainder of the group feel: relieved or embarrassed? If someone is blocking, can you understand why? Understanding the feelings of others doesn't always mean you act on them, but understanding is the first step to making progress on both the task and maintenance dimensions of the group.

Nonverbal Communication and Group Member Roles

So far, we've considered how verbal cues can indicate which roles group members are assuming. Nonverbal cues are just as important. Observing the posture, gestures, expressions, and other nonverbal cues allow you to see more of the discussion than is happening "out loud." And watching your own nonverbals helps, too!

For example, what would you think of a person who separates herself from the rest of the group by moving her chair away from the table? What if she leans back, crosses her arms, and frowns? Add eye-rolling and you have some

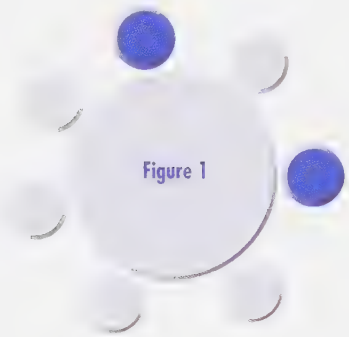
very obvious nonverbal cues that something is wrong. She is not participating at all on the task level. She is adding nothing on the maintenance level. She might be playing a self-centered role. Whatever the situation, her nonverbal communication lets you know that something could be better. You can then decide if you will assume a task or maintenance role in relationship to her.

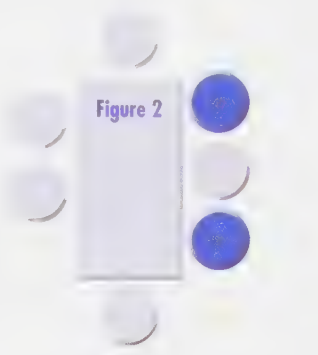
Your own nonverbal is communicative as well. As you participate, what does your posture say to other group members? Your gestures? Your facial expressions? Remember that if your verbal messages conflict with your nonverbal, people will be likely to believe your nonverbal.

When someone is assuming a positive task or maintenance role, they can do so without uttering a word. Establishing eye contact, for example, will encourage some reluctant people to talk (gatekeeper). Nodding can reinforce the comments made by others (supporter). Handing out papers can establish procedures (procedure developer).

Another dimension of nonverbal behavior that affects group member roles is seating arrangement. If you are concerned that members interact with each other, assume task and maintenance roles, and stay together on task, which seating arrangement would you set up as procedure developer?

Assuming you had a choice, figure one provides greater opportunity for interaction than figure two. In both figures, the dark dots (representing group participants) are separated by one other group member. The rectangular table hides them from each other while the circular table still allows eye contact.







Chapter 11 Summary

Groups are made up of individuals. To make the group function, individuals must assume the types of roles (duties, responsibilities) that will move the group forward and keep it together. Task roles move the group forward in solving a problem or addressing an issue. Maintenance roles keep the group together, maintaining harmony and positive relationships.

Sometimes individuals seek to meet more personal—more selfish—needs in a group discussion. These self-centered roles are usually destructive to a group's functioning. While it's natural for people to assume these roles, limiting personal, selfish motives will help the group.

Empathy and nonverbal communication help you assume your roles most effectively.

Remembering

1. Prepare a list of task roles that help groups meet their goals. Explain how each role positively affects group dynamics.
2. Prepare a list of maintenance roles that help groups stay together. Explain how each role positively affects group dynamics.
3. Identify the most common self-centered roles and explain how they often hinder groups' task and maintenance functions.
4. Explain how empathy can help you fulfill your task and maintenance responsibilities in a group.
5. Provide an example of how nonverbal communication can help reveal an individual's group member role.

Reflecting

1. Which of the task roles are you best suited for? Think of a task group that you have been a part of. Identify verbal or nonverbal behaviors that have allowed you to assume one or more of these roles.
2. Which of the maintenance roles are you best suited for? Think of a task group that you have been a part of. Identify verbal or nonverbal behaviors that have allowed you to assume one or more of these roles.
3. From your perspective, which of the group member roles is difficult to assume? Explain why you feel this way.
4. Create your ideal group of five people whom you know. To do this, select a long-term task that your group should perform. Select your "all-star" discussion group of 4-7 people. You may select from friends and acquaintances, or you may choose to make a true "all-star" group by selecting anyone you'd like from any walk of life. For each person, explain your choice by suggesting which task and maintenance roles each could fulfill and why you believe so.

Reaching

Prepare small slips of paper with one group member role identified on each. Keep the slips of paper in three pools: task, maintenance, and self-centered. Your pools should contain all the task roles (pool #1), all the maintenance roles (pool #2) and two of the self-centered roles (pool #3). Be sure that pool three has as many blank slips as needed to equal the number of people in your group. Create a group to discuss a topic of your choice. Group members should draw from each pool, keeping their slips of paper private. At the end of the drawing, each group member should have an assignment that only he or she knows. For example, one of the people could be an opinion-giver (task)/harmonizer (maintenance)/confessor (self-centered). Conduct the discussion for at least 30 minutes. Assign another group to observe silently and take notes about the group's interaction. At the end of the discussion, ask the observing group to hold their own discussion regarding these questions:

- Who played each role? How do you know?
- Which role contributed most to the group? Why do you think so?
- Which role detracted from the group? Why do you think so?

- Which roles were missing? How do you know? What could have happened if the role had been present?

Real Life

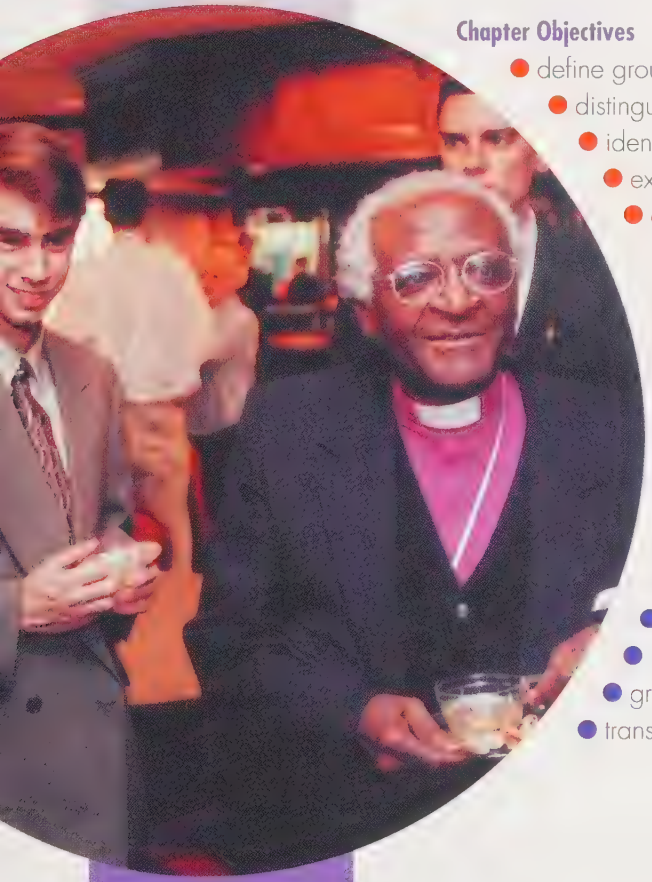
1. Reproduce the definitions of each of the task and maintenance roles identified in this chapter. Give the roles with definitions to a person who is frequently a member of work groups. Ask them to comment on the roles that they find most necessary and most lacking in their day-to-day group work.
2. Select a class or team meeting from your own daily life. Use the list of group member roles to guide your analysis of the group. Note what kinds of behaviors are evident within the group. Observe the group for at least 15-20 minutes. You might want to share the observer role with others and compare your notes. Draw conclusions about the group dynamics based on the chart.

	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4	Member 5	Member 6
Task Role						
Initiator						
Information seeker						
Information giver						
Opinion seeker						
Opinion giver						
Clarifier						
Coordinator						
Orienter						
Energizer						
Procedure developer						
Recorder						
Group Maintenance Role						
Supporter						
Harmonizer						
Tension reliever						
Gatekeeper						

12 Chapter Twelve Application.Group Leadership

Key Concept

Group leadership refers to behaviors that assist a group in meeting its task (task leadership) or developing a positive communication context (maintenance leadership). While some leadership responsibilities are assigned, many leadership skills can be learned and applied as needed.



Chapter Objectives

- define group leadership
- distinguish between formal and informal leadership
- identify traits commonly associated with effective leaders
- explain transformational leadership
- distinguish among authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire styles of leadership
- explain situational leadership
- explain leadership in terms of leadership functions
- identify basic guidelines for effective group leadership

Key Terms

- authoritarian leader
- democratic leader
- formal leader
- informal leader
- laissez-faire leader
- group leadership
- transformational leadership

"*Leadership* and learning are indispensable to each other." John F. Kennedy, President of the United States

"A great *leader* never sets himself above his followers except in carrying responsibilities." Jules Ormont

"Perhaps in His wisdom the Almighty is trying to show us that a *leader* may chart the way, may point out the road to lasting peace, but that many leaders and many peoples must do the building." Eleanor Roosevelt, columnist and ambassador

"The task of a *leade*r is to get his people from where they are to where they want to be." Henry Kissinger, Secretary of State

"*Leadership* is practiced not so much in words as in attitude and in actions." Harold Green, founder, MCI Communications

"*Leadership* has a harder job to do than just choose sides. It must bring sides together." Rev. Jesse Jackson, religious, social, and political leader

"The secret of a *leader* lies in the tests he has faced over the whole course of his life and the habit of action he develops in meeting those tests."
Gail Sheehy, psychologist and author

"People ask the difference between a *leader* and a boss. . . . The *leader* works in the open, and the boss in covert. The *leader leads*, and the boss drives." Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States

"No man will make a great *leader* who wants to do it all himself, or to get all the credit for doing it." Andrew Carnegie, business leader and philanthropist

"I am a *leader* by default, only because nature does not allow a vacuum." Bishop Desmond Tutu, religious leader

"There is no such thing as a perfect *leader* either in the past or present, in China or elsewhere. If there is one, he is only pretending, like a pig inserting scallions into its nose in an effort to look like an elephant." Liu Shao-ch'i

"The quality of a *leader* is reflected in the standards they set for themselves." Ray Kroc, founder of McDonald's

"You do not *lead* by hitting a man over the head—that's assault, not leadership." Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States

"*Leadership* should be born out of the understanding of those who would be affected by it." Marian Anderson, musician

"Remember that it is far better to follow than to *lead* indifferently." John G. Vance

"I start with the premise that the function of *leadership* is to produce more leaders, not more followers." Ralph Nader, consumer advocate

These quotations—and many, many more—can be found in many books of quotations, CD-ROM collections, Internet sites, and other resources. The presence of so many quotations shows how preoccupied we can be with leadership. It is vital to any organization, from small group to large country. It is as exciting to watch great leaders as it is to be a leader. Good leadership helps us all be better.

One of the most valuable components of leadership is communication. Leadership in groups—while small in scale—is great in impact. Truthfully, people who want to lead at a grand level must also be able to lead at a smaller scale. This is true of a president, who will lead a nation only if he or she can lead a cabinet, or of a business person, who must lead his or her small team before leading the company.

Scenario

Pilar, James, JaRon, and Alicia are doing a three-month review of the staff members who work for them. In this group discussion, the task is to identify people who should be advanced into leadership positions. One of their employees, Steven, is up for such consideration. The four group members

must make a recommendation to place Steven in the company's leadership training program or not.

Pilar: *I'm interested in hearing everyone's opinion about Steven. I haven't been here as long as the rest of you, so I will rely on what you have to say.*

JaRon: *I'd support recommending Steven into the leadership training program. I feel he is as prepared as anyone in the training group I was part of.*

Alicia: *I've really never worked with him. What's he like?*

JaRon: *Well—first, he's a hard worker. He puts in lots of time on any project he's part of. Second, he can really speak and write well. He's the best we have when it comes to speaking to outside groups. Third, the other employees really respect him. They trust him. He knows when to give advice and when to back off.*

James: *That's what I'm concerned about. It seems sometimes that he doesn't really provide leadership. Oh, he's a good manager…organized, good on detail. And he can speak. But leading? I was in one of his meetings, and he was pretty quiet.*

Alicia: *People seem to like being in the groups he's in charge of. Maybe he's one of those "quiet" leaders, who lead by example.*

James: *Our organization has more than enough quiet people. We need someone to take charge, get things done.*

Pilar: *And you don't think Steven is one of those people?*

James: *No. Not from what I've seen.*

Pilar: *And you, JaRon?*

JaRon: *I'll agree that he's not an authoritarian. But I'd like to be in any project he's part of.*

Pilar: *Alicia?*

Alicia: *Like I said, I've never really worked with him. But isn't the idea of leadership training to develop leaders? Maybe he doesn't have all the qualities of a good leader now, but leadership can be learned. I support recommending him.*

Pilar: *I'd like to support someone from our office. I, too, think we should recommend him. James, I'll pass along your concerns to Steven when I tell him of the recommendation. That will give him something to work on as he goes through training.*

Discussions such as this one go on many times every day. Leadership traits are constantly being evaluated and discussed. Many traits of a good leader are communication traits: speaking, writing, relating to people, organization, etc. When people discuss your leadership skills, what will they say? What skills do you have that can help make you a leader? If you don't know the answers to these questions, you have time to learn about leadership. Most leaders have their first leadership experiences in small groups. And as Alicia said, "leadership can be learned." That's what this chapter is about.

The Importance of Communication to Leadership

Before we discuss specific leadership styles in groups, it is important to note the role group communication plays in overall leadership ability. In two separate studies, business leaders and speech educators both ranked small group leadership as one of the important communication skills for leaders. Apparently, both business people and speech people think that success in a career is linked to communication skills generally, and small group leadership specifically. Why would this be so?

1. Often, people are selected to lead large groups or organizations precisely because they have been successful in smaller groups. If a leader cannot keep a small group working well, how can he or she be expected to lead a larger group?
2. Rather than make all decisions themselves, leaders are supported by others who make decisions in specific areas. Keeping these individuals (who are themselves leaders) working well together requires small group leadership.
3. Leaders often "try out" their ideas on small groups before making them public. Gaining the support and cooperation of a small group thereby becomes a prerequisite for leading a larger group. This leadership quality

is particularly important. Leaders of large organizations often use smaller groups of advisors as "sounding boards" for their ideas and how to express them. What is this but metacommunication, communicating about communicating?

Formal and Informal Leadership

Formal leadership is leadership that is designated as a norm of the group. For example, if the norm is to elect a chairperson, that person becomes the formal leader. If someone appoints a person to coordinate or direct the group, that person is also a formal leader. Formal leaders are appointed, elected, designated, or assigned through some formal process.

Informal leadership emerges from the functioning of the group. For example, if a group begins working on a task and a person begins to develop influence over the group, that person has become an informal leader.

Groups might have both types of leadership at the same time. For example, a formal leader (the group's chairperson, for example) might have the authority and responsibility for the group's task behaviors. That person might be very talented at managing the group's activities. Sometimes, however, the same person who is so good at task behavior is not as good at group maintenance behavior. In that case, another leader could emerge: a group maintenance leader to help the social dimension of the group. This leader—without title or official designation—could play a very important role in the group's activities.

Defining Leadership

Leadership is defined in various ways. Common sense tells us that a leader is someone "in charge"— someone who has a title like chair, chief, president, director, etc. These titles might—or might not—tell us who the true leaders of a group are. A better definition states that leadership is "interpersonal influence, exercised in a situation and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specialized goal or goals."* That's quite a lot, so let's break it down:

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*Tannenbaum, Robert, Irving R. Weschler, and Fred Massarik, Leadership and Organizations: A Behavioral Science Approach. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961.

...interpersonal influence...	Note that this definition emphasizes the interpersonal nature of leadership. In small groups, a leader can relate personally to each member of the group. Apart from the group, the leader can still exert influence. It would be a mistake to think that a leader's influence starts only when the group meets and ends as the group meeting ends.
...exercised in a situation...	We've already learned that all communication takes place in a context. Situation is the first part of the SPAM model. Leadership occurs in a context. The individual and the group have a history and relationship. The task has context as well. This means that leadership can be viewed as situational—that is, changing from one situation to another.
...directed toward the attainment of a specialized goal or goals...	This is the P in SPAM: purpose. Leadership is purposeful. It is aimed toward the achievement of a goal or task. (That is not to say that leadership is only important as a task role. Sometimes the most important contributions made by leaders are to group maintenance functions.)
...through communication...	This phrase indicates why leadership is an important part of this text. Leaders make their contributions through communication. Communication is the creation of meaning. Leaders create meaning. They give meaning to group tasks. They help group members share meaning. They can only be leaders through communication.



Leaders, such as Bishop Desmond Tutu, are known for their excellent communication skills.

The Trait Approach

Some people believe that leaders have traits or characteristics that make them leaders. Some people even go so far as to believe that leaders aren't developed or trained—they are "born leaders." A better understanding of leadership traits is to substitute the word "talent." We all have a variety of talents that we can develop. Many of these talents can make us leaders.

For example, think about enthusiasm. Some people are naturally enthusiastic. Moreover, they can communicate their enthusiasm to others. This talent (or trait) can be developed over time. It can be sharpened with experience or practice. The trait approach to leadership attempts to list the characteristics that good leaders have. Here's a partial list* of certain traits that people attribute to effective leaders.

communication
courage
emotional balance and control
empathy
energy
enthusiasm
ethical conduct
experience
independence
intellectual skills
interpersonal skills
listening ability
maturity
open-mindedness
organization
personal integrity
sensitivity
social skills
team orientation
technical skills
willingness to share responsibility

Would you disagree with any of them? Of course not. But these traits might or might not contribute to leadership in any given situation. That leads to other approaches to leadership.

The Leadership Style Approach

In general, group leaders work in three styles: authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire. Each of these leadership styles can produce much different group experiences and will likely have different impacts on task and maintenance dimensions of a group.

*Bradley, Patricia Hayes and John E. Baird, Jr., *Communication for Business and the Professions*, Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, Dubuque, Iowa, 1980.

	Authoritarian style	Democratic style	Laissez-faire style
relationship to group	• dominates • imposes his/her will	• helps • helps group develop its own identity	• observes • allows group to move as it sees fit
process	• dictates processes to group members • challenges others	• seeks input from others • uses persuasion	• allows group to establish its own processes without interference
relationship to task	• often defines task for the group	• helps group define task	• waits for group to find and define the task
interpersonal style	• aggressive • assertive • directive	• friendly • sociable • "one of the guys"	• patient • passive

Which of these styles is better? If you look at the list of qualities for each, you'll probably make a choice very quickly: democratic. But is that always true? Are there times when an authoritarian leadership style is needed? If time is a consideration, won't an authoritarian leader produce results more quickly? Don't some group members need the "space" allowed by a leader with a laissez-faire style?

Research has shown that authoritarian groups will produce results more quickly; and when time is a consideration, authoritarian leadership can produce these results with a high level of group satisfaction (morale). On the other hand, authoritarian leadership can also produce resentment and group dissatisfaction. Democratic leadership can produce better group morale and good group decisions. Some studies show that democratic leadership will also increase productivity. Laissez-faire leadership might work only with highly experienced groups, but otherwise is less productive than the other two styles. It can also harm group morale by increasing frustration.

The Situational Approach

So is authoritarian, democratic, or laissez-faire best? Which is the best trait? Our definition stated that leadership was exercised "in a situation." The situational approach to leadership recognizes that no single concept of leadership will apply to all groups in all situations. Sometimes, a group leader needs to be a great listener. At other times, the leader probably should have the courage to state that—while everyone has a point of view—the time for listening is over

and the time for action has come. Authoritarian leadership could be the answer to one group's task in a time crunch, but the same group might prefer democratic leadership, given sufficient time.

The situation approach to leadership requires a leader to examine the situation and respond appropriately. Within one short meeting, the situational approach says, a leader can alternate between leadership traits or styles as the situation requires. This concept of leadership can be the most demanding, since it requires a leader whose personality and beliefs might lead to an authoritarian or democratic style to "play against type." A situational approach might require someone who is a democratic leader to assume an authoritarian role.

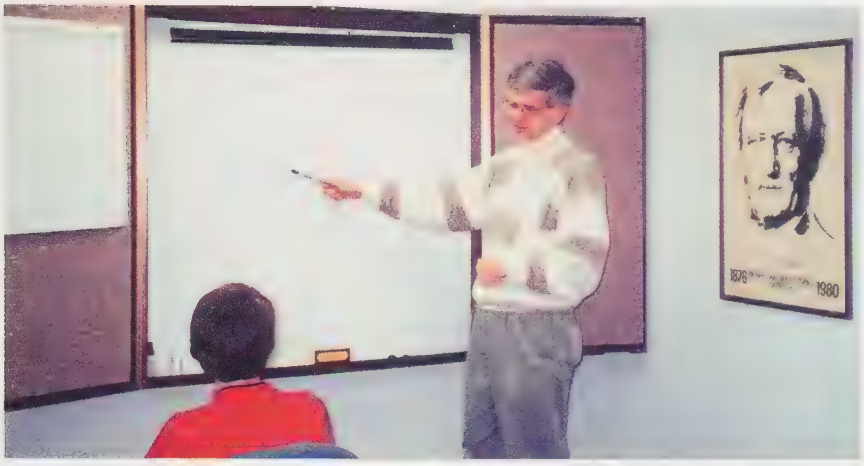
The Functional Approach

Each of the approaches so far (trait, style, situational) treats leadership as a characteristic of a specific person. The functional approach treats leadership differently. Like group member roles, the functional approach states that there are a number of functions that must be performed in a group and any group member's behavior that fulfills those functions is leadership. In other words, all group members are leaders of different types and degrees. Their contributions as leaders will depend on how well they met the definition of leadership.

...interpersonal influence...	Does the group member exercise influence over others? Will others support or cooperate?
...exercised in a situation...	Is the behavior appropriate to the situation?
...directed...toward the attainment of a specialized goal or goals...	Is the behavior goal directed? Does it meet the group's task or maintenance needs?
...through communication...	Is it communicated well?

The advantage of this approach is that it makes all people in a group responsible for the group's results. An authoritarian leader, for example, might get a task accomplished without the members of the group actually supporting the result. Moreover, if an authoritarian is delegating tasks to others, he or she is not always delegating the responsibility: He or she keeps that for himself or herself.

Whatever approach to leadership you use to discuss leadership, this approach is the best to take as you practice group communication. All members in a group can provide leadership. All members of the group have value. Allowing leadership from others makes the group more cohesive and improves group morale.



Leaders are able to move groups to a decision that is in the group's best interests.

Transformational Leadership

Recently, especially in business literature, authors have begun to contrast "new" leadership styles with older, more traditional styles. One of these leadership theories defines "transformational leadership."

To understand this concept, you should think about what motivates people. According to Abraham Maslow, there is a hierarchy of human motivation. At the most basic level, humans are motivated by physiological needs such as food, water, sleep, etc. Once those needs are assured, humans are motivated by safety needs; they desire to be free from threats. As a result, they act out of a need for shelter and comfort. Just above safety are the motives derived from social needs, belonging to a family, a group, etc. The two higher levels of motivation are esteem and self-actualization. Esteem is our need to feel good about ourselves. Self-actualization motivates us to "be all we can be," to realize our unique potential. Graphically, the hierarchy looks like this:



According to this theory, older (transactional) leadership styles appeal to the bottom three motives in others and transformational leadership appeals to the top two. A transactional leader relies on basic needs to motivate or drive members of a group. This reliance results in a leader who uses such motivators as fear, money, and social acceptance. For example, a leader who uses gossip to gain the cooperation of others is basically threatening the social acceptance of that individual, hoping that fear of losing social standing will motivate the member of the group to cooperate.

On the other hand, a transformational leader relies on higher motives: esteem and self-actualization. They reason that if group members can derive a positive sense of self and can develop themselves to their fullest potential, they will be outstanding group members. Transformational leaders make positive assumptions about people and create an environment in which others enjoy working and contributing.

These words describe transformational leaders* :

Creative: Transformational leaders challenge what we know. They take creative risks. They experiment.

Interactive: Transformational leaders talk to others. They share. They communicate well.

Visionary: Transformational leaders have a definite idea of where they are going and where they want the group to go. They can express this vision to others.

Empowering: Transformational leaders encourage others to act. They allow others to be creative and interactive. They make others feel a part of the process.

Passionate: Transformational leaders are committed to the vision and to the process needed to reach the vision. They can communicate this passion to others.

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*Hackman, Michael Z. and Craig E. Johnson, *Leadership: A Communication Perspective*, Waveland Press, Inc., Prospect Heights, IL., 1991.



An agenda can assist a leader in helping the group meet its goals.

Communication Management—Facilitating



Sometimes, a person is asked to "facilitate" a group. What exactly does that mean? The word "facilitate" means "to make easier," "to remove obstacles," or "to aid or assist." Often, a facilitator is "outside" the group. If an outsider is asked to facilitate, you can be sure that the group has something special for the facilitator to do that they feel they can't get from within the group. If you are asked to facilitate a group, you are being asked to lead in a very special way. Facilitators typically have these responsibilities:

- To organize the group for success. Sometimes a facilitator needs to establish an agenda or process that will help the group meet its goals.
- To encourage participation. A facilitator makes speaking and listening easier for all group members.
- To help the group think about itself and its processes. Sometimes a group will need a fresh start or a time for reflection. A facilitator can provide group members the opportunity to step back from the group and think about how the group works.
- To allow discussion of conflict or controversy in a safe context. If a facilitator is an outsider, then he or she can be more objective. If a leader within the group has not been objective, a facilitator can help the group talk more frankly and openly.
- To focus on group processes. A facilitator often doesn't have specific information about the task being discussed by the group. The facilitator doesn't always need detailed information about the group's topic. Instead the facilitator focuses on group processes. The facilitator is interested in how information is collected and shared, how people speak to each other, how decisions are made, and other processes.

Qualities of Effective Group Leadership

As we've noted, there is not a single approach to understanding leadership. All the approaches help us talk about leadership and learn to be leaders. However, there are certain commonsense behaviors that are expected of a leader. The following list is not all there is to being a leader, but it does include those qualities that most people associate with effective small group leadership.

Quality	Explanation
1. The effective leader's personality is unaffected by the role.	You've probably known someone who went through a personality change after being elected or appointed to an office or important position. A group leader who is comfortable with the role and behaves naturally will be more effective than someone who tries to act or talk like "the leader." Of course a leader will communicate differently when performing some leadership tasks, but the best advice is to keep the leadership role from overcoming your personality.
2. The effective leader is organized.	Formal leaders are responsible for setting agendas, scheduling time and place for meetings, notifying members of meeting dates and times, and supplying any materials needed for the meeting. The leader may designate other members to assist with these tasks, but it is the leader's responsibility to determine what is needed and who is to get it done. Democratic, authoritarian, and laissez-faire leaders will each approach this task differently, of course.
3. The effective leader is sensitive to the group's needs.	Leaders cannot ignore the interpersonal needs of group members. Even authoritarian members must empathize with the group and understand what each person needs to be effective. Democratic leaders can also empathize and act with authority when the group needs such firm leadership. Being sensitive to group needs can even be as simple as knowing that people need a break. Also leaders need to be aware of the task, maintenance, and self-centered functions being assumed by group members. The leader must be aware of potential problems arising from group member roles. If a role is not being performed, the leader finds someone to assume the role, or assumes the role.
4. The effective leader is a good listener.	A good group leader follows the group discussion closely. Through listening, the leader is able to assume necessary roles, summarize group activities, and "report out" to others. If the leader has not listened carefully, he or she cannot fulfill these functions.
5. The effective leader is flexible.	Even the best plans have a way of going astray. A subcommittee report might not be ready, group members might be absent, or an outside person or organization could make a decision that changes the group's task. A good leader doesn't let the unexpected interfere with the group. A flexible leader deals with the unexpected with a minimum of disruption.
6. The effective leader learns through experience.	No one masters all leadership traits the first time he or she is placed in a leadership position. Practice helps us all become better leaders.

Guidelines for Leading a Group

If you become a group leader, there are some basics that can help. These basics will help you meet the expectations that people have of leaders.

1. Plan	a) Determine what needs to be done before the meeting. Locate a meeting place and make arrangements for its use. Be sure the room is ready with needed equipment and furniture. b) Set a time for the meeting. Include both beginning and ending times. This will help group members plan and keep the group on a schedule. c) Send out notices of the meeting. d) Prepare an agenda. e) Prepare — or have someone prepare — needed handouts. f) Be sure you understand as clearly as possible the group's task.
2. Develop procedures	a) Begin the meeting on time. b) As leader, you will have the first chance to start norms. Work to develop group norms that will keep the group efficient and effective.
3. Initiate the discussion	a) Review the group's task. It might even help to have the task written down for discussion and as a reminder. b) Remember: The first comments set the tone for the meeting. Be sure you get the group started in a positive direction.
4. Keep the discussion moving	a) Fill roles not being filled by others. For example, if there is no one in the group who is good at relieving tension, be sure that you can insert an appropriate comment or put the discussion in perspective. If someone isn't eliciting comments from group members, do so yourself. b) Encourage other group members to assume roles by directing questions or comments to them. For example, if a group member is capable of clarifying or coordinating, the leader can ask that person to respond to comments by another member. c) Be aware of nonverbal clues that indicate lack of understanding, disagreement, or a need for a break. For example, if two members are conversing quietly and their facial expressions indicate disagreement or dissatisfaction, a leader can ask if they want to comment on what's happening. d) When someone gets off the subject, get the group to re-focus without offending anyone. e) Involve all members of the group, even those who seem reluctant to participate.
5. Close the meeting	a) When the meeting is close to being over, summarize what has been done. Have a recorder read notes, if appropriate. b) Review actions that have been taken to assure that the group reaches a decision. c) Review what tasks need to be accomplished before the next meeting. Review who has agreed to do them. d) Ask for questions or comments. e) Set a time, date, and location for the next meeting. f) Set an agenda for the next meeting.



Chapter 12 Summary

Communication is a very important part of group leadership. Like other communication skills, group leadership can be learned. Whether assuming a formal or an informal role, you can be an effective group leader by knowing the various approaches to leadership. Being a leader means meeting the commonsense traits that others associate with leaders, but it also means responding to situations appropriately. Finally, remembering some simple leadership tasks such as organization and planning can help you become a more effective leader.

Remembering

1. Define group leadership. Be sure to explain the role of communication in the definition.
2. Distinguish between formal and informal leadership.
3. Identify traits commonly associated with effective leaders.
4. Distinguish among authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire styles of leadership.
5. Explain situational leadership.
6. Explain leadership in terms of leadership functions.
7. Identify basic guidelines for effective group leadership.
8. Contrast transformational leadership with transactional leadership.

Reflecting

1. We are all familiar with formal leaders—chairmen, chairwomen, directors, presidents, and the like. Think about a group that you are a member of and explain how informal leaders emerge from groups. A good example is the emergence of leadership in classrooms. A teacher is the formal leader, yet even if teachers are doing outstanding jobs, student leaders emerge in each class. Using the functions approach, explain how student leaders emerge in classes and fulfill group roles.
2. Identify a set of conditions under which you might prefer an authoritarian leader over a democratic leader. Identify a set of conditions under which you might prefer a laissez-faire leader over a democratic leader.
3. Clearly, most people tend to prefer a democratic leader. Using terminology developed in previous chapters on communication, listening, group member roles, etc., explain the preference people have for democratic group leadership.
4. You are a member of many groups. Identify the leadership functions that you are comfortable performing.

Reaching

1. Select a well-known leader. Research his or her leadership style. Write a paper in which you analyze that style in the terms presented in this chapter.
2. A good leader helps people become good followers. Review the chapter and interpret the information on leadership from the perspective of a good follower. What traits does a good follower exhibit? In what ways do good followers fit the functional approach to leadership?
3. Many plays and television shows examine group activities. One of the most famous is *Twelve Angry Men.* View or read the play. Evaluate the leadership styles of the formal leader and the informal leaders. Select specific lines from the play that reveal the leadership qualities of each.
4. Bookstores typically have sections that deal exclusively with leadership. Select one of the books for review. Read the book and present your review as a speech to the class.

Real Life

1. Divide the class into four groups. Select a task for the groups to perform. For example, ask the groups to recommend a solution to a problem at the school or in the community. Assign a leader to each of three groups, asking each to assume a different style. In another group, assign no leader at all. Give the groups twenty-five minutes to solve the problem. Ask each group to report out its results. Following the report, ask each group to analyze its own processes. Evaluate the performance of the group without a designated leader, the authoritarian-led group, the democratic-led group, and the laissez-faire group.
2. Conduct a panel discussion on leadership.
   - Allow sufficient time for research of the topic.
   - Establish each panel member as an "authority" on a leadership theory or style.
   - After researching the topic, develop a set of questions to which panelists will respond.

13 Chapter Thirteen Application.Maintenance

Key Concept

Good interpersonal communication skills will allow you to contribute to a supportive climate, a set of attitudes that will produce open, positive, supportive communication.

Chapter Objectives

- use understanding of supportive climate as a basis for making interpersonal communication decisions
- understand the concept of team building
- apply principles of the supportive climate to offering and receiving criticisms
- learn means of overcoming communication barriers



Key Terms

- defensive climate
- supportive climate
- team building

Scenario

It's been a bad day for Pilar. She has been working hard on a difficult project with a tight deadline. She really isn't prepared for her meeting with the office staff. The staff wants to talk briefly about the upcoming holiday office party. This isn't a big issue for Pilar, so she doesn't want to take the time for the discussion. She also doesn't want to cancel the meeting. JaRon is in charge of coordinating the preparations for the party.

Pilar: *OK, everybody. Let's get this show on the road. I really need to get back to the quarterly report.*
(Everyone but Pilar exchanges glances with other group members.)

JaRon: *Well, I'll try to be brief.*

Pilar: *Great. I can do "brief." What's the plan?*

JaRon: *Well, we felt we could reserve the Classic Room at the Hilton. It's conveniently located.*

Pilar: *That's not really a great idea, is it? The Hilton wasn't really good for our last party.*

JaRon: *Oh. The committee thought it was a good deal. The price was good.*

Pilar: *I suggested using the restaurant downstairs, but whatever. I guess I don't care. Go on.*

JaRon: *We also discussed bringing spouses or dates. We thought…*

Pilar: *I can see this coming. Alicia and I will probably not like this one—right, Alicia?*

JaRon: *What?*

Pilar: *Go ahead. I'm just saying that since Alicia and I aren't married, we'll probably be dragging a date to this thing.*

JaRon: *Well...we were going to recommend dates and spouses. I'm sorry you feel that's a problem, but we didn't really know you and Alicia would be offended.*

Alicia: *I'm not offended...*

Pilar: *Go on. I didn't mean to rain on your parade.*

JaRon: *Didn't mean to....What is the problem? I mean, if you don't like what I'm doing, why don't you just say so? I'm really sick of being second-guessed. Maybe I'd better ask you a few more questions later before we go on with the committee report.*

Pilar: *Don't worry. I'm sure you and your little committee did the best they could. This party could be pretty lame, anyway.*

That's more than enough. It's easy to see that Pilar is not being very receptive. Imagine how JaRon feels. Pilar's bad day has turned into a bad day for JaRon...and probably for everyone else in this tension-filled, unproductive meeting. How could things have gone better? You could probably point out many things that Pilar shouldn't have said or should have said differently.

Skill One: Empathy

In one way or another, empathy is part of many successful communication practices. Empathy is the ability to put ourselves in someone else's place and understand their feelings. Pilar probably never stopped to understand how JaRon (and his committee members) would feel about her negative comments. Just stopping to put yourself in someone else's place can help you avoid many communication errors.

Empathy might sound like an easy skill to develop and use, but it is not. First, it requires us to temporarily suspend thinking about ourselves and think about others. Then you have to turn that understanding of others into a positive communication behavior, verbal or nonverbal. Empathy alone is admirable, but to be productive it must turn into action. Second, you must realize that empathy is never perfect. You simply cannot accurately identify

with someone's feelings all the time. Try as you might, you simply cannot have total empathy. Third, you should take care not to let other's feelings overpower your own. Empathy is understanding other people's feelings, not letting their feelings replace your own.

Another way of looking at empathy is to think about the word "understanding." If you disagree with someone, you can still understand their point of view. This level of understanding is more than understanding the other person's position or argument; it is understanding the feelings behind the position or argument. Understanding can then become communicating with understanding.

Interpersonal Insight—Showing Empathy



Showing your empathy can be as important as feeling empathy. You can let others see your understanding—or at least your willingness to understand—by following some simple suggestions.

Adopt nonverbal behaviors that show understanding.	• Lean forward. • Look at the speaker. • Nod if you understand. • Use silence. It gives the other person time to express himself or herself.
Reflect the message.	• When appropriate, show you understand by summarizing or paraphrasing what the other person is saying. • Allow the other person to clarify your understanding by commenting, even by disagreeing, with your paraphrase.
Use think time.	• Don't be so busy talking that you don't think about what you are going to say. • During your "think time," consider how what you are preparing to say will be interpreted by the other person.
Hope for—but don't expect—the other person to be empathetic.	• If you are being empathetic, you hope the other person will be the same. But sometimes, being understanding means understanding that the other person is too emotional to be empathetic. • Give the other person the chance to understand you. Ask if you are understood. Model understanding.
If you don't understand, say so.	• Sometimes, despite your best efforts, you don't really understand another person's feelings. You can let the person know that.

Skill Two: Creating a Supportive Climate

Your communication behaviors can help develop a supportive or a defensive climate for communication. A supportive climate is a communication context in which people will trust each other and communicate openly. A defensive climate is the opposite—a communication context in which trust and open communication are unlikely because of negative expectations.*

What exactly is defensive communication? Defensive communication occurs when a group member perceives or anticipates a threat to himself or herself. As a result, he or she directs communication toward defending himself or herself. For example, if a group member thinks that other group members see her as incapable, she will likely spend a lot of time and energy proving to others (and to herself) that she is not. If she feels attacked, she will likely abandon task and maintenance roles and concentrate on a self-centered role.

Imagine that you are in a discussion at an advertising firm. All participants are supposed to be bringing up ideas to sell a new product. One participant feels as if no one respects her ideas. In fact, several of her ideas have been ridiculed by the others. She feels threatened, and it doesn't take long for her to become defensive. She modifies her communication to reduce her negative feelings. What will she likely say or do? Here are some responses she might have:

- "Oh yeah? Well, my ideas are better than the stupid ideas you come up with." She defends herself by attacking others and increasing tension in the group. Can this possibly be good for the group or the individuals?
- "No one likes me. That's why my ideas are never accepted." She expresses her feelings of rejection. Not only will she lose effectiveness, the group will likely have a serious problem.
- *Silence.* This "comment" expresses withdrawal.

Note that these behaviors (aggressiveness, withdrawal, self-criticism) are self-centered behaviors, unlikely to contribute to group task or maintenance. You will recall that self-centered behaviors usually don't help the group. Developing supportive communication can help avoid these problems

To understand supportive and defensive communication, you must consider the role of perception. A person will react defensively if he or she perceives a threat. In other words, other members of the group might not react to a comment because the comment seems unimportant...even positive. But if a person perceives a threat, that is enough to cause a defensive reaction. Because perception is so important, good group members will constantly look at issues

**Gibb, Jack R., "Defensive Communication," The Journal of Communication, Vol. 11, No. 3 (September, 1961), 141-148.*

through the eyes of others in the group. Again, the idea of empathy in communication becomes very valuable.

The differences between a supportive and defensive climate can best be seen by examining the variables that produce each. These variables are all the result of communication.

Behaviors that yield a supportive climate	Behaviors that yield a defensive climate
Description	Evaluation
Problem orientation	Control
Spontaneity	Strategy
Empathy	Neutrality
Equality	Superiority
Provisionalism	Certainty



Groups accomplish more with a supportive climate.

To understand these variables, assume that you are in a group discussion. You've just made a comment that you feel is a good contribution to the group's work—say, a suggestion to solve a problem. You get the following types of responses. Which will encourage you to participate? Which will keep the discussion going positively? Which will cause you anger, disappointment, discomfort, or embarrassment?

Description	"That idea seems complex. Could you explain it a bit more?"	**Evaluation**	"That is not a very good idea."
Problem orientation	"That's an approach we have not tried yet. It could be useful."	**Control**	"Save the idea until it's your turn."
Spontaneity	"That's interesting. Let's think outside the box. An approach like that never occurred to me."	**Strategy**	"That idea really doesn't fit into our plans, does it?"
Empathy	"I understand how you feel. Even though I don't completely follow your idea, I can see why you're going that direction."	**Neutrality**	"I don't support your idea, but I guess I won't fight it. It doesn't make any difference to me."
Equality	"OK. Let's consider it. Everybody's ideas should be evaluated and put on the list of possible solutions."	**Superiority**	"That's not a bad idea...for a new group member, that is. Those of us who have worked on the problem before have heard it before, though."
Provisionalism	"That contradicts what I think about the problem, but let's consider it. I'm willing to look at this from a fresh angle."	**Certainty**	"I'm sure that the other plan is better. There's no point in going much further, as far as I'm concerned."

Evaluation vs. Description. When someone says, "That is not a very good idea," he might score points for honesty, but he won't help the group much. A purely evaluative comment of this sort leaves few options for whoever offered the idea: He can drop the idea and accept rejection, or he can fight for his idea and self-esteem. Either way, the group is likely to stall. Why? Dropping the idea, even if it isn't a very good one, could be the first of many omissions made by group members. If they all have to risk an immediate, negative evaluation, they might stop making suggestions altogether. By changing the evaluative comment to a descriptive comment ("That idea seems complex. Could you explain it a bit more?"), discussion is promoted, not stalled.

Control vs. Problem Orientation. When a task group meets, each member is related to every other member by the task itself. Supposedly, all group members are trying to solve the same problem or reach the same goal; so long as all members believe that other members are working on the task (that is, maintaining a problem orientation), comments are likely to be productive. When a group member abandons a problem orientation, she is likely to arouse defensiveness. For example, if an idea is rejected ("Save the idea until it's your turn"), members of the group might perceive the rejection as a means of controlling the group, not solving the problem. If someone wants to dominate a group more than solve the problem, resentment results. No one wants to feel controlled. To avoid defensiveness arising out of control, all discussants should remember the task at hand. Sometimes it is necessary to spend time on ideas that you don't personally agree with. You can help the group by reminding everyone of the task at hand.

Of course, all group members welcome some control in the form of constructive leadership. Without leadership, the group often stalls. But the leader must remember that leadership exists for the group, not vice versa. When a leader seeks control for its own sake, she runs the risk of creating a defensive climate.

Strategy vs. Spontaneity. A comment such as, "That idea really doesn't fit into our plans, does it?" makes the group's work appear pre-determined. If members of a group perceive that one or more group members are strategically manipulating the direction of the group, defensiveness can result. Members feel "railroaded," or forced in a direction they did not freely choose. Generally the members of a group respond to spontaneous, genuine comments. No one appreciates being manipulated.

If a group member has a "secret" strategy, one of the most effective means of avoiding strategic discussion in favor of spontaneity is to make the "secret" known. A member who has a goal for the group that is unstated is promoting a "hidden agenda." A hidden agenda is every bit as real as a printed agenda, but it is know only to a few group members, perhaps even to one. To avoid hidden agendas, you can sometimes "surface" the agenda. To surface an issue or agenda is to name it and bring it out into the open so everyone can be aware of it and respond to it.

Neutrality vs. Empathy. If a person is neutral, some people will interpret the neutrality as uncaring or detached. If a person's communication behaviors are interpreted as conveying a cold, "I-don't-care" attitude, others will likely respond with some defensiveness. Why? Even if you intend your "neutrality"

to be objectivity toward the topic, you should take care that you don't encourage others to see it as uncaring about their feelings and attitudes.

Empathy, on the other hand, conveys caring for other people's feelings. A person can be objective about issues and empathetic about people at the same time. If people feel as if their emotions are considered by others, they will be less likely to react defensively.

Superiority vs. Equality. What would you think if you perceived that someone felt superior to you? What if that person's communication behaviors made you feel inferior? Would your group communication be helped or hurt? Superiority always implies inferiority, and if a person feels inferior, he or she might react defensively. Especially in the United States, equality is an expectation in most group interactions. Feelings of equality contribute to a supportive communication climate.

Certainty vs. Provisionalism. If someone is certain, he or she might feel as if there really isn't any point to listening to others. A person who is certain that he or she is right can often communicate that others are wrong. If a person in a group is unwilling to listen to anyone else and unwilling to discuss issues from other perspectives, the other group members might become defensive. That is, they may begin defending themselves rather than discussing issues. To combat certainty and the defensiveness that goes with it, practice provisionalism. Provisionalism is willingness to experiment and investigate one's own beliefs, attitudes, and ideas (and those of others). A person who practices provisionalism in a discussion doesn't have to give up any of his attitudes, beliefs, and values; he does have to suspend his certainty for the sake of the discussion.

Communication Management—Using "I-Comments"



Sometimes a supportive climate is the result of "I-comments." An "I-comment" is simply a statement that begins with "I" and expresses how a group member feels. To be effective, an "I-comment" will follow the principles outlined previously. The use of "I" helps the speaker describe feelings rather than evaluate. It makes first person comments about the speaker rather than second person comments (you) about others in the group. Compare the comments below. Which set will be better for the group to hear and respond to? Which will more likely produce a defensive reaction?

I feel that the group is losing sight of the goal.	This group is losing sight of the goal.
I sometimes think that we'd be better off to research the topic a little longer.	You guys need to research the topic a little longer.
I would like to hear more about the new plan.	The new plan is the best idea. That's what we should be talking about.
I feel like my comments aren't really being taken into account.	You guys aren't listening to what I have to say.



I-comments prevent evaluation and suggest ownership for feelings.

Interpersonal Insight—Giving and Receiving Criticism



In both social and professional situations, we are frequently called upon to give or receive criticism. We sometimes think of the word "criticism" as a negative term. However, criticism can be positive and constructive when it helps a person improve without arousing negativity. To give criticism well, we must learn to be supportive while sharing our views. To receive criticism well, we must develop an attitude that allows others to speak frankly to us without reacting negatively to them.

To offer criticism effectively...

1. Know when to offer criticism. Sometimes, you feel you know things that could improve another person's effectiveness. But just because you feel you know better doesn't mean criticism is appropriate. Choose an appropriate context for offering criticism, one that will reduce defensiveness. For example, people can usually receive criticism privately better than they can publicly. In addition, you should be sensitive to how the other person feels. If he or she is feeling confused or unsure, perhaps criticism will hurt. Select a time when you gauge that he or she will feel better about hearing your opinions.
2. Be empathetic. How would you like to hear the criticism? Use your empathy to help you offer criticism in a supportive, constructive manner.
3. "Sandwich" a negative comment between two positive ones. Our tendency when offering criticism is to deal directly with the areas where someone else can improve. Never forget that positive comments are also criticism. If you are positive before and after you offer criticism, you can help someone accept the more negative comments.
4. Be descriptive of the behavior. Rather than say "You aren't being very friendly on the phone" (which describes and judges the person), say "You're tone of voice on the phone is rushed and a bit gruff." By describing how you hear the tone of voice, you avoid describing the person as "unfriendly." That sort of description will likely cause defensiveness.
5. Offer suggestions for improvement. Sometimes a person is more willing to hear criticism when it is phrased positively as a suggestion for improvement. For example, if a person hasn't developed computer and technical skills very quickly, you could say "Your computer skills aren't really very good." Do you see how that kind of evaluative statement would cause defensiveness? Instead, you might say, "I think your job performance would improve if you took advantage of the company's computer training courses." This suggestion for improvement is less threatening.

To receive criticism effectively...

1. Listen. Even if you think the criticism is unfair, allow the other person to make comments.
2. Ask questions. Sometimes a misunderstanding can lead to defensiveness. Check your own understanding by asking for explanation. For example, if you are told that you should take advantage of the company's computer training course, ask "Which courses do you think would be most beneficial?" This helps you get more specific information for your consideration.
3. Do a reality check. If you get suggestions for improvement from someone, you can always check out those suggestions with someone else. Maybe someone else can help you understand the criticism.
4. Remember that *you* make the decision. Unless the criticism is given to you by someone who has the power to insist that you change, you usually can decide if you want to accept the criticism. When you remember that you have the power of decision making, you might feel better about hearing criticism.
5. Don't confuse the message with how it is delivered. A person might deliver a criticism clumsily, hurting your feelings or making you feel defensive. Still, the person's message could be very helpful. Even if a message is expressed in an unsupportive way, consider the content of the message on its merits.

Skill Three: Team Building

If a group is working closely together, developing relationships, and striving for a common goal, we think of the group as a team. A team shares a common identity: Members see themselves as part of the group. A team helps individual members: They cooperate. A team willingly assumes roles that advance the team's goals: They do what they can for the team. Members of groups form relationships: They might even be friends. Group members rely on each other: They develop trusting relationships. Team building is a process that helps a group form these characteristics. Team building can be either formal or informal.

A team is working well together if...

- members of the team feel comfortable with each other.
- members of the team can manage well in stressful situations.
- members of the team understand each other's abilities.
- members of the team understand each other's preferences
- members of the team have confidence in each other.
- members of the team divide responsibilities well.

Informal team building happens during the group's efforts at addressing a task. Usually, if task and maintenance needs are met and if self-centered roles aren't taking over, group members develop identity, cooperation, teamwork, trust, and friendships. As a result, they work together even better. The process is like a cycle: Working together produces team spirit (team building), which produces even better work together. You can see how this benefits both the team and the individual. The team does better work and the individuals enjoy themselves.

Formal team building attempts to produce these results with greater speed or certainty. A formal team building exercise is designed specifically to promote identity, cooperation, teamwork, and trust. Often, a formal team building activity is not even related to the group's primary task. The team building process is designed to enhance the maintenance elements of the group. Sometimes, a team building experience will even be scheduled for a group that has been together for a long time. Perhaps the group isn't working as well as it used to. Maybe the group needs to be refreshed.

Getting-Acquainted Activities. When a group is just beginning, a getting-acquainted activity can help get the group started. A good getting-acquainted activity will help build a team in three ways: It will give the members an

opportunity to learn names. It will allow members to discover information about each other. It will give the members a chance to talk without the pressure of solving an important task.. The simplest get-acquainted activity is a simple set of introductions. Going around a table and introducing yourselves is quick and simple, but not much team building occurs. Other activities can be more interesting and more effective.

In large groups, "people bingo" is an example of a low-key team building activity to help group members get acquainted.

1. Each group member is given a grid (see next page).
2. The group members are then given a time period (30 minutes, for example) to find people who fit in each square.
3. As each member finds someone who fits, he or she enters the name in the grid. Names can only be used once.
4. At the end of the activity, the group re-convenes to discuss whose names have been entered.



Physical challenge courses are commonly used in organizations for team building.

A person who has been to Europe.	A person whose parents are from outside the U.S.	A person who played collegiate sports.	A person who was homecoming king or queen.	A person who likes classical music.
A person who has had a birthday in the past month.	A person who has been on television.	A person who has lived in another country.	A person who likes old movies.	A person who speaks a language other than English.
A person who plays a musical instrument.	A person who cooks for a hobby.	A person who has purchased a CD or tape in the past week.	A person who has had a part in a play.	A person who is a member of a club or civic organization.
A person who likes seafood.	A person who drives a car not made in the U.S. or in Japan.	A person who has attended school out of state.	A person who likes science fiction.	A person who knows the capital of Brazil.
A person who knows who invented bifocals.	A person who voted in the last election.	A person who knows the meaning of the word syzygy.	A person who has been to the Caribbean.	A person who likes cauliflower.

Smaller groups can benefit from a structured introduction. Structured introductions encourage people to share information about themselves so others can know them.

1. Each group member gets an introduction questionnaire to record his or her information and that of other group members.
2. Each group member fills out his or her questionnaire, which forms the basis of personal introductions.
3. A group member volunteers to go first and respond out loud to the questions. When he or she is finished, he or she picks the next person to go through the questionnaire.

Name	What is your job, task, or assignment?	What are your hobbies or special interests?	What one thing really makes you excited or enthusiastic?	What was your most recent challenge and how did you address it?	Why do you believe you are part of this group?

(Use as many rows as there are people in the group)

Puzzles. Sometimes a group can learn about each other as the members begin solving a fictional task. Since the group will soon enough be addressing a real task, a puzzle or other task will give members a chance to work on solving a problem that is fun and low-risk. In so doing, they can learn about each other, learn how to rely on each other, and generally build teamwork habits. Puzzles are exceptionally good if teams are to be developed out of large groups. If that is the case, the team can build bonds in a good-natured competition with other teams. For example, if you are in a class of twenty-four, six groups of four can solve the same puzzle, get to know each other, and build teamwork in an atmosphere of friendly competition.

The are many team building books that will supply puzzles. Magazines and books of games can also provide ideas. On the next page are two quick samples of games you can invent or find in specialized books or magazines.

Puzzle One

Each of the following items gives a common fact or phrase. As a group, figure out the sentence. Select someone to explain your answers to the larger group. For example if the item says "there are 26 L in the A," the correct answer is "there are 26 *letters* in the *alphabet.*" (An actual team building exercise might have15-25 of these items...or as many as time will allow. Don't forget to allow time for reporting out, when the groups can compare their answers.)

There are 8 N in the S	There are 8 *notes* in the *scale.*
A S has 4 S	A *square* has 4 *sides.*
A B T has 9 P	A *baseball team* has 9 *players.*
The U S F has 13 S and 50 S	The US *flag* has13 *stripes* and 50 *stars.*
There are 2.54 C in an I	There are 2.54 *centimeters* in an *inch.*
A C has 9 L	A *cat* has 9 *lives.*

This puzzle presents common words and phrases in an usual way. The group's job is to get as many as possible.

Suddendeath time sudden death overtime	**reawithson** within reason	**crazy ikd** crazy mixed-up kid
c **r** **townrivals** **s** **s** cross town rivals	**l** **i** **v** **i** **n** **g** living on the edge	**VIOLET** shrinking violet

For each of these kinds of puzzles, keep your goal in mind. Give the members an opportunity to solve a problem in a way that lets them get to know each other. Don't make the puzzles so easy that they aren't a challenge.

Physical Challenges. Sometimes a team undergoes physical challenges as part of a team building experience. In fact, some communities have special obstacle courses and special "guides" who work with businesses and organizations to help build teams. These physical challenges can be fun and exciting. They are like puzzles, but they take physical activity. They allow group members to move around, dress informally, and experience things together. However, anyone planning a physical team building experience should keep in mind the physical limitations of the team.

Feeling Heard. One of the most important elements of team building is taking time to talk as a group about the group process. Sometimes group members get so wrapped up in solving a problem that they don't take time to discuss how the group is functioning. Setting aside specific times to visit about the group's process and reflect on ways to improve can help teamwork.

One simple exercise is "Plus/Delta." A Plus/Delta exercise typically occurs at the conclusion of a group meeting, but can occur at the start. It allows group members to reflect on how the group is doing.

1. In Plus/Delta, everyone needs to speak without being interrupted.
2. Everyone can offer a "plus," something he or she thinks is going particularly well. They can also offer a "delta." In mathematics, delta (Δ) is the symbol for change. A delta is something the person wishes the group could change.
3. Plusses can be compliments, thanks, or descriptions of how the group has worked well.
4. Deltas are not simply complaints. Deltas are changes that could help the group work better. A delta should be phrased remembering the elements of supportive communication and avoiding comments that might create defensiveness.
5. The plusses and deltas are listed for the group.
6. After each member has had a chance to enter plusses and deltas, the group can reflect on the list and think about changes they can make as a group—or as individuals—to improve group functioning.

Here's what a Plus/Delta list could be like:

+	Δ
+ the ability of the group to remember the needs of individuals	Δ if we all return from break on time, we could get more done
+ the willingness of the group to help new members understand the issues that have already been discussed	Δ we might be able to break into sub-groups to work out some of the details for the larger group
+ taking regular breaks to allow us to stretch	Δ I'd be happy to bring some snacks for the next meeting, if everyone thought that would be OK
+ the minutes Susan provides of each meeting	Δ sometimes, we are breaking into side conversations that make it hard for all of us to hear the main group conversations
	Δ more information on what other groups have done would be helpful



Chapter 13 Summary

Group members need to develop skills that will help in keeping the group functioning well. Empathy helps keep groups functioning well because it allows group members to understand each other. With empathy and other behaviors, a group will develop a supportive climate and avoid defensive communication. The same attitudes and behaviors that help us develop a supportive climate can also help us when giving and receiving criticism. Teams are special kinds of groups that depend greatly on togetherness. Sometimes, special team building exercises allow group members to learn to work together more effectively.

Remembering

1. Identify and explain the seven pairs of variables that create supportive and defensive communication climates. Explain how these variables can help you make communication decisions.
2. List and explain five suggestions for offering criticism.
3. List and explain five suggestions for receiving criticism.
4. Review the characteristics of a team as identified in this chapter. Explain what distinguishes a team from any other group.
5. Explain the function of team building.

Reflecting

1. Select three of the pairs of variables from the information on supportive and defensive climate. Imagine that a group member is making comments that are creating defensive responses. Put yourself in the position of a person in the group and explain why each creates defensiveness.
2. Using the same ideas from #1, explain how you might change the climate from defensive to supportive. What kinds of comments could you make to reduce defensiveness?
3. Team building is common in athletic teams. As a group, prepare a list of things that athletic teams do to increase their teamwork. How can these things be adapted to help discussion and problem-solving groups become better?
4. Describe how you would like to receive criticism. Consider when and where you would like to receive it. Explain how a person could give you the criticism in a way that would be positive and supportive.

Reaching

1. Develop your own team building activity. You can choose from activities in books on team building or in magazines containing puzzles and games. Don't forget that your goal is to build togetherness and mutual understanding, not simply to have fun.
2. Create posters promoting supportive communication. Use cartoons, illustrations, slogans…anything you can suggest that will remind your class to favor supportiveness over defensiveness.
3. The activities at the end of Chapter Nine introduced the play *Twelve Angry Men*, a famous play centered on a jury in a murder trial. The play is filled with comments from jurors that produce defensive responses and comments that are supportive. Find examples of both within the play and use your findings to discuss the group's operation. There are two motion picture versions of the play; watching the video could be very helpful. Notice also the actors' uses of nonverbal expression to convey the qualities that promote defensiveness and supportiveness.
4. If your school has athletic teams, you probably have coaches skilled in team building. Invite one or more of the coaches to present to your class on team building. (If you can, ask several to present a panel on team building.) Focus your interest and questions on communication. After the presentation determine how you could adapt the athletic strategies to other team activities in a business, professional, or social situation.

Real Life

1. Conduct a Plus/Delta exercise after one of your class sessions. It could be led by your instructor or by a student. Use the exercise to suggest changes in classroom processes.
2. The ability to handle difficult group situations without creating defensiveness is valued by organizations. Often, leaders in organizations are able to lead group activities by following some of the principles identified in this chapter. Invite a leader from school or the community to visit with your class on leadership. Develop some questions that will prompt them to reflect on the supportiveness or defensiveness.
3. Conduct a group discussion on a controversial topic. While a small group (6-8) attempts to discuss the issue and advance a solution, another small group (6-8) will observe the group. This is called a "fishbowl" exercise because the group members in the discussion are being carefully observed by the others. Following the discussion, the outside group becomes the inside group and attempts to identify a list of communication behaviors that could be supportive or defensive.

14 Chapter Fourteen
Application.Task Skills

Key Concept

Most task groups are engaged in some kind of problem-solving activity, which frequently involves data-gathering and brainstorming. Decision-making is also a skill that depends on communication.

Chapter Objectives

- learn to use a problem-solving sequence for task groups
- identify the characteristics of effective brainstorming
- identify means of reaching decisions such as voting and consensus
- augment traditional research with data-gathering techniques



Key Terms

- brainstorming
- consensus
- ownership
- problem solving sequence

Scenario

The organization is developing plans for improving their web sites. Pilar is attempting to put together the best way for developing her own office's suggestions. She sends JaRon, Alicia, and James an e-mail requesting their advice.

Pilar's e-mail:

TO: JaRon, Alicia, James
RE: Web site development
DATE: 02/14/02

The central office has asked for input from all departments on web site development. You all are aware of our current web-based services and our informational web page. How would you suggest we proceed in putting together our own suggestions? I want to be sure that any new development in Internet services meets our needs, as well as those of other offices. If you have suggestions on what we should do, please respond by Friday. We'll place this topic on Monday's agenda and discuss all your suggestions then.

Pilar

JaRon's response:

TO: Pilar
RE: Web site development
DATE: 02/14/02

Thanks for asking for suggestions. Whatever we do, I am strongly in favor of maximizing the input of everyone involved. Our secretaries and clerks deal with the web site every week, and I'm sure they would like a say in web site development. I know our sales staff is too far-flung to bring into a meeting, but they also have a lot of information we can use. I believe our decision should be based on the kinds of data that we have in our own staff—the question is, how do we get the information so we can make a good decision? I'd like to discuss collecting information as our first step.

Alicia's response:

TO: Pilar
RE: Web site development
DATE: 02/15/02

I got your request yesterday afternoon, and I'm eager to work on the issue. In fact, I think we should follow a formal problem-solving plan. It's more important than ever to define what we have and what we need before taking the next step. If we can sit down and discuss the weaknesses of our current web site (which is already six months old!), we can be in a better position to make good suggestions. And this should be an issue on which we can get agreement from everybody before taking the next step. Besides, a formal problem-solving session can help keep us focused on the task. Thanks for asking for input. I'll help in any way I can.

James' response:

TO: Pilar
RE: Web site development
DATE: 02/15/02

I'm prepared for a brainstorming session on the subject. I've been thinking about this issue for a while, and I think if we get a bunch of us together, we can come up with some great ideas. The staff is creative, and a brainstorming session always brings out the best in us. I look forward to talking on Monday. Thanks.

From the tone of the responses, Pilar has some people eager to work on the problem, even if they are coming from different directions:

- JaRon favors gathering data and involving lots of people.
- Alicia wants a formal problem-solving session, with agreement from everybody.
- James wants to brainstorm.

While it seems that the three people have different approaches, Pilar shouldn't have too much trouble incorporating all the suggestions into one plan. If Pilar has the time—and is willing to work—she can see that the outstanding suggestions made by JaRon, Alicia, and James all have a chance to work toward effective task completion.

Problem Solving

When we are in a task group, we often feel the need for an organized and thorough approach to solving a problem. Problem solving can emerge informally. Since we've all faced problems before, we all have our own ways of solving them. However, if every member of an eight-person group adopts his or her own problem-solving approach, the group can become disorganized. A problem-solving sequence is a systematic approach to solving a problem that allows individual creativity while providing focus and order. Many organizations advocate their own brand of problem solving. (Your own school may have a preferred problem-solving model. If so, compare it to the one presented in this chapter and use whichever you and your instructor find most effective.)

The most famous problem-solving model was proposed by philosopher-educator John Dewey. Since it is a process, each step depends on the successful completion of the step before it. For the chart below, assume that a group is attempting to solve a very simple task: They have a visiting client from out of town and they want to take her to a nice restaurant for lunch. Here are the stages of the Dewey problem-solving sequence and how they might be applied to this simple task.

Each stage of the problem-solving sequence outlines what the group needs to do:

Step One	Felt Difficulty	Determine if there is a problem.
Step Two	Definition of Problem	Analyze and describe exactly what the problem is.
Step Three	Proposal of Solutions	Generate a list of possible ways to solve the problem.
Step Four	Evaluation and Selection of Solution	Choose which solution(s) the group wants to adopt.
Step Five	Action	Take steps to see that the solution(s) is turned into action.



Once solutions are proposed, it is important to discuss and evaluate them.

	Description	Application
Step One: Felt Difficulty	The "felt difficulty" is the recognition that a problem might exist. Sometimes the "felt difficulty" originates within the group. Other times, it comes from outside the group. It is the result of two beliefs: First, a group or individual must believe that some problem likely exists. Second, the group or individual must believe that the problem can be addressed or solved. Sometimes, early in a task discussion, the first step is to determine if each group member has similar attitudes about the "felt difficulty."	For example, someone might feel that the last time an out-of-town client was treated to lunch, the restaurant was too far away, too noisy, or too crowded. Perhaps the food wasn't good or the wait was too long. If someone in the group making this simple decision feels there is a potential problem, he can make his feelings known. If other people agree that there is a potential issue, the "felt difficulty" stage develops, which leads to the next stage of the problem-solving sequence.
Step Two: Definition of Problem	Once the individuals or group identify the felt difficulty, the difficulty must be defined more precisely. Groups often overlook this step, leading to miscommunication and wasted time. Defining the problem is essential to developing any kind of solution. In fact, this step will often contain within it the solution that the group will ultimately want to make.	At this stage, the small group identifies the problem. Perhaps they will phrase it more positively as a goal. For example, the group could conclude that the problem is to find a nice restaurant that isn't too crowded and provides a wide variety of food so the client can choose a dish to his or her liking.

Step Three: Proposal of Solutions

Once the group has decided what the problem really is, the group examines options for addressing the problem. This stage is important because it generates the "list" of answers from which the group will choose. It is vital that members of a group feel as if each had a role in preparing the list, that his or her views were represented.

The solutions proposed for the problem above might be something like this:

1. Eat lunch early, before the crowds develop. The client is from one time zone away, so this will likely be better anyway.
2. Cater a lunch in, so we can talk privately.
3. Make reservations at both a formal and an informal restaurant and ask the client which she would prefer.

In this case, the group might have already decided that there were plenty of good restaurants—the difficulty was timing the lunch and pleasing the client.

Step Four: Evaluation and Selection of Solution

Sometimes, proposed solutions can be combined. Generally, however, the group must choose one or combine several to make a final decision. The group's task is to set up criteria for judging the possible solutions. Then the group applies the criteria and makes its selection.

The group might determine that these are the criteria for a good plan:

- Speed—we have to be able to do lunch in 90 minutes.
- Atmosphere—we have to be able to talk if we are going to do business during lunch.
- Variety—we must be sure that the client is able to choose food that she prefers.

Based on these criteria, the group can eliminate solution #2. If speed is really important, the best solution is probably #1. Eating early avoids the crowd and avoids the noise. And if they eat early, they will likely be able to get a reservation at many restaurants.

Step Five: Action

After the group has determined the solution, the group must take appropriate action. "Appropriate action" will, of course, be different for different groups and different problems. However, a decision without action is the same as no decision at all.

The group might assign someone to make the reservations, being sure to get a table out of the noisy part of the restaurant. They could further decide who will go to the lunch, who will drive, etc.



A group could use the problem solving steps to address a restaurant selection issue.

Problem-Solving Prompts

Here are some basic questions that can help as a group goes through Steps One, Two, and Four. The questions can be asked aloud, as a checklist. Or they can be reminders of the attitude that group members should have at each step.

Felt Difficulty

- Do I feel okay about this (topic/question/issue)?
- Have others voiced concerns about this (topic/question/issue)?
- What will likely happen if we don't discuss this (topic/question/issue)?
- Should I bring up the (topic/question/issue) with the group, or should I first discuss it with individuals?
- Is there some information I need to determine if the (topic/question/issue) is important?

Definition of Problem

- What particular felt difficulty created the need for this meeting/discussion/group?
- How can we best describe the problem? The following list will help the group work together to define the problem in a more positive manner.

ambiguous	clear up; clarify
disadvantageous	advantageous
expensive	economical
impractical	practical
inconsistent	consistent
ineffective	effective
misunderstood	understood
misused	used appropriately
outdated	modern; up-to-date
restrictive	flexible
time-consuming	efficient
unclear	clear; clarify
unfair	fair; equitable
unrecognized	well-known; recognized
unsupported	supported
untried	tested; tried
unworkable	workable
vague	precise; clear

- Whom does the problem affect?
- Does the problem produce harmful or undesirable results?
- What causes the problem?
- Does the problem always occur? If so, why? If not, why not?
- Does the problem involve specific terms that are misunderstood or vague?
- Does everyone understand the issue?
- Does the problem result from an attempt to solve another problem?
- What is the history of the problem? Is it a recent problem? How long have we known about it? Why hasn't it been addressed before now?
- Is the problem significant enough to warrant action by the group?
- Does this group have the authority to take the kind of action to solve the problem?
- Does the problem result from rules or laws?
- Does the problem develop from people's attitudes?
- Does the problem require further research? A poll? A questionnaire?

- What have people said about the problem?
- If people knew what was really happening, would they believe there was a problem?

Evaluation and Selection

- Which of the proposed solutions would best solve the problem as defined by the group?
- Would some proposals combine with others to provide a better solution?
- Would the proposed solution create other problems? Would these problems be worse than the ones we have?
- What are the additional benefits of the solutions, apart from solving the defined problem?
- How much would the proposed solution cost in time and money? Is it worth it?
- How would other groups or individuals receive the proposed solution? Would they like it? Who are the individuals and groups we should be concerned with?
- Is the proposed solution temporary or permanent?
- Does one solution have any comparative advantages over the others?
- Is the proposed solution consistent with the moral or ethical beliefs of the group and of other people affected?
- Does the group have the power to enact the solution or merely to recommend it?

Decision and Ownership

All through the problem-solving process, groups make decisions. While you might think that a decision comes only at the end of a group process, think about this: Doesn't the group decide what the problem is? Doesn't a group decide on how to determine if a solution is successful? Doesn't a group decide on such simple things as when to meet and for how long? All these decisions occur long before a group makes a "final" decision. Reaching a decision is an important part of each step of the problem-solving process.

One of the qualities of a good decision is ownership. Ownership is the commitment by individuals to support a decision because they have been part of making the decision. Ownership, also called "buy-in," means that group members will be likely to support the group publicly and to work to see that the group's decisions are acted upon.

Voting. This is a means of decision-making that you probably find very familiar. In America, voting is an respected means of reaching decisions. At

some point in the group process, someone usually suggests a vote on what the group should do. Usually, the group votes by a simple show of hands. Voting has the advantage of moving the group toward a decision. In a parliamentary group (such as a city council or school board), it is the only legitimate way to make important decisions. Voting also allows the majority to "have its way."

When is voting not such a good idea? Think about what happens when the group votes, moves forward, and fails to recognize significant objections from a minority of group members? Unless the vote is unanimous, there will be "losers," people who could feel as if the group is going in the wrong direction. When a vote "buries" problems instead of resolving them, a vote can actually hurt group process.

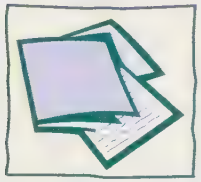
Consensus. Reaching consensus allows a group to make a decision while avoiding a vote. Consensus means "general agreement." Another way of looking at consensus is "a decision that everyone can live with." Reaching consensus requires more than persuading the majority of the group to vote for a decision. Here are strategies for reaching consensus:

1. Allow others to talk. If a person doesn't feel he has had the opportunity to speak his mind or try to persuade others, he will be less likely to join a consensus. On the other hand, if a person feels heard, she is more likely to join the group on a consensus decision, even if it isn't her first choice.
2. Take time. Allowing people to talk will take time. It could be evident early in the group's problem-solving process that the majority would vote a particular way. Rushing a vote will get a decision, but consensus will get ownership. There's a reason why effective group members speak about "building consensus." Consensus is put together a piece at a time. It doesn't develop immediately.
3. Word decisions carefully. A decision can be expressed in a way that divides the group or unifies the group. Spending some time on wording can gain general agreement and ownership. For example, assume that a group is discussing how to allocate vacation time. A poorly worded decision could get a majority vote, but not a consensus: "Because of the volume of business during the summer, no office employee can take a vacation break of longer than three days during the months of June, July, and August." If someone in the group disapproves of this wording (perhaps they think it is too inflexible), ownership could be at risk. A different wording can express the intent of the group and gain support of all group members: "Because of the volume of business during the summer, all office employees are encouraged to schedule extended vacations from September

through May. Exceptions to this policy can only be made in extraordinary or unusual circumstances." The wording of the second decision could bring along all group members.

4. Remember the strategies for generating a supportive climate. If communication within the group is supportive, group members will be more likely to cooperate in reaching consensus.

Communication Strategies—Setting Priorities



Setting priorities is a special kind of decision-making. Setting priorities can mean deciding what is more important than something else. It can also mean deciding what is more urgent than something else. The consensus-building strategies in this chapter will work in setting priorities, but there are also other ways to help a group reach agreement on the importance or urgency of large numbers of items.

Assume that a large group, fifteen people or more, is developing a list of characteristics they would like to see in a new employee. As a group, they have brainstormed a list of characteristics and agree that they understand what each characteristic means. Each group member feels as if he or she has been heard. But what if the list is thirteen items long? How can the group rank order the characteristics so other people will know what is most important? Assume these are the characteristics they have identified.

sense of humor	strong work ethic	fairness	database skills
organization	experience	speaking skills	willingness to listen
empathy	budgeting skills	college degree	good contacts in the business
			respect for diversity

As you can see, the group values personal qualities such as a sense of humor, character traits such as work ethic, and skills such as budgeting. But what does the group think is important?

One way to solve the problem is to divide the large group into smaller groups, say five groups of three. Each group can discuss the items and decide for the small group what is important. After the discussion, each group can cast a special "vote." Give each group five votes that can be allocated as the small group sees fit. If a small group feels that budgeting skills are tremendously important, they can "spend" all five on budgeting. If they would prefer, they could spend two votes on budgeting and one each on work ethic, sense of humor, and speaking skill.

A group leader could tally the votes. In this way the group's will can be registered in a priority list. The list can show that all the traits are important, but some are more important than others.

Brainstorming

With all these things to do—and with the order that comes from a problem-solving sequence—how can individual creativity function in a group? Part of the answer is in the maintenance skills the members of the group exhibit: supporting each other, avoiding defensiveness, promoting participation, etc. One of the processes that helps capitalize on the talents of individual group members is brainstorming.

Brainstorming is the process of developing large numbers of ideas in a short amount of time that can later be evaluated and applied to a task. Brainstorming promotes creativity and participation. If it is to be successful, the group needs to adopt certain norms for brainstorming. While it is properly a task skill, it requires a supportive climate if it is to work. These simple "rules" or norms will help groups function well in brainstorming.

1. Share all ideas with the group. Even if an idea seems strange or unworkable when it's first encountered, it might be the answer to the problem. Or it could jog another group member's creativity so that that person advances a good idea. Members must feel that their ideas are welcome.
2. Withhold evaluation of any idea or comment. By withholding evaluation, you can prevent unintentional comments that create defensiveness. Moreover, the purpose of brainstorming is to come up with ideas that define the problem or explore solutions. In this process, coming up with the ideas is more important than evaluating them. That can be done later. Immediate evaluation can squelch creativity. If someone begins evaluating too soon, gently remind them that this is the brainstorming stage, not the evaluation stage.
3. Reward members of the group for voicing ideas. A simple "good idea" or "good job" often encourages even shy group members to continue contributing. This kind of positive response is not an evaluation of the idea; it is a positive response to the process.
4. Write down all ideas. No matter what your reaction to an idea might be, write it down. If you don't, the group might forget it. All ideas should be treated with respect. Appointing someone to record is an important part of brainstorming. Recording ideas can best be done with a marker on a tablet of paper, on a computer screen visible to all, or on a marker board. This public recording frees other members to think (not write) and helps keep all ideas in front of the group.
5. The more ideas the better. Think "outside the box." Be open to rearranging or combining ideas. Write down the combinations, or they too can be forgotten in the bustle of the process.

Gathering Information

Ultimately, problem solving will depend on information. Without information, the problem-solving sequence is random, based on hunches, feelings, and suppositions. Hunches are important, but they are no substitute for good information about the problem being addressed. Groups generally get their information from three sources:

knowledge and experience of individual group members

Groups exist because they share a common interest or task. Usually the task is one that the group members have some experience with. One of the benefits of a group is that it combines the knowledge and experience of a number of individuals, giving the group a broader base of information than any one individual has.

research into the knowledge and experience of others

Just as individuals use library and Internet resources for research papers and private decisions, groups sometimes need to do research to learn what others have written. Groups themselves don't do this kind of research. Instead, they rely on individual group members to do the research and bring the important information to the attention of all members.

opinions, beliefs, and values researched directly by the group

This is one of the most important sources for any group. Groups often conduct their own surveys of the opinions, beliefs, and values of others. This information isn't readily available to individual group members through their own experiences or through library/Internet research. It must be generated by the group.

Communication Management—Strategies for Gathering "Original" Information



You've undoubtedly researched topics in the library or on the Internet. This type of research can be indispensable for a group. Yet getting information that doesn't exist in the library is also important. Groups often need information that isn't written anywhere. It exists in people. If the group is going to meet its goals, it must get the information out of the people and into the decision-making process. Here are three strategies that groups often employ to get data for problem solving and decision-making.

Strategy #1: Listening

Group members can accomplish a great deal just by asking questions and listening to others. If a group runs into a question for which they need to know how others think or feel (and if the group has the time), group members can be assigned to go back to people and ask specific questions and listen to them respond.

Sometimes a group will assign individual members to take an issue back to others with the responsibility to listen and bring the information back to the group. The group could even develop a specific list of questions, so that all the members collect the same information.

Strategy #2: Questionnaires

Groups might get the most information from surveying the attitudes, beliefs, and values of others. In a few questions, the group can determine how people feel and design solutions to meet the needs of others. This can be particularly important if the group is acting on behalf of others or is developing a solution that others will have to participate in.

When a group develops a questionnaire, that in itself is a task that demands problem solving and brainstorming. A group will have to decide that they need a questionnaire (felt need), decide what they need to know (problem definition), decide exactly what to ask and how to ask it (brainstorming proposed questions and selecting the best ones), and determine who will conduct the questionnaire, accumulate the data, and share it (action).

E-mail can make questionnaires even more useful. E-mail systems usually allow posting one message to a group. If the questionnaire is posted to a large number of people, they can respond without paper or pencil.

Strategy #3: Breakout Groups

Sometimes a large group (20+) needs to get information from the group members themselves. If it is difficult for the large group to get the information from individuals, the group could recombine into smaller "breakout" groups. The goal of these smaller groups is to generate information to report back to the larger group. The smaller group usually has a defined task. They generate the required information and record it. The group selects a reporter to report the small group's information back to the large group.



Chapter 14
Summary

A task group can best solve problems if it blends a problem-solving sequence, brainstorming, and information gathering. The problem-solving sequence keeps the group on task, performing jobs in a specific and useful order. Throughout the group process, the group makes a series of decisions. Building consensus will give group members ownership. Brainstorming helps the group creatively generate large numbers of ideas. Both problem-solving and brainstorming depend on the group's access to information.

Remembering

1. List and explain the five steps of the Dewey problem-solving sequence.
2. List and explain the five characteristics of effective brainstorming.
3. Define consensus and contrast it to voting.
4. Explain the concept of ownership.
5. In addition to library and Internet research, list three means of gathering data for group problem solving.
6. Identify four strategies for building consensus.

Reflecting

1. Why do groups often skip the first two stages of the Dewey sequence? Why can such shortcuts lead to poor problem solving?
2. What is the relationship between supportive climate and brainstorming? How can the behaviors that promote defensive communication inhibit brainstorming?
3. How can relying solely on library or Internet research limit a group's problem-solving capabilities? Why must groups be open to generating their own information?
4. Why does consensus-building take so much time? Think of an example of a group activity which might require a vote because of time pressure.
5. Think of a time when you've been part of a group that reached a decision that you didn't have ownership in. How did you react to the decision? Did you support it publicly? Did you oppose it publicly? Explain your feelings.

Reaching

1. As a class, decide on a topic that a problem-solving group might need to research through a questionnaire. Divide into small groups (4-6). Have each group write a short questionnaire (5-8 questions). Have each group share its questionnaire with the class. Which questions do the groups have in common? Which are the best questions? Which would provide a group with the kind of information it needs?
2. Research other problem-solving models. You can typically find information about problem solving in the library or on the Internet. You can also find it in books about education and effective leadership. Make posters that outline the steps of a sequence other than Dewey's. Discuss which process is more appealing. Discuss which are easy to remember and practice.

Real Life

1. Divide the class into small groups. Each group should select a recorder. Each group should be given a common object, like a computer disk or a stapler. Give the groups a time limit of 10 minutes. Each group's task is to brainstorm a list of uses for the object, a list that goes beyond the normal use. For example, a computer disk could be used as a coaster, a Frisbee, a bookmark, a note card, etc. Attempt to generate as long a list as possible. Practice the rules of effective brainstorming.

2. As a class, discuss several "felt needs," issues that people feel should be addressed. Treat this section of the assignment as a brainstorming activity first, then discuss the issues that arise. Determine as a class how many groups can function effectively and their size. Select the topics that the group will discuss. (More than one group can claim a topic.) The assignment is for each group to use the problem-solving sequence to come up with a proposal to solve the issue/problem. Each group should report back to the class on two things: First, what was the group's suggestion for addressing the issue/problem, and why? Second, how was the group's performance in using the problem-solving sequence?
3. As a class, brainstorm a list of the characteristics of a good teacher. Don't stop until you have listed at least twenty characteristics. Discuss the characteristics as a class. Add to the list or subtract as needed. Rank order the list according to importance using the two methods described in this chapter. In other words, vote on the list—each class member getting one vote. Then, divide into small groups of three to four. After the small groups discuss the characteristics, allow them to "spend" five votes however they would like. Once you've rank ordered the list both ways, discuss the differences in the ordering of the characteristics. How do you account for the differences? Which list best represents the views of the class?

15 Chapter Fifteen Application.Group Mechanics

Key Concept

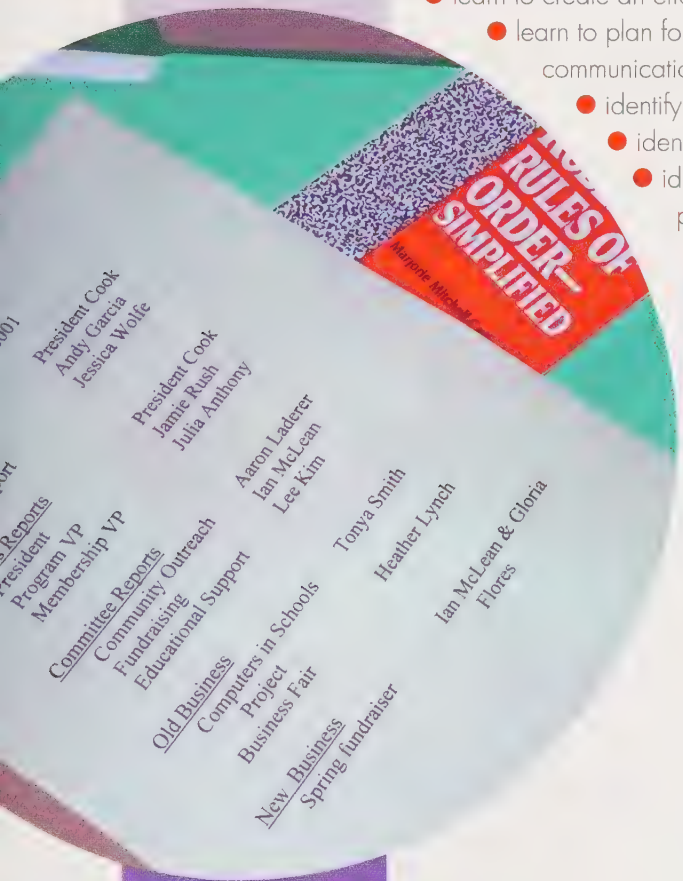
Good planning can create a communication context that leads to productive group work. A smoothly run meeting improves communication.

Chapter Objectives

- learn to create an effective agenda
- learn to plan for a physical environment that promotes effective communication
- identify strategies for keeping a meeting on schedule
- identify purpose of parliamentary procedure
- identify the duties and processes of parliamentary procedure

Key Terms

- agenda
- parliamentary procedure



Scenario

Pilar has asked James to plan and conduct an upcoming meeting. The meeting will involve 12-15 people, some from out-of-town. It will last most of the morning. James wants to be sure that everything is in place. He's put together a "to do" list to help him remember everything. Look at James' list. Has he forgotten anything? Are you surprised at anything he thinks is important?

Sales Meeting
10/12/02
8:30 a.m. - Noon

- ✓ Agenda prepared and mailed
- ✓ Name tags prepared
- ✓ Room scheduled
- ✓ E-mail reminder to all participants
- ✓ Refreshments arranged
- ✓ Photocopies of materials made
- ✓ Markers and paper available
- ✓ Parking arrangements made
- ✓ Audio-visual equipment available – especially overhead and LCD projectors
- ✓ Custodian knows room set-up, with map

James seems to be prepared. He's probably thought of things you've never thought about. Truthfully, not all arrangements for group meetings are this involved. In informal meetings, few of these tasks need attention. For special meetings, however, this could be just the beginning of arrangements to be

made. What do "parking" and "refreshments" have to do with effective communication? Just think: If parking isn't available, group members will be late…and could be in a bad mood. And refreshments are an important part of a meeting that lasts all morning!

James is aware of the old saying that many business people live by: Failing to prepare is preparing to fail. Good preparation for a meeting can foster good communication.

The Value of an Agenda

An agenda is a schedule of group activities. An agenda includes the list of activities in order and could include the following:

- the length of time each activity will take
- who is responsible for each activity
- extra materials required for each activity

Following are two agendas, one very simple and one very complete. Note how they each provide direction for a group meeting.

Simple or "List" Agenda

Manager's Meeting
August 15, 2002
10:00 a.m.

1. Monthly review
2. Product update
3. New company policies
4. Telephone messages
5. Office hours
6. Employee insurance
7. Newsletter suggestions
8. Q and A

AGENDA

Manager's Meeting Minutes

08/15/02
10:00 a.m. to 11:55 a.m.
Oakmont Room

Meeting called by:	Farrell Richardson
Type of meeting:	Monthly Manager's Review
Facilitator:	Farrell Richardson
Note taker:	Steve Howerton
Timekeeper:	Steve Howerton
Attendees:	All managers
Please read:	New insurance brochure August 1 policy update
Please bring:	Policy manual Items for next newsletter

Agenda topics

10:00–10:10 a.m.	Monthly Review	Farrel Richardson
10:10–10:25 a.m.	Product Update	DeeAnna Jones
10:25–10:45 a.m.	New Company Policies	Leslie Clifton
10:45–10:50 a.m.	Telephone Messages	Saul Wiseman
10:50–11:05 a.m.	Office Hours	Terry Moore
11:05–11:15 a.m.	Employee Insurance	Diana Espinosa
11:15–11:35 a.m.	Newsletter Suggestions	Brianne Summers
11:35–11:55 a.m.	Questions and Answers	Farrell Richardson

Observers:	None
Resource persons:	Jim Bird, newsletter editor
Special notes:	Meeting will be over by noon—lunch will be at Duffer's Restaurant

The second agenda was prepared using a "wizard" or template, which is a computer-generated pattern that guides you in preparing documents. As you can see, the second document is far more complete, but that doesn't mean you should always have a more complete, complicated agenda. For example, the first agenda is certainly sufficient, if it communicates everything the members need to know. On the other hand, if you want to be sure that the members have read the new insurance brochure and the August 1 policy update, then you should provide a more complete agenda. Notice that the second agenda is not something you can hand out at the start of the meeting. This agenda is meant for advance mailing or e-mailing so group participants can adequately prepare.

What are the advantages of an agenda?

- The agenda helps group members prepare for a meeting (if it's mailed or e-mailed early enough). Communication can be based on prepared, well-considered information.
- The agenda helps keep the group members on task. For example, if group members know that newsletter topics are scheduled for later in the meeting, they won't be bringing up that topic while the group is discussing office hours. Communication can be more focused.
- The agenda helps maintain a time schedule. If it's important to be finished by noon, the agenda can help the group and the group leader know if they are on schedule. Communication can be more efficient.
- The agenda can assign responsibilities. Imagine what it is like to show up to a meeting and be asked to cover the new employee insurance program...if you don't know that it is your responsibility to do so! An agenda can assign responsibilities. Communication can be better planned.
- The agenda can remind people that a meeting is scheduled for a particular time and place. It's possible for some people to forget a meeting entirely. If they receive an agenda, they are reminded that the meeting will occur. Communication can involve all group members.

Notice that the sample agendas provide a time for questions and answers or "Q and A." If time permits, this kind of entry in an agenda provides a time for group members to interact informally. Perhaps the agenda hasn't included important topics that group members need to bring up. If that's the case, an agenda item for "Q and A" or "other" can be a time set aside for bringing such topics to the group's attention.

Communication Management—When You're In Charge



If you are responsible for a group meeting, an agenda can be just the first step. Facility planning, or arrangement of the meeting's time and place, can be more challenging than the meeting itself. A good time and place for a meeting ensures participation. A poor time and place might even mean that the meeting won't happen at all. These steps are part of facilities planning.

Coordinate a time and place	Determine if the meeting's participants' schedules will coincide with room availability. If places are plentiful, you should put your emphasis on meeting the group members' schedules. This can be the most frustrating part of scheduling a meeting.
Arrange the room	While you often can't arrange a room (or have it arranged) until just before a meeting, you should plan the arrangement. If someone else—a custodian or staff member—must arrange the room for you, prepare a simple diagram of how you want the room to look.
Arrange for refreshments	Refreshments aren't required, but they can be either a nice touch or a necessity, especially during lengthy meetings. Refreshments should be simple. They should not detract from the meeting. (Frequently, refreshments must also fit into a budget.)
Plan for supplies and equipment	Will the meeting include brainstorming? If so, you'll probably want markers and tablets. Will there be a presentation using audiovisual equipment? If so, you'll need to arrange computers, screens, overheads, etc. And don't forget extension cords. If someone needs electricity, hunting down a cord can take away valuable time from communication.
Be sure of all "facilities"	If people who will attend your group are new to the area, be sure that restroom facilities are available and convenient. Often, the location of restrooms is announced at the start of the meeting or on a printed agenda.
Schedule a "back up"	What if your preferred location isn't available? If you have a back-up location, you can still have the meeting.
Copying	Will the members bring or produce materials that need photocopying? If so, you should be sure that copying services are close by.



Keeping a record of what takes place at a meeting is important for future reference.

Minutes

A group meeting may require the keeping of minutes. Minutes are a recording of the important parts of the meeting. Minutes serve as a permanent record of the group's activities. They help group members recall what happened, what will happen, and who has what responsibilities. Simply put, if we rely on memory only, a group of six members will likely recall six different things at the end of the meeting.

Meeting minutes can be both formal and informal. Informal minutes might be a brief summary of the group's activities and decisions. Formal minutes are more extensive, but contain the same basic material. After minutes are written, there are two options: First, minutes can be mailed or e-mailed to group participants for their approval. Second, minutes can be brought to the next meeting for review and approval. In either option, the minutes serve as a record and reminder of what the meeting accomplished.

The very formal minutes that follow are produced from the "manager's meeting" at the start of the chapter. The minutes are produced from the "wizard" or template provided by a word processing program. For brevity, only the first three items are included.

AGENDA

Manager's Meeting

08/15/02
10:00 a.m. to 11:55 a.m.
Oakmont Room

Meeting called by: Farrell Richardson
Type of meeting: Monthly Manager's Review
Facilitator: Farrell Richardson
Note taker: Steve Howerton
Timekeeper: Steve Howerton
Attendees: Gwen Hornbeck, Grace Tucker, Mike Poer, Mark Barton, Joel Harris, DeAnna Jones, Leslie Clifton, Saul Wiseman, Terry Moore, Diana Espinosa, Brianne Summers, John Stone
Please read: New insurance brochure
August 1 policy update
Please bring: Policy manual
Items for next newsletter

Agenda topics

10:00–10:10 a.m. **Monthly Review** **Farrell Richardson**

Discussion:
Farrell reviewed the accomplishments of all departments for July. He specifically noted the typical summer decrease in customer contacts resulting from summer vacation. Colleen noted that new products had not come on-line yet, so the decline in contacts was not unexpected.

Conclusions: None

Action items: None **Person responsible:** **Deadline:**

10:10–10:25 a.m. **Product Update** **DeAnna Jones**

Discussion:
Colleen handed out the new product descriptions and price lists. She reviewed each item. (A copy of her handouts are included with the minutes.) John shared his department's results as a pilot site for the new products. He reported a very positive response from customers.

Conclusions: Catalogs will be mailed by August 15. New products will be shipped before September 1.

Action items: All managers will receive the catalog and a manager's training sheet.

Person responsible: Colleen Chitwood **Deadline:**
August 1 (mailing)
September 1 (shipping)

10:25–10:45 a.m. **New Company Policies** **Leslie Clifton**

Discussion:
The group reviewed (1) customer complaint policies; (2) emergency phone numbers; (3) the sexual harassment policy. He asked that any office without these current policies e-mail him for a posting for the employee bulletin board. Several managers inquired about the need for so many emergency numbers. All had a directory of numbers which included former employees as well as dated insurance information.

Conclusions: Each department requested a new directory and a wallet or purse card for each manager to carry.

Action items: The entire directory will be updated. New cards will be mailed. Managers should check their bulletin boards for current postings.

Person responsible: Leslie and Jim **Deadline:** August 7

Keeping a Schedule

All members of a group are responsible for keeping the meeting on schedule. A formal leader, however, often feels the responsibility more immediately. Here are some hints to help you as a group member or group leader keep to the schedule.

1. Post the schedule. If the schedule is posted (on a wall, on a marker board, on a sheet for each member) the members can know what kind of time frame the group is aiming for.
2. Observe the start time. If the group is slated to start at noon, start at noon. Of course, extenuating circumstances can occur, but starting on time will set a group norm that everyone will be on time.
3. Allow group input. If the group can set the schedule or modify the schedule, the group will have ownership and will feel more obliged to keep a schedule mutually set than a schedule imposed by someone else.
4. Schedule break times. If break times are built into a long meeting, people in the group will know when they will have time to visit the restroom, get a snack, or talk more informally. Ideally, this will make the other group time more efficient.
5. Announce the length of breaks. When the group takes a break, someone can simply announce that the group will "reconvene in 15 minutes—we'll start up again exactly at 2:15." Stick to the start time. If the group starts on schedule, people won't be as likely to try to stretch a fifteen-minute break into a thirty-minute break.
6. Recognize when the agenda/schedule isn't working. Sometimes, the best agenda or schedule will not work. Something takes longer than expected, something brings about conflict. If so, the group could choose to make a new agenda. For example, at some point, the group may determine that no further progress is possible unless more data is available. In that case, the group could cut the meeting short and reschedule for later.
7. Don't be afraid to tell the group that it is off-task. Reminding group members that they are wasting time is one of the group member roles that can be most valuable. Be aware that such a reminder should be part of building a supportive—not a defensive—climate.

Parliamentary Procedure

For some highly formal groups, there is another means of ensuring smooth group processes: parliamentary procedure. Parliamentary procedure is a complete, formal set of rules for conducting a business meeting. The procedure is based on the rules of the English Parliament. In this chapter, we'll look at a simplified set of rules.

Why use parliamentary procedure? Use parliamentary procedures to assure that there is a complete discussion of important issues conducted in a fair and consistent way. Parliamentary procedure is not appropriate for all groups. It is used only in formal groups. Frequently, parliamentary procedure governs the behavior of public groups. It is primarily used for legislative groups, such as a city council or a formal hearing. It is not meant for social groups. It can be used for formal business meetings. The basics of parliamentary procedure can be demonstrated through an analysis of duties and rules.

Duties of the Presiding Officer. Parliamentary groups have formal leadership. The leader can be elected by the group, appointed by someone outside the group, or (in the case of a representative group) elected by constituents outside the group. The leader's primary responsibility is to operate the group according to parliamentary rules and any group rules and norms that are established. These duties should be met by the presiding officer. They will help a group run smoothly.

1. Prepare an agenda for the meeting.
2. Oversee distribution of the agenda prior to the meeting.
3. Call the meeting to order.
4. Call for officers' reports. For example, if a group has established the procedure of committee reports at the beginning of the meeting, the presiding officer calls on other officers (in this case, committee chairs) to present the reports.
5. Call for business, beginning with old business (issues remaining from previous meetings) and moving to new business (new issues for first discussion).
6. Recognize individuals to speak on the issues, both old issues and new issues.
7. Make rulings on parliamentary motions.
8. Appoint committees as the need arises.
9. Conduct votes.
10. Report the results of votes.
11. Close or recess the meeting and set the time for future meetings.

In most groups, the presiding officer participates in the discussion. In very large or very formal groups, the presiding officer oversees the discussion, but does not participate in the discussion. Depending on the group's norms, set up as by-laws or a constitution, the presiding officer might or might not vote on motions.

Duties of Members of Parliamentary Groups. Members of parliamentary groups must familiarize themselves with the parliamentary rules. Among the most important of the group norms are:

1. Obtaining recognition from the chair before speaking.
2. Speaking on the topic under discussion.
3. Avoiding interrupting a speaker unless it is to propose a valid or allowable motion.
4. Abiding by the rules of the group.

Of course, group members should also concentrate on the other basics of good discussion. They should respect others, use empathy, problem-solve, etc. In some highly political groups, individuals use parliamentary procedures to attempt to avoid issues, block discussion, and generally "get their way." While all of these are possible, group members should keep in mind the purpose of parliamentary groups: to ensure a fair hearing of all sides of an issue.

The Order of Business. When groups use parliamentary procedure, they usually follow a standard order of for conducting a meeting. This order allows discussion to proceed smoothly. It also allows for group members to anticipate the group's progress and plan for the discussion. An order of business for a typical business meeting would look like this:

1. Chair calls the meeting to order.
2. Secretary calls roll (not always necessary in small groups).
3. Minutes of the previous meeting read, corrected, approved.
4. Reading of reports from officers, e.g., the treasurer and chairs of standing committees.
5. Reports from special committees.
6. Consideration of old or unfinished business from the past meeting.
7. Consideration of new business.
8. Announcements.
9. Determine date, time, and place for next meeting.
10. Adjournment.

Duties of Secretary or Recorder. As noted, parliamentary procedure is used by formal groups. Part of the formality of the group is the need to take notes and publish them. A secretary or recorder—elected or appointed—sees to that task and other responsibilities.

1. Call roll.
2. Read the minutes of the previous meeting.
3. Record the key points of the discussion, including a description of motions, who makes the motions, and who seconds the motion.

4. Call names and keep records of all roll call votes.
5. Prepare minutes of the meeting and distribute copies as prescribed by norms or by-laws.

Conducting Business. The major component of business in a parliamentary group is the motion. A motion is simply a statement of the topic under discussion. A motion is introduced by addressing the chair (for example, "Mr. Chairman" or "Madame Chair"). The group member then begins the motion by saying "I move that..." and phrases the motion. For example, in a city council's discussion on funding a local theater group, a motion might be something like this: "Mr. Chairman, I move that the city authorize the establishment of a fine arts budget, overseen by the Director of Parks and Recreation, to be used to benefit community theater groups."

There are four classes of motions:

Main motion

A main motion is designed to bring up business matters before the group. (Of course, "business" is defined according to the group's task or purpose.) Only one main motion at a time may be considered. The main motion must receive a second before being considered by the group. The motion must be voted on before another main motion is introduced.

Incidental motion

An incidental motion is related to the main motion. Incidental motions are mainly procedural. These motions may or may not require a second, and they must be discussed or dispensed with before resuming discussion on the main motion. Examples of an incidental motion include a motion to object to consideration of a question (must be introduced immediately after a main motion), a motion to rise to point of order (to enforce proper procedures when the chair has erred), or a motion to suspend the rules (to change the order of business).

Subsidiary motion

These motions modify, delay action upon, or dispose of a main or certain other motions. Subsidiary motions require a second. Some are debatable, others aren't. Some require immediate action. These motions must also be dispensed with before

resuming discussion of a main motion. Examples of a subsidiary motion include a motion to lay on the table (to put a motion aside until later), or motions to limit discussion of a main motion (usually stated in terms of a time limit or set number of presentations for and against the main motion).

Privileged motion

A privileged motion is not related to the main motion. Privileged motions take precedence over main motions because of their importance or urgency. These motions may or may not require a second. Examples of privileged motions are motions to recess (break) or motions to adjourn.

In this sequence of actions, you can see how a motion can move through the parliamentary process.

1. A motion is made.
2. The motion must be seconded; otherwise, it is not discussed.
3. The motion is stated by the presiding officer to be sure that the chair understands the motion and the secretary records it accurately.
4. The motion is debated. (Note: In formal proceedings, some motions are not debatable.)
5. Debate ends by natural cessation of the discussion, a call for the question, a motion for previous question, or a motion to table.
6. The motion is restated.
7. The motion is voted on.
8. The results of the vote are announced.
9. The table that follows summarizes basic motions and their characteristics.*

As you can see from the chart of motions, parliamentary procedure can be very complicated. In fact, groups that follow the procedure strictly usually appoint or elect a person as parliamentarian. The parliamentarian helps the presiding officer assure that rules are followed. Despite the complexity, a well-run parliamentary meeting can help everyone know how to proceed through a formal, highly structured business meeting.

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* *Carlile, Clark S. and Dana V. Hensley, 38 Basic Speech Experiences, Clark Publishing, Topeka, KS, 1999.*

Communication Management—Chart of Precedence of Motions and Their Rules



Key to abbreviations

No-S	=	No second required
Und	=	Cannot be debated
Int	=	May interrupt the speaker
2/3	=	Requires a 2/3 vote for adoption
Lim	=	Limited debate
1/3s	=	Requires a second supported by 1/3 of the group

Privileged Motions

To fix the time at which to adjourn ..... Lim
To adjourn (unqualified) ..... Und
To take a recess ..... Lim
To rise to a question of privilege ..... Int, Und, No-S
To call for orders of the day ..... Int, Und, No-S

Subsidiary Motions

To lay on the table ..... Und
To move the previous question (this stops debate) ..... Und, 2/3
To limit or extend the limits of the debate ..... Lim, 2/3
To postpone definitely ..... Lim
To refer to a committee ..... Lim
To amend ..... 1/3 S
To postpone indefinitely ..... Lim
A Main Motion – to introduce business ..... Lim
a. "To reconsider" is a specific main motion

Incidental Motions (no precedence of order)

To suspend the roles ..... Und, 2/3
To withdraw a motion ..... No-S, Und
To object to a consideration ..... Int, No-S, Und, 2/3
To rise to a point of order ..... Int, No-S, Und
To rise to a point of information ..... Int, No-S, Und
To appeal the decision of the chair ..... Int, Lim
To call for a division of the house ..... Int, No-S, Und
To call for a division of the question ..... Und



Chapter 15 Summary

The effectiveness of group communication can depend on how well the group is planned. Keys to planning the group's activities are creating an agenda (formal or informal) and taking care of the physical accommodations for the meeting. Good leaders go further by adopting strategies to keep the group on schedule. Some formal groups go beyond the agenda or schedule by adopting parliamentary procedures to assure a fair and full discussion of issues.

Remembering

1. List at least four characteristics of an effective agenda.
2. List at least five tasks that you can perform before a meeting to help the meeting run more smoothly.
3. List five strategies for keeping a meeting running on schedule.
4. Identify the purposes of parliamentary procedure.
5. List the basic types of a motions used in parliamentary procedure.

Reflecting

1. When is an informal "list" agenda preferable to a formal agenda? When is a formal agenda preferred?
2. Using your empathy skills, consider how group members feel when their needs are met. Then imagine that you are in a group whose physical needs are not being met. What is the difference in attitude towards task? Toward each other? Which group will likely be more efficient? Why?

Reaching

1. Attend a public meeting, such as a school board meeting or a city council meeting. Most of these meetings have formal agendas to follow. Note how the agenda governs the progress of the meeting. Report back to the class your observations.
2. At the public meeting, take notes as if you are providing meeting minutes. Limit your notes to one typed page, but summarize all group activities.
3. The chart of motions is pretty complicated for someone who doesn't use parliamentary procedure regularly. Use your research skills to find out more about parliamentary procedure. Give a short informative speech on your findings.
4. Attend a city council or school board meeting. Note the order of business and the use of a specific procedure for conducting the business. Report back to the class.

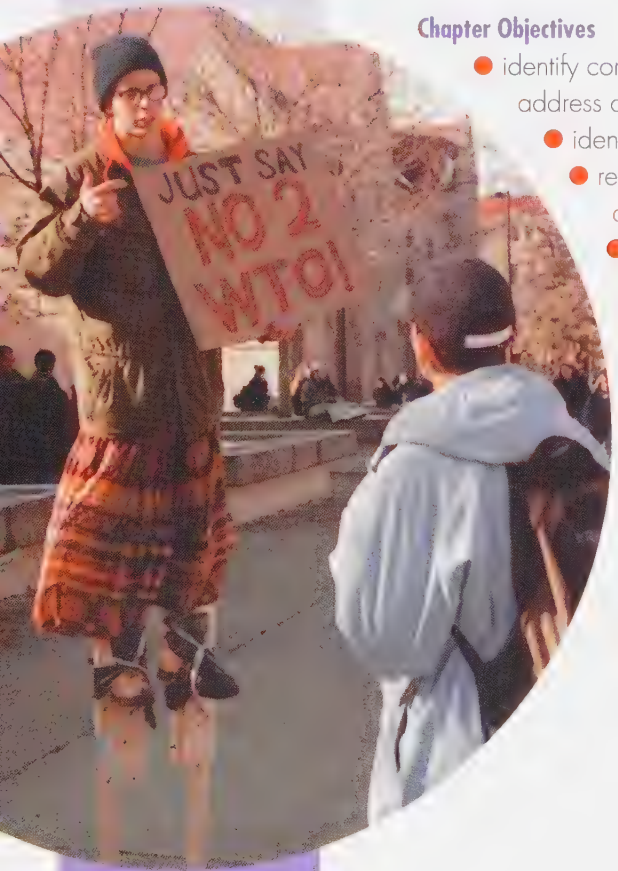
Real Life

1. Look through your school. Find the best room for a group meeting. Consider the following characteristics: size, seating, proximity of rest rooms, noise level, use of audio-visual equipment.
2. Use a "wizard" or other template in a word processing program to create a formal agenda. Make up an agenda that includes at least seven issues and one break.
3. C-SPAN broadcasts the proceedings of Congress, including debates, committee hearings, confirmation hearings, etc. Watch one of the broadcasts that is parliamentary in nature. Maintain a list of motions and votes. Compare their process with the chart of motions.

16 Chapter Sixteen Application.Managing Conflict

Key Concept

Task groups can produce conflict, but conflict is not always bad for group activity. Group conflict can be productive. Group conflict can also be managed in a way that allows an open discussion which addresses all people's interests.



Chapter Objectives

- identify communication behaviors to avoid when trying to address conflict
- identify strategies to bring up conflict in a group setting
- review supportive communication behaviors that help address conflict in a positive manner
- introduce the interest-based approach to discussing and resolving conflict

Key Terms

- compromise
- creative tension
- facilitator
- interest-based bargaining
- superordinate goals
- surfacing an elephant

Scenario

Conflicts, both major and minor, are a part of communication within an organization. Whenever people feel strongly about a situation, they will voice disagreement with others who don't feel the same way. Alicia is involved in a conflict. She meets regularly with technical people who feel they work very hard to keep computers, software, and networks running smoothly and efficiently. She also meets regularly with office staff who feel that the computers are slow, the software is difficult to use, and the network doesn't work well. She is seeking advice from Pilar.

Alicia: *I just don't know what to do. I can see both sides, but I don't know how to solve the problem.*

Pilar: *Maybe they need to talk to each other, hear each other out.*

Alicia: *I don't know if that really will work.*

Pilar: *To your knowledge, have office staff members had a chance to sit and talk about their disagreement?*

Alicia: *Not that I know of. They "talk around" the problem whenever they are together.*

Pilar: *Well, one thing for sure: They'll never solve the problem unless they talk about it. And if they don't talk about it, the responsibility is all yours.*

Alicia: *But they start from different points. The computer people talk "tech" and the office staff don't. The office staff just complain.*

Pilar: *If you want my advice, I'll give it to you.*

Alicia: *Sure. I really would like to know how you would address this.*

Pilar: *First, they have to talk directly. You can't be in the middle. Second, let them talk about what's important to them. Don't start with complaints, start with what they really want. Keep it positive. Third, let them see that this is an opportunity. Tension and conflict aren't pleasant, but they create an opportunity for change.*

Pilar's advice is only the beginning. Conflict resolution is one of the communication skills that studies say are a major component of effective leadership. Dealing with conflict isn't always pleasant, but it is a necessary part of communicating.

What to Avoid

Sometimes, the answer to conflict is to avoid making things worse. That means avoiding communication that can create more conflict. To avoid making things worse, avoid these communication traps:

1. Ignoring the issue: Sometimes, minor issues solve themselves; however, important issues don't solve themselves. Working with others and avoiding an issue is like having a discussion with an elephant in the room and never mentioning the elephant. Everyone knows the conflict (the elephant) is there, but no one will discuss it. "Surfacing the elephant" is a metaphor for bringing up the conflict that everyone is aware of, but no one will talk about.
2. Defensive communication: Remember that certain communication behaviors make others feel as if they have to defend themselves. If you can avoid these behaviors, everyone can concentrate on the resolving the conflict. If you don't use supportive communication (the opposite of defensive), conflict can worsen. In addition to disagreeing over an issue, the group develops the additional burden of dealing with personal conflicts.
3. Taking it personally: Just as you don't want others to be defensive, you should avoid becoming defensive yourself. If someone disagrees with you, remember that the conflict is over the issue, not over you. And if you believe the group's communication is becoming personal, discuss that, too. Help the group maintain a problem orientation, not a personal one.

Expressing these ideas more positively and dealing effectively with conflict requires acknowledging the conflict, practicing supportive communication, and focusing on issues (not personalities).

How to "Surface an Elephant"

You might feel a little awkward in bringing up a conflict in a group. There are several ways to start a discussion about a sensitive or difficult subject. You can "surface the elephant" in several ways.

1. Building the climate: The first—and most important—way to surface an elephant is to build a climate in which all group members feel free to express themselves. In other words, if the group functions poorly during periods when there are no major conflicts, how can you expect members to feel free to address conflicts? And if they bring up a disagreement, will they do so positively if the group norms have focused on defensiveness and negativity? Throughout the group's processes, members should practice good communication so that all members will feel good about bringing up all kinds of issues.
2. Listening: Often, other people will "surface the elephant" if they think you (and other group members) are prepared to listen. If the group norms emphasize listening, then group members feel they will get a fair hearing, even if they express an opinion that others disagree with.
3. Reality checks: Too often, groups plow ahead on tasks without stopping to check if all group members are in agreement. Groups can set up checkpoints during the process to allow all members to express agreement and disagreement. Sometimes a person who disagrees with the group majority will feel positive about the decision if allowed to express herself and become part of the decision-making process. In many cases, the disagreement will become a way of reaching a better decision. "Creative tension" is the development of positive group decisions from disagreements among group members. By stopping a group's task long enough to check on everyone's viewpoint, creative tension can emerge in a controlled and safe manner. Like a "safety valve," such reality checks can prevent conflicts from remaining hidden until they explode.
4. Bring up a potential conflict that you believe others might feel. Sometimes as a member of a group, empathy can lead you to insights that will help bring up a touchy issue. It is often easier for a group member to bring up a conflict if the member isn't really the one involved in the conflict. For example, a group member could say, "I think I'm okay with where we are heading, but it seems to me that Sarah might not like the idea of splitting the jobs up this way. Are you okay with that, Sarah?" By asking Sarah's opinion, you can give her the option to voice her concerns. She gracefully gains an opening, and the conflict can be discussed.
5. Use supportive communication to bring the issue up yourself. If the group seems to be ignoring a possible conflict, you can bring up the conflict in a positive, non-threatening way and allow the group to react.

Communication Management—Review Supportive Communication



Remember that defensive communication results when people feel threatened, intimidated, insulted, etc. On the other hand, supportive communication helps others feel safer and increases the likelihood of positive communication. Here are some suggestions for using supportive communication to discuss difficult issues.

DO	DON'T
Use *descriptive* language to express how you feel. "I feel bad about our decision to change advertising firms. I feel more commitment to our existing firm than I sense from others in the group."	**Use *evaluative* language** "Changing advertising firms is just a bad idea. Doing that is treating our existing firm like dirt."
Maintain a *problem* orientation. "The decision to change advertising firms might be the solution, but I'm not sure it will work if we don't know what's really wrong with our current advertising."	**Stress personal *control* of the group.** "This decision is not going to work. I can tell you what's wrong with our current advertising. That is more important than changing advertising firms now."
Allow for *spontaneity.* "Even though it's not in our agenda, let's stop a moment to ask how many people share Paula's concerns about changing advertisers."	**Pursue *strategies* perceived as "getting your own way."** "Well, Paula, I appreciate your opinion. Let's take a vote right now to see which opinion the group supports."
Use *empathy* to see the other person's point of view. "I guess if I were in Paula's shoes, I wouldn't be too excited about breaking in a whole new advertising firm. That's got to be tough work, Paula."	**Appear to be *neutral.*** "I guess it makes no personal difference to me which advertising firm we go with."
Stress *equality* of members and their right to participate. "That's the way I feel about it, but I know that's only one opinion. How do the rest of you see the problem?"	**Try to be *superior* to others.** "Listen—I've been through this a lot more than you guys. If you want the advice of experience, you'll go with my idea."
Express willingness to discuss issues *provisionally.* "O.K. Let's look at this from the other point of view. What are the advantages again of staying with the old firm?"	**Express a degree of *certainty* that makes you appear closed-minded.** "Look, you can discuss this issue 'til you're blue in the face and it won't change a thing. We've got to change advertising firms."

Goals and Compromise

Conflicts can often be resolved by returning to an understanding of group and individual goals. Sometimes in the process of discussing an issue, people can lose sight of the real purpose of the group. Ideally, group members would hold many mutual goals, goals they all agree on. But they can also develop conflicts when goals differ. By understanding superordinate goals and compromise, groups can reduce or eliminate some conflicts.

For example, if a group is discussing how to spend the money in an advertising budget, some people might want to spend money on radio; others might want to spend money on billboards. If the difference of opinion becomes a conflict, members might begin arguing over radio ads and billboards. They might lose sight of the superordinate goal, which is the overriding goal that the entire group is interested in. If they remember that the superordinate goal is not advertising but increasing business, each side might be interested in exploring more options. They might decide that an objective measure of success—profitability—is the best basis for judging which plan to agree with.

Sometimes, compromise becomes the key to resolving conflict. A compromise reduces conflict by asking each side to make some concessions in order that the members can settle their differences. In this case, perhaps the group will agree to divide the budget equally between radio ads and billboards. Or group members could decide to develop one ad campaign, initiated by radio ads and sustained by billboards. Compromise means each side gives a little in order to get something it wants.

Using an "Interest-Based" Approach

One of the most successful means of resolving conflicts can be the use of an "interest-based" approach to negotiations, problem solving, and conflict resolution. This is one of the techniques used by federal mediators who mediate disputes among parties. It consists of these steps. To understand the steps, think of the simplest conflict: Two groups are discussing difficult issues and come upon one that they view from different perspectives. One side—call it side "A"—favors a change of some kind. Note how these steps closely parallel Dewey's problem-solving sequence.

Identifying the issue	• Side A defines the issue from its perspective. • Side A provides information on the issue. • All group members discuss the issue to clarify the problem or conflict.	• The issue is insufficient break time. • Twelve of us have to take a break between 10:00 and 10:30. • It takes a lot of break time walking to the 4th floor to the vending machines. • By the time we get a snack and get back, break time is over. • Rushing around increases tension and bickering.
Defining interests	• Both sides define their interests. This step is very important. The sides must communicate in terms of interests, not positions. • Both sides provide more information. • People question each other to help all group members understand the interests.	Side A • We have an interest in a more relaxing break time. • We have an interest in reducing office stress. • We have an interest in breaking with people who are our friends. Side B • We have an interest in keeping workplace productivity up. • We, too, have an interest in reducing office stress. • We have an interest in break policies that can be applied in all offices.
Brainstorming solutions or options	• Both sides offer ideas for meeting all the identified issues. • The group follows the rules of brainstorming.	1. Lengthen the break time by 10 minutes. 2. Lengthen the break time by 5 minutes. 3. Install vending machines on our floor. 4. Schedule breaks over a longer period of time to alleviate the crowds. 5. Allow people to sign up for breaks, basically establishing their own schedule. 6. Have unscheduled breaks.
Establishing criteria	• The groups agree on how to judge the solutions that have been brainstormed. • The criteria are very important because they help the group sift through the ideas to select the one (or the combination) to solve the problem and meet everyone's interests.	A. Cost: The solution shouldn't cost too much. B. Legality: The solution should comply with the law. C. Mutually agreeable: Both sides are willing to adopt the solution. D. Workable: The solution can be put into place and will work.
Applying criteria	• The sides judge the proposals with the established criteria. • It can be useful to apply all the criteria to each solution independently.	• Solution 1: Meets criteria B and D. Doesn't meet A and C. • Solution 2: Meets criteria B and D. Doesn't meet A and C. • Solution 3: Meets all criteria. • Solution 4: Meets all criteria. • Solution 5: Meets all criteria except D. Questions about C. • Solution 6: Doesn't meet criteria A, B, and D.
Reaching consensus	• Reaching consensus is agreeing on a solution that everyone can live with. It might not be the solution that both sides want more than any other, but it is one they can agree on. • Consensus is not the same as voting. Consensus is general agreement.	• The group advocates installing beverage and snack machines on our floor. • The group recommends stretching break time over an hour. People will still have the same break time. With fewer people in the break room, everyone will have more time and space.

Communication Management—The Difference Between Interests and Positions



One key to solving conflict is to know the differences between an interest and a position. When you are in a conflict situation, focusing on interests gives communicators a great deal of room to talk, listen, and understand each other. Stressing positions leads to more conflict, not less. Here's why:

An interest is something you have concerns about, a goal you'd like to see met. For example, assume you are part of a group scheduling holiday breaks for everyone in the office. Many people have asked for the same day off. You could advance the following interests:

- We have an interest in being certain that phones are covered adequately all days except Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.
- We have an interest in providing good computer service during the holidays.
- We have an interest in assuring that office staff members should have adequate time off for the holidays.

These are interests, not positions. They are goals that you would like to meet. The key is that there is still room to discuss how to meet these interests.

Now think about what would happen if you offered positions:

- The receptionist must work during all work days.
- The computer techs must be at work as long as anyone else is working.
- No one should have to work on December 24 or 31.

Do you see the difference? Positions produce more conflict. Once someone has said "the receptionist must work all work days," he has publicly announced a position and must defend it. If he doesn't get his way, he has lost. Therefore, the conflict becomes more than a discussion about how to cover the office over holidays. It becomes a matter of avoiding losing a debate, not solving a problem.

This is a communication issue because the idea of advancing interests, not positions, is a communication problem. How can you communicate your ideas in a way that will resolve conflict instead of making the conflict greater?

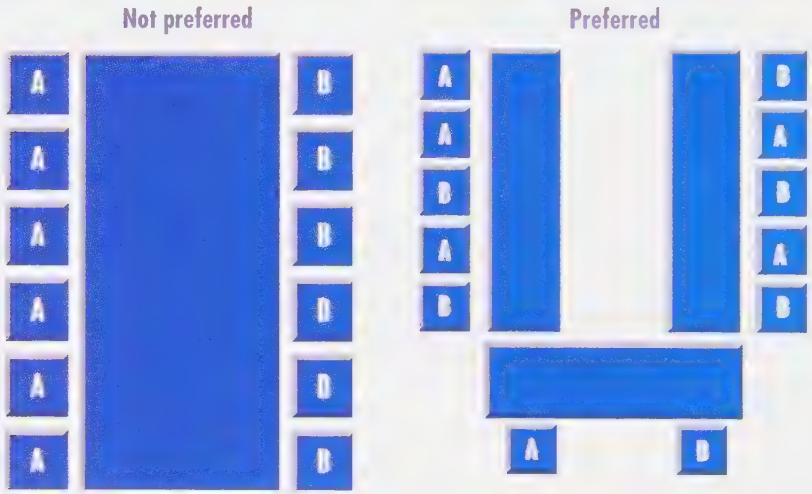
This sequence of events seems highly structured. By structuring the group's problem-solving efforts, the group can emphasize confronting the potential conflict and working on solutions. The organization and structure of the process is agreed to "up front" and doesn't become part of the conflict.

This type of discussion is also called "win-win" bargaining. The goal is to allow both sides to meet their needs or interests without starting from fixed positions.

Making the Process Work

Groups use the interest-based bargaining approach to solve some very difficult problems. It has been used to solve disputes between labor unions and management, special-interest groups and government, individuals, and others. People who have used the approach successfully recommend several procedures that can help produce good results.

1. The process should be led by a disinterested party. "Disinterested" means the leader is objective, favoring neither side. An objective leader can keep the process going and cannot be accused of bias. The objective leader is called a facilitator. A facilitator is a formally identified leader who oversees group processes to the benefit of all group members.
2. Sit in a mixed seating arrangement. In other words, don't automatically break up physically into sides. A mixed seating arrangement leads to less tense, less formal interactions.



3. Use markers and tablets to keep the group's ideas posted at all times. If a group begins working on a problem—especially one that is complicated—members might not remember everything that has been said. Keeping track of issues, interests, solutions, and criteria helps the group stay on task and reminds both sides of their responsibilities.
4. Take time to talk about the process. The process exists to help resolve conflict. If the process isn't working well, the group members should feel free to discuss what can be done to improve the process.

Interest-based bargaining is an outline for successfully communicating about issues that can create disagreement and conflict. The process is important, but it can only work with the correct attitude. If people engage in interest-based discussions with the goals of understanding each other and solving problems, they can minimize personal conflict and increase success. On the other hand, if they go through the motions of interest-based discussion but still cling to positions that they strategically want to accomplish, then the process cannot succeed.

One more piece of advice: The interest-based process is one that requires training and practice. The more often group members engage in successful interest-based discussions, the more skills they will develop. Like most communication behaviors, this process is not an immediate solution to all conflict. Like most communication behaviors, it requires effort.



Chapter 16
Summary

The interest-based approach to solving conflicts is very important, but it is only a part of addressing conflict. The interest-based approach will not work unless group members have the right attitudes about communicating about conflict. When people communicate about important issues, we can expect some conflict. Usually, ignoring conflict doesn't help; we must "surface" the conflict so we can talk about it out in the open. Practicing supportive communication can make communicating about conflict less stressful and more productive.

Remembering

1. List three communication behaviors to avoid when trying to address conflict.
2. Identify five strategies for bringing up a potential conflict or disagreement in a group discussion.
3. List the supportive communication behaviors that can reduce defensiveness.
4. Identify and explain the steps of the interest-based process.

Reflecting

1. Sometimes people are reluctant to talk about disagreements or conflicts because they are worried about what others will say. In other words, they fear the unpleasantness that sometimes accompanies disagreement. Review the chapter and list the group norms that can help members feel less threatened about conflict.
2. In small groups, prepare a list of things people say and do that make discussing conflict less threatening. Use any of the chapter's suggestions to guide your discussion. Report out your group's findings to the class.
3. Review what the chapter says about "surfacing an elephant." In small groups, develop a list of at least three issues or "elephants" that everyone knows about but few people talk about. From the three, select the most important of these issues. Report out to the class. List all the group's ideas for the class to view. As a class, discuss the issues. Answer these questions: What about the issues makes them hard to talk about? Where would the issues most likely be discussed?
4. Compare and/or contrast the interest-based process with the Dewey problem-solving sequence.

Reaching

1. Interest-based bargaining is a very important issue in labor-management disputes. Look up interest-based bargaining on the Internet and in the business section of local bookstores. Research a dispute that was mediated using interest-based bargaining. Report on the dispute to the class. Be sure to include the nature of the dispute and the steps that were used in resolving it. (Be sure to check other terms such as "win/win bargaining" and "mutual benefit bargaining.")
2. Some jobs are more likely to involve communication about conflict than others. As a class, brainstorm a list of jobs that involve communication about conflict. Select several jobs that you would like to research. Interview a person who deals regularly with conflict. Ask her what strategies are preferred in dealing with conflict. If possible, ask someone to address the class on communication behaviors he or she uses in conflict situations.

Real Life

1. Set up a role-playing discussion involving conflict. Select a local or school conflict about which you know a good deal. Divide into groups, one for each side of the conflict. Select two group members to serve as objective leaders or facilitators. Role-play your side. For example, even if you don't feel strongly about the issue, put yourself in the place of people who do and communicate as they would. Follow the interest-based approach in solving the problem.








PRICE
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Unit Four
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Chapter Seventeen
Application.Speech Preparation

Key Concept

Effective public speaking is the result of a number of communicator [illegible] involving substance, organization, and style. These decisions are the [illegible] that a speaker selects to accomplish a purpose with the audience in a [illegible] uation.



Chapter Objectives

- review situation, purpose, audience and method (SPA[illegible]
- understand the interactive nature of communicator decisions involving substance, organization, and [illegible]e
- develop a simple model for demonstratin[illegible] interactive nature of decisions about subst[illegible] organization, and style
- apply the model to a specific spee[illegible]

Key Terms

- controlling purpose
- purpose statement
- S.O.S
- substance
- thesis statement
- unity

Scenario

Last year, James won a company award as an outstanding problem-solver who had contributed to the success of the company. As last year's award-winner, he has been asked to give a speech at this year's banquet. He will serve as a host, or emcee. He has prepared a speech based on his knowledge of situation, purpose, and audience.

Situation: The event is an annual award dinner. Aside from welcoming remarks by company officials, James' speech will be the longest formal speech of the night. All other speeches will be introductions of winners and acceptance speeches.

Purpose: James has two purposes. First, he needs to honor the award winners. Second, he feels he should provide some light entertainment after the dinner—entertainment in keeping with the night's main purpose.

Audience: The banquet is attended by company officials and employees, with their husbands, wives, and dates.

Here is the introduction James has prepared:

Thank you, Pilar, for the kind introduction. Had I known last year that I would be speaking at this year's banquet, I wouldn't have used the only two jokes I know in my acceptance speech.

When I think about speaking before tonight's award winners, I don't mind telling you I get a bit nervous. Just think of it: Everyone who has made an outstanding, highly creative contribution to solving our shared problems is sitting here in this room tonight. I feel a little on the spot to come up with an "outstanding, highly creative" speech to honor the recipients.

While I was preparing for tonight—and getting progressively more worried—I encountered a simple riddle that helped me calm down. To share it with you tonight, I'm going to ask you to think about taking algebra...you know, back when you were about 13 or 14. Do you remember the absolute worst part of algebra? The part that made you get so nervous and frustrated you wanted to give up on math altogether

and think seriously about a career in dog-walking or car-parking? If you are like me, it was word problems. "Train A leaves point B at 3:30 traveling at 30 miles per hour and train C leaves point D traveling at 40 miles per hour. Point C and D are 223 miles from each other. When will Train A and Train C collide?"

I can tell from the groans that you remember these problems with the same fondness that I do. Now our award winners tonight probably loved these problems. I am sure these brain busters were brain teasers to them. But for me, my first question was "Who cares?" My second question was "Why are they traveling on the same track?" And too often, my third question was "Is the answer in the back of the book?" It's certain that Pilar doesn't keep me on because of my crackerjack algebra skills.

Here's a twist on the old algebra problem I thought you'd like to hear. See if you can get the solution. Good old Train A and Train B are traveling toward each other on the same straight track. They are 150 miles apart and each is traveling at 75 miles per hour. A trained bee flying at 127.5 miles per hour leaves the front of Train A and flies directly for the front of Train B. When it reaches Train B, it turns around—losing no time or speed—and heads back to Train A, where it repeats the process. It flies back and forth between A and B until the two trains collide. The question is: How far does the trained bee fly?

Before you say "Who cares" or "Why are they traveling on the same track," think about this: The problem I just gave to you is nothing compared to the problems our award winners encounter every day of the week. Compared to the problems of managing people, computer networks, finances, and the countless daily emergencies of the workplace, this little word problem is almost nothing. Our award winners are being honored tonight because they have come up with the creative solutions that make our company work, that make our jobs easier.

These people have—I am sure—already seen the solution to the trained bee question. While those of us who dozed through algebra and dodged through logic are now diving under tables and checking to see if Mr. Curmudgeon, our freshman math teacher, is breathing over our shoulders, our award winners have seen that one of the keys to creative problem solving is to define the problem. When I heard this riddle, I was thinking of formulae, numbers, geometric proofs, sines, cosines, and tangents. I couldn't really see the problem. When I heard the answer, I knew I could speak tonight, because I was reminded that I should just keep it simple. A creative, imaginative problem-solver will keep it simple and look at the problem like this:

Since the trains are 150 miles apart and both traveling at 75 miles per hour, they will collide in one hour. Since the bee is flying at 127.5 miles per hour, it will travel exactly 127.5 miles.

Now, see how easy it is? Our talented award winners probably did. And tonight, we need to keep it simple, too. How do we show our gratitude and admiration to people who have done so much over the past year? Tonight, we will keep it simple

with our applause and our words of admiration. I invite you to join with me throughout this evening in honoring them. Before we start, will all nominees stand, so we can give you a round of applause?

What did you think of James' introduction to the evening's activities? Do you think he would meet his purpose with the audience in the situation? If you were sitting in the audience, would you be amused? If you were an award winner, would you feel flattered?

Communication Decisions Are Interactive

If you study James' speech, you can see that he has made a number of decisions. The decisions can be placed in one of three categories: decisions about substance, decisions about organization, and decisions about style.

Examples of Substance Decisions

- To gently poke fun at himself ("It's certain Pilar doesn't keep me on because of my crackerjack algebra skills").
- To recognize the difficulty of the job that the award winners do ("compared to the problems of managing people…etc.").

Examples of Organization Decisions

- Using a humorous remark for the introduction ("I wouldn't have used the only two jokes I know").
- Making a transition from one point to another ("I can tell from the groans" and "here's a twist on the old algebra problem).
- Concluding his brief speech with the nominees themselves standing.

Examples of Style Decisions

- Overall, the tone is light, even playful, while expressing admiration for the award winners.
- The language is conversational and easy to listen to ("those of us who dozed through algebra and dodged through logic are now diving under tables").

It is clear that James made important decisions. From your study of communication, you can probably come up with other examples of the substance, organization,s and style decisions in the speech. What isn't as obvious is the way the decisions about substance, organization, and style work together. To understand the interaction between substance, organization, and style, we must review the decision making components that we established in the book's earlier lessons: situation, purpose, audience, and method.

Interpersonal Insight — Using Your Support System



As you prepare to make your communication decisions, don't forget the value of trying out your ideas on other people. Metacommunication is communicating about communication. To make good decisions, share your understanding of situation, purpose, audience, and methods with others. Ask them to help. If you have a draft of a speech, let them hear it. Listen to what they have to say. In writing, we would call this "peer editing." Here are some of the improvements you can make in your public communication by using interpersonal communication.

1. Checking your assumptions. Perhaps you are making an assumption about the audience. By talking to someone else about your assumptions, you can find errors in your thinking or refine your ideas.
2. Finding omissions. Often, you will simply leave something out. Frequently, a speaker will omit information because he or she is so familiar with the topic that the omission is "filled in" in his or her own mind. By talking with someone else, you might be reminded to include information that you simply took for granted.
3. Discovering recent developments. When you talk with others about your communication decisions, you can find out new information. . .information you aren't aware of. That can make a big difference in your decision making. Interpersonal networking allows you to track some new information, even before it's publicly available.
4. Polishing. Sometimes your message is just right. You've made good assumptions. You've discovered and corrected omissions. You've tracked recent developments. What's left? If you talk with others — even let them hear your presentation — you can polish your message. You can find the right word, use the right data, or tell the right story. In short, by practicing metacommunication in an interpersonal context, you can make your public communication much better.



Practice in front of a friend and discuss your speech before presenting it.

SPAM and S.O.S.

You recall from earlier chapters that SPAM will help you think about communication decisions. To make good decisions about your methods of communication, you must know the situation, your purpose, and the audience. Once you understand situation, purpose, and audience, you use that understanding to decide on methods.

For example, if you are attending a high school job recruitment night trying to convince a group of teens to apply for summer work, you will use different methods than you would if your audience were adults. You would talk about different subject matter (substance), you might change your organization, and you might have a different style of language or delivery. The following chart shows how differences in situation, purpose, and/or audience can change a speaker's selection of methods.

Situation	During the spring, at a high school	Prior to winter holidays, at a retirement center
Purpose	Sign up part-time and full-time workers for the summer to handle increased sales and cover summer vacations for other employees	Sign-up temporary workers to handle the holiday rush
Audience	Teens aged 16, 17, 18	Retired adults
Methods	• Emphasize saving for college. • Bring young employees along to answer questions in the language the audience understands. • Talk about using a summer job to build experience for applying for other jobs. • Play contemporary rock and pop music as audience waits for presentation. • Since the students have to return to class right away, hand out a card they can call from if they want more information.	• Emphasize more money for holiday presents. • Since most of the retirees have already held jobs, bring written materials about job. • Talk about how much a retiree is allowed to earn. • Play traditional holiday music as the audience waits for presentation. • Since the retirees have few other demands on time, allow lots of time for questions from the audience.

You can think about situation, purpose, and audience establishing the basis for making all the communication decisions about methods. Do you include visual aids? Ask yourself if they are appropriate in the situation. Do you talk about the details of the job? Ask yourself what the audience already knows. Do you hand out samples of your product? Ask yourself if it will help you meet your purpose.

Communication Management—Questions for Selecting Speech Methods



Your decisions about methods will fall into three categories: substance [S], organization [O], and style [S]. The simple acronym S.O.S. will help you remember the categories of methods you have to work with. These categories can be defined by the kinds of questions that a speaker asks in each.

Based on these questions, you can see...

- the *substance* category involves decisions about what you say.
- the *organization* category involves decisions about arranging what you say.
- the *3* category involves decisions about how you say what you say.

Substance

- What do I say?
- Do I have enough information?
- Do I need statistics?
- How much do I include?
- What do I leave out?
- Can I support my position?
- What audience objections should I address?
- Is this a good argument?
- How much detail should I include?
- Should I use a true story or a fictitious story as an illustration?
- Do I have plenty of examples?
- Do my examples make sense?
- Will I leave important questions uncovered?

Organization

- Do I have a good introduction that will get the audience's attention?
- Is the speech arranged in a logical manner?
- Do I include transitions to help the audience follow my points?
- Do I have a conclusion that will wrap up the speech gracefully?
- Will my conclusion leave the audience with something to think about?
- Should I use a chronological order?
- Should I use my statistics early in the speech or late?

Style

- Is my language clear and convincing?
- Is my style of delivery suitable to the occasion?
- Can I say this more gracefully?
- Am I brief and to the point?
- Are my visual aids attractive and easy to understand?
- Can I improve my speech with gestures?
- Will my tone of voice convey my attitude?
- Can I be heard well by the audience?

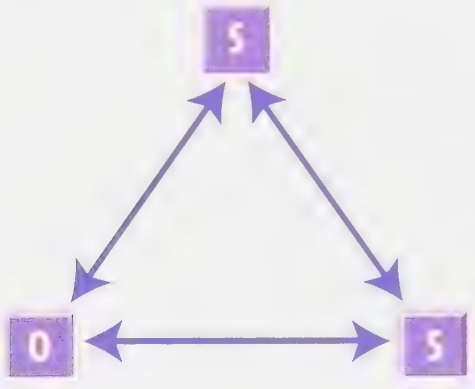
Interactivity and Unity

In addition to providing a framework for making communication decisions, S.O.S. also reveals the interactive nature of these decisions. In other words, a decision in one category will likely affect a decision in the other two.

In the example of recruiting employees, think about the implications of describing the available jobs in lots of detail. That decision about the substance of the speech not only affects what you are going to say, it brings up organizational and stylistic decisions as well. For example, should you leave time at the end to describe jobs that people ask about or describe the jobs in the body of

your speech (organization)? Should you use highly detailed language that is unique to the job (style)?

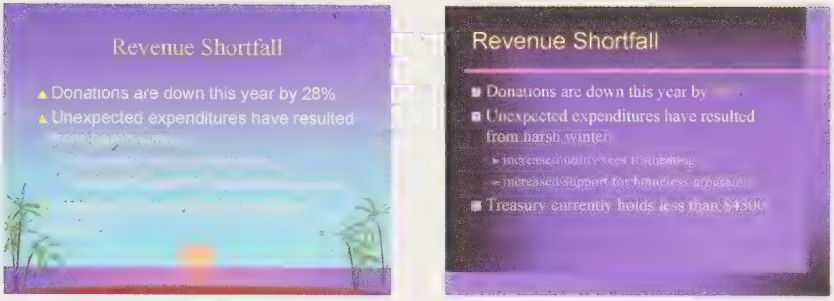
We can represent the interactivity of these decisions with the following diagram:



The arrows show how we must think about the decisions we make. If you decide to include lots of detail (substance) then you increase the amount of information of the body and probably decrease the length of the introduction or conclusion (organization) and place an emphasis on clear, concise language (style).

While we will discuss substance, organization, and style separately because it is easier, we must recognize that the decisions are all part of a whole. The decisions about S.O.S. should be consistent with each other to produce a speech or presentation that all fits together. Unity is the characteristic of a speech in which all parts work together to make an effective and complete whole.

Here is a good example of the need for unity. Assume you are going to give a speech to a volunteer group. Unfortunately, you are facing a situation in which the group will not have enough money to complete their volunteer activity. Your purpose is to inform them of the bad news and give them the necessary information to decide what they should do next. As part of your preparation of the speech, you've decided to use presentation software which will produce visuals or "slides." Which of these designs will fit best with your situation, purpose and audience?



The answer is obvious. If you have a presentation to make that will deliver unpleasant news about a financial matter, why would you use a slide that is "tropical" in design? A tropical design could be suitable for a retirement party or a travelogue, but not on a disappointing financial report. For the presentation to have unity, the substance, organization, and style must complement each other.

Because the substance or content of message is logically the first thing to consider, the unity of a presentation will usually flow from the content. However, sometimes the situation, purpose, and audience make organization or style dominant. If so, organization and style may dictate the unity. Assume that you are going to give a presentation to a bored, apathetic audience. Your read of the audience is that they don't have much interest in your topic. Assume further that you have an idea for an exciting, clever introduction. You might prepare your presentation based on the introduction (an organizational factor). If the introduction is lively and humorous, you'll probably want to maintain that tone (an element of style), since it is difficult to start lively and humorous and switch suddenly to grave and serious. If the introduction that you need to overcome audience apathy is long, you might have to sacrifice some content to make the presentation fit the time limit. In this case, the unity of substance, organization, and style is set by your choice of introduction, an element of organization.

We will cover unity of organization in a later chapter. The remainder of this chapter will cover the unity of a presentation which comes from decisions made about substance.

Achieving Unity—Substance

A presentation's unity will likely flow first from the selection of topic, statement of purposes and development of thesis. Each of these communication decisions allows a speaker to develop a unified, coherent message.

Topic Selection. SPAM largely determines your topic selection. You select a topic because it is something that an audience should hear about and it is something that you feel the need to talk about. You should, of course, suit your situation and your audience, but you must also suit yourself. You should consider these questions when you select a topic.

Consider your audience

- Will the audience be interested in the topic?
- Can you interest the audience in the topic?
- Does the audience need to know about the topic?
- What does the audience already know about the topic?
- Will the topic be fresh and original?
- If the topic is something about which the audience has heard before, can you make it new and interesting with a different approach?
- Will the audience expect to be entertained? Informed? Persuaded? Will the topic allow you to meet these audience expectations?

Consider the situation

- Why is everyone together at this time and place?
- Is this a special occasion that calls for a special topic?
- Does the topic fit audience expectations of what is appropriate for the occasion?
- Are you comfortable speaking on this topic in this situation?
- Does this situation call for a particular tone (light? serious?) that the topic is suitable for?
- Does the occasion require you to entertain? Inform? Persuade?
- Can you speak on this topic in the allotted time? Will development of the topic give you a speech that is long enough and not too long?

Consider yourself

- Are you interested in the topic?
- Do you already have some information on the topic through experience or study?
- Do you have time to prepare adequately on the topic?
- Will you enjoy talking on this topic?
- Are there other topics that suit the audience and situation that you would rather speak on?
- Does the topic let you entertain? Inform? Persuade?

What if you can't really select your topic? Often, a topic is selected for you—either by the situation or by someone else. If you are speaking at someone's retirement dinner, the topic will obviously be the person who is retiring. If your boss tells you to make a presentation on workplace safety, you can't very well change the topic to something else. If the topic is not your own, you must make it your own. Use the same list of questions to help you make the topic something you feel good about presenting. Adjust the topic to your audience, your situation, and yourself.

Unity of Purpose. Developing a purpose statement will also help you achieve unity. As you select your topic, you will decide what exactly you will try to accomplish. Keeping your goal in mind throughout speech preparation will help you achieve the kind of focus that makes a speech unified.

Typically, we think of three basic speech purposes: to entertain, to inform, and to persuade. As you select your topic, ask yourself, "What do I hope to accomplish with this audience and this situation?" Your answer will center on one of these three basic purposes.

Entertain	**Inform**	**Persuade**
interest	teach	convince
amuse	educate	win over
please	familiarize	influence
enliven	introduce	sway

If you decide, for example, that your primary purpose is to inform, you would exclude from your speech any elements that might cross over into trying to influence or sway your audience to a particular point of view. This helps you achieve unity because you focus your audience's attention on new information.

More important, selection of a purpose statement will allow you to recognize what is and what is not important. One very important skill in developing a unified speech is to know what to leave out of a presentation as well as what to include. A purpose statement is a speech preparation technique that requires the speaker to state the speech topic in a way that communicates purpose and audience.

Topic	Employee attendance	The company's United Way campaign
Purpose Statement	To inform employees of the new attendance and sick leave policy so that employee abuse of leave will go down.	To persuade members of our office to sign up for payroll deduction of denotations to the United Way.

Note that these purpose statements help the speaker prepare. By constantly keeping the speech's goal in mind, the speaker knows what information does and does not fit.

The basic speech purposes—to entertain, to inform, and to persuade—are also incremental. In other words, an informative speech needs to have some elements of entertainment. If it doesn't, then there might be nothing in the speech to grab the audience's interest and focus it on the topic. Therefore, interesting or "entertaining" an audience is a prerequisite for informing. (Note that "entertainment" doesn't necessarily mean comedy or jokes. A good story is entertaining. Facts can be entertaining.) Similarly, you aren't likely to persuade someone without providing new information. In addition, a speech aimed at persuasion must also have some element of interest building. Otherwise, people won't listen.

The statement of purpose will focus your speech preparation on the controlling purpose. The controlling purpose of the speech is its primary purpose. All selection of substance will be guided by the controlling purpose. This kind of control over selection will help a speaker prepare a unified presentation.

Do you include your purpose statement in your speech? That is a decision you will make. Usually, a speaker prepares a purpose statement to guide speech preparation and the statement is not included in the speech. In other cases, you will want to include your purposes statement in your speech. Your decision will be based on your audience and the occasion. For example, you might have a purpose that you feel will help your audience understand the speech: "My purpose in speaking to you this afternoon is to convince each of you to make a donation to the company's United Way drive." This topic is likely to cause very little opposition and lets the audience know the speaker's goal is selfless. But if your purpose is to communicate your attendance policy, would you necessarily want to say, "The purpose of this speech is to inform you of the new attendance and sick leave policy so that your abuse of leave will go down"? This isn't a really positive way to start a talk.

Thesis Statement. A more graceful way of expressing your purpose—a way that will likely find its way into your speech—is developing a thesis statement. A thesis statement is simply your point of view about a particular topic reduced to a single sentence. It is different than a purpose statement in that it doesn't necessarily express your point of view in terms of one of the basic speech purposes and it doesn't have to mention the audience. Here's how the thesis statement could be phrased for the two examples above.

Notice that the thesis statements would fit gracefully in a speech's introduction.

Topic	Employee attendance	The company's United Way campaign
Purpose Statement	To inform employees of the new attendance and sick leave policy so that employee abuse of leave will go down.	To persuade members of our office to sign up for payroll deduction of donations to the United Way.
Thesis Statement	Familiarity with the new attendance policy will benefit employees and the company by setting clear procedures.	Because our company cares about the community and the worthy goals of the United Way, everyone should consider making a donation of whatever amount he or she can afford.

Why have a thesis statement?

- First, audiences generally expect some sort of statement of topic early in the speech. Thesis statements are more informative than simply "My topic is the United Fund."
- Second, a thesis statement will help your audience follow your speech more closely. For example, if you say "Familiarity with the new attendance policy will benefit employees and the company by setting clear procedures," the audience will be alert to hear the new procedures and how they will be more clear.
- Third, the thesis statement will shape your audience's expectations about your speech content. For example, an audience who hears, "The purpose of this speech is to inform employees of the new attendance and sick leave policy so that employee abuse of leave will go down," will probably prepare itself for a scolding. A better statement will prepare the audience to receive information.



A good speech title can give some hint about a speech thesis.

A good thesis will accomplish these goals:

	Generating interest	Being precise	Being concise	Being reasonable
Explanation	When the audience hears a good thesis, the audience members want to know more.	Being precise means using clear, exact words, words that appeal to the audience and tell them exactly what the speech is about.	Being concise means being brief. A concise thesis will exclude filler such as "I believe" or "In my opinion." It will exclude support material, such as examples.	A reasonable thesis doesn't overstate the case. It doesn't promise things that the speaker can't truly prove. It avoids terms like *never, all, always, totally, always.*
Weak thesis	Everyone should know how to make the workplace safer.	Workplace safety is a good thing.	In my opinion, a safer workplace in which we all work is probably the single most important thing we can all do, such as just knowing how to lift properly, not to mention insurance costs and all the rest that goes with accidents.	Learning about workplace safety can eliminate all costly accidents.
Improved thesis	If all employees know how to make a safer workplace, our jobs can be more enjoyable and more profitable.	Workplace safety is healthier for individuals, more profitable for us all, and legally necessary.	Workplace safety is the single most important thing we can all do to help each other be healthier and more prosperous.	Simply following the guidelines to workplace safety will eliminate many costly accidents.
	People will want to hear more about making more money and enjoying work.	"A good thing" seems silly compared to the specifics of health, profit, and legality.	Fewer than half the words can be clearer and more focused.	Can anything really guarantee that *all* accidents will be eliminated? Isn't *most* a more reasonable word?

Communication Management—Narrowing a Topic



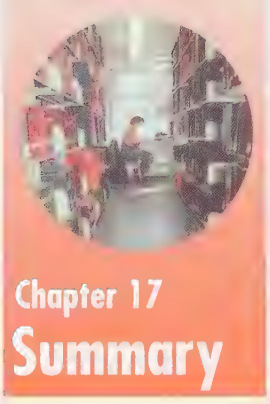
Speakers often struggle with narrowing a topic. The topic itself is clear, because of audience interest, situation, or speaker's purpose. But what if the topic is just too general or broad to fit in an allocated time limit? This is particularly a problem when the speaker knows a great deal about the topic and is tempted to tell that audience everything in just a few minutes.

A broad topic will call for narrowing. Applying the principles of situation, purpose, and audience goes a long way toward narrowing a topic. A purpose statement can help narrow by focusing the speaker on exactly what he or she wants to accomplish. A good thesis—with clear and precise language—also helps. Here is a checklist of questions to help a speaker narrow a topic.

1. What is it? Define the topic.
2. What examples of it are there?
3. Of these examples, which are the most interesting? The most typical? The most unusual? The most controversial?
4. What are the topic's parts or features? Can the topic be broken down into sub-topics, parts, groups, or other constituents?
5. What is the most important part or feature for the audience?
6. How is the topic like other things?
7. How is the topic different from other things?
8. What is the nature of the topic? Is it a process? Is it a series of stages or steps? Is it one in a series of stages or steps?
9. Is it part of a larger topic? Is the audience aware that it is?
10. What are the results or consequences of this topic?
11. What have others said about the topic?
12. Does investigation into the topic reveal a need for change? If so, what kind of change?

Sometimes, you will be called upon to give a speech covering more than one topic. For example, what would you do if you were asked to meet with a group of people and address three different issues—say, the attendance policy, an upcoming change in software, and the periodic employee evaluation process? Since the topics are chosen for you, you must try to achieve unity in other ways.

- You can look toward organization and style to help supply unity.
- You can look for a unifying principle.
- You can simply admit that you have three disparate topics and ask the audience to bear with what is essentially three separate "mini-speeches."



Chapter 17
Summary

The analysis of situation, purpose, audience leads to decisions about methods. Those methods can be conveniently categorized into decisions about substance, decisions about organization, and decisions about style. When these decisions are made appropriately, they will lead to unity, a quality of a good presentation in which all communication decisions support each other, creating an effective message. Key elements of decisions about substance that can lead to unity are selection of topic, development of purpose statement, and development of thesis statement.

Here is a section of a speech that helps you visualize and understand how a speaker can take a broad subject, narrow it, develop a purpose and a simple thesis, and achieve some unity of subject. The speech is by Richard W. Riley, who was Secretary of Education at the time. It was delivered on September 15, 1999, as the Secretary's annual "back to school" address before the National Press Club. The National Press Club meets weekly in Washington, D.C. It is composed of members of the press. This speech was particularly important because it was given after several incidents of school violence during the previous year.

Two Key Transitions: Ninth and Twelfth Grades

Two Key Transitions:
Ninth and Twelfth Grades

Two very important transition points take place in the American adolescent experience: when young people first enter high school; and when they graduate. These transitions really amount to rites of passage, as they come at key moments in adolescent development. We need to see them in a new light.

The typical eighth grader, for example, leaves a much smaller elementary or middle school and suddenly find himself in a very big and, at times, impersonal high school. The transition can, at times, be overwhelming. The result is that some students become low achievers, some drop out and some decide that they are not college material.

And suicide prevention experts tell us that ninth grade is the most troubling year. So this first transition deserves our attention. Several recommendations come to mind.

Schools can create a smoother transition in a number of ways, such as freshmen academies, regular contact with the same group of teachers and advisors, and transition courses that address new challenges from study skills to understanding other

The title focuses audience attention on the chosen subject. He limits his topic to "transitions."

(This paragraph identifies the transitions and advances the simple thesis.) Throughout, the audience will be expecting a "new light" on key moments in adolescent development. The organization will likely be two-part, since there are two transitions. "New light" invites the audience to hear new answers to problems.

The focus sharpens on the transition from eighth to ninth grades. The style is simple and straight-forward. This part of the speech focuses on problems and solutions, not really inspiration. The language reflects the problem-solution approach, describing problems and advancing solutions with "policy language."

This short paragraph moves the audience from problem to solution.

The organization breaks solutions down into what schools can do…

cultures. The key is to create smaller and more personalized learning environments for these young people.

...what parents can do...

Parents need to stay very involved with their children when they enter high school. This is so important and goes against the common assumption that parents should give their teenagers more independence. The truth of the matter is that teenagers want to grow and have new experiences; at the same time, they want to know that their parents are there for them. Parents need to realize that they are still the most important source of support and guidance for teenagers. Sometimes it is hard to break through.

My message to parents is to stay involved. Slow down your lives. I hear a real concern from parents about their children being bombarded by a multitude of messages — some of them harmful — from television, movies, the Internet, and even from their children's best friends.

...what communities can do...

Young people can be very tough on each other at a time when relationships are so important to them. They create cliques, groups, and select out those they do not want. Our high schools have to push back against this tendency, and students are telling us that this is where they need the most support. Community groups and faith communities can also play a positive role in helping schools meet this challenge. The

message should be very clear — every teenager matters.

This is why I believe that schools should set a real goal that every student has some adult to turn to for advice and support. It may be a counselor, a mentor, a coach or a teacher. But the key is to make sure that every teenager has that sense of security about knowing whom to turn to when he or she is struggling.

...and what adults generally can do.

The freshman year is also a crucial year for getting young people on the right track in terms of taking the right courses and getting them thinking about going on to college. This is why I want to recommend highly something that Gene Bottoms is doing as part of his "High School That Works" initiative that is supported by the Southern Regional Education Board.

The speaker supports the general suggestions with a specific program.

Freshmen who participate in this program, which is now in more than 500 high schools across the South, sit down with their parents and a high school advisor and sketch out a six-year plan. The young people get the message that they have a new and higher horizon and that going to high school has a larger purpose.

Creating New Pathways to Learning and Adulthood

We can also do more to create new pathways to learning and to adulthood. In a world exploding with knowledge, with teenagers hooked on the Internet as never before, the traditional seven-periods-a-day way

The speaker then uses his organizational pattern to move the audience to the second part of his topic: moving out of high school and into adulthood.

of learning may not be the best or the only way to educate our young people.

New pathways to learning and adulthood mean new connections to colleges and universities, new connections with other institutions in the community, whether it is a hospital, a bank, a zoo, or a museum. Close to 230,000 high school students, for example, are now taking college-level courses across the country. Tech Prep courses and School-to-Work programs, for example, are great ways to link high school students to community colleges.

The speaker mentions linking schools to the "real world."

High schools of the future need to see themselves as the starting place where young people launch themselves into other learning experiences, and then come back to their high school to integrate what they have learned.

I also encourage schools to do some creative thinking about the senior year experience. Some high school seniors start "checking out" once they have filled out their last college application or received an early acceptance notice from college. The young people tell us in a very direct way that they want to move on.

The speaker moves to the senior year specifically. Notice how the speaker's purpose is reflected in his "encouraging" schools to be different. Clearly, this is the language of a gently persuasive speech.

Senior year should be a well-thought-out transition into adulthood with students being given increasing responsibility. They should be given many more opportunities to be out in the community

The repetition of "adult" and "adulthood" is evident here. The speaker's concentration on transitions is reflected in using terms such as "internships, apprenticeships... service learning."

in structured internships, apprenticeships or service-learning opportunities. By treating these young men and women as adults, we send a powerful message that we expect adult behavior from them as well.

Conclusion

I end now with this thought. Believe in our young people. I say that again — believe in our young people. Please help me give them a message of hope, promise and possibilities. I am tired and weary of the worn-out nostalgia and pessimism that seems to haunt American thinking when it comes to our young people.

Let us reject the twin belief that once there was a time in American education when all things were better; and the negative assumption that this generation of young people can't quite cut it. Our young people don't buy that and neither do I.

Surely, in this time of peace and prosperity, in this great nation — the world's best democracy and hope — we can send a more positive message than that to our nation's young people.

I believe in America's young people. They are optimistic and ambitious and they are looking for direction. If you don't know a high school student, go out and meet one.

The high school student you meet will be full of possibilities and bored at the same time; extraordinarily creative and, at times, absolutely

Although the speech is about schools, the conclusion focuses on young people. The language now can become more inspirational and less political. The switch from talking about problems and solutions allows the speaker to visualize what good schools will do for everyone.

clueless. High school students will be full of themselves, and scared to death about what people are thinking about them. They are our children and grandchildren. And in a few years, when all of us are in our rocking chairs, they will be our leaders.

Let's give them hope and promise for the coming times, and let's create high schools that are exciting, exploring, creative, and challenging, high schools that spark all of our young people to see the full value of their God-given potential.

Thank you.

Remembering

1. Explain situation, purpose, audience and their roles in making decisions about methods. If necessary, use the book's index to review references to these topics.
2. Identify the three categories of decisions that public communicators make regarding methods. Define which kinds of decisions belong in each category.
3. Draw the simple model that illustrates the interactive nature of the decisions regarding method. Give an example of how a decision in one category can affect decisions in another.
4. Explain the concept of unity.
5. Define and explain the relationship among topic, purpose statement, and thesis statement.
6. List the three basic speech purposes and briefly explain each.

Reflecting

1. When substance, organization, and style don't "match up," a speech has weak unity. For example, if the speaker has a serious topic but chooses to wear a comic tie, the speaker's style of dress will likely detract from the message. Assume you are a member of an audience and you are receiving a message that lacks unity. What will your likely response be? Why? Why is such unity—or consistency—important?
2. As a class or in small groups, select two topics that could be the topic for a speech to entertain, a speech to inform, and a speech to persuade. Select one topic and write a short essay describing how you would narrow the topic, select language, and determine a suitable organizational pattern.
3. Writers and speakers share the same purposes. Like speakers, writers entertain, inform, and persuade. Find an article in a magazine, newspaper, or web page that does all three. Share a portion of the article with the class and explain how the writer uses entertainment and/or information to persuade.
4. Find a speech in the library or on the Internet. You might find a suitable speech in *Vital Speeches of the Day*, a periodical carried by many school and public libraries. Choose a speech which allows you to analyze unity. Look for a speech that narrows a topic and contains a good thesis. Outline the speech. In small groups, share your opinions on the author's efforts at giving the speech unity.

Reaching

1. Many presentation programs such as Microsoft PowerPoint have patterns for speakers to follow. They could be called presentation designs, wizards, templates, or other name. Typically, they come complete with a design that includes colors, patterns, pictures, and fonts, as well as a content outline. Experiment with one of the designs. Create a short speech. Rather than give the speech, share the presentation with your classmates and describe how the appearance of the presentation complements the message of the presentation.
2. Select a general topic of interest to you and your classmates. (Examples are subjects like improving schools, teen jobs, college preparation, etc.) Using the questions in this chapter to narrow the topic to one that is manageable in five minutes.
3. Take the topic you've selected in #2 and develop a thesis statement that exhibits the four qualities of a good thesis statement.

Real Life

Give a five-minute to seven-minute speech on a pet-peeve. Your speech should focus on something that really bothers you. You do not have to provide a solution. Prior to delivering the speech, write a précis, a short summary of your speech. Be sure the précis includes the following:

- topic
- reasons for the selection of the topic
- topic narrowed
- basis for narrowing the topic (use SPAM)
- purpose statement, including your intention to entertain, inform, or persuade
- thesis statement
- a paragraph on how substance, organization, and style complement each other.

18 Chapter Eighteen Application.Support Materials

Key Concept

After selecting a topic and identifying purposes and thesis, a speaker identifies support materials that are appropriate to situation, purpose, and audience There are two basic types of support materials: proof and development.

Chapter Objectives

- defining support material
- understanding the relationships among thesis, claims, proof and development
- explain the types of proof
- explain how proofs are developed
- develop skills in using support material



Key Terms

- analogy
- claims
- comparison
- contrast
- definition
- description
- development
- evidence
- example
- illustration
- incident
- paraphrase
- proof
- statistics
- support material
- testimony
- visual aids

Scenario

Alicia is responsible for technology in her office. She is also responsible for training people in the use of the technology. Her company is introducing a new software package, and she is developing a presentation that will introduce the office to the new software and what it can do. She has applied the SPAM model, and has determined the following:

Situation: The new software will be introduced within the next two weeks. It will dramatically change the way everyone in the office does business. The last time that there was a major change in software (before Alicia took over) the transition did not go smoothly.

Purpose: To calm the concerns that office staff members have about the new system. Alicia has written a purpose statement: This speech should convince the office staff that the new system will be easier to use and that their introduction to it will be smooth and easy.

Audience: Alicia knows that the office staff—especially the secretaries—are very worried. Some of them are worried that the new software will make their jobs harder. All are worried that they will be "thrown in" to a new software package with no training.

She is ready to make decisions about her methods. How will she accomplish her purpose? She knows so much about technology that she fears she will confuse them if she goes into detail. On the other hand, she has to support what she says. If she says the new software is "easy to use," she needs to support that statement. If she says the transition will be "smooth and easy," she needs to support that statement as well. All the office staff will want to believe her because they trust her. Still, they have been disappointed before with the introduction of a new system. What kind of support materials does Alicia need to convince her audience?

Here are some suggestions made by Pilar, James, and JaRon. Which do you like?

- Demonstrate how the system works.
- Describe the process a person would use to accomplish a simple task.
- Give examples of the kinds of screens the people will use.
- Share the training sequence they will all go through to learn the new system.
- Compare and contrast the new system with the old one.
- Give statistics on the speed and ease of the new system.
- Share what people in other offices have said about the new system.

Defining Support Material

Alicia faces the same decision that all presenters face: How exactly do you make your point? What goes into the speech? How much is enough? When do you have too much? Can you meet your time limit? Will the audience understand? Will they see the point you are trying to make? Will the audience be entertained? Informed? Persuaded? These are largely questions of substance or content.

Support material is information that helps the speaker make a point. To understand support material, think about your thesis. A good thesis makes the audience require more...more information, more explanation, more argument...*more support*. You have to show that your thesis is valid or true. That requires *claims,* the conclusions or ideas you want your audience to accept. Claims are supported by *proof,* which is also called *evidence.* When proof needs further support, it must be developed. There are many methods of *development.* It's easiest to understand these terms if you think about a specific speech. Alicia's will be a good one.

Thesis	The introduction of the new software package will be smooth and gradual and will ultimately make our entire office work more efficiently.
Claim #1	The new system is faster than the old system.
Proof	The new system will handle 15,000 bits of information per second.
Proof	The old system can only handle 1,000 bits of information per second.

Development	Let me illustrate why that is important. When you are working on your accounts on your own, the system can handle all the information you are entering. But what happens when Darren, Angela, and Kylie are all working on accounts at the same time? The system slows down.
Development	It's like you are pouring water into a funnel. If you are pouring a little water, the funnel handles the water without overflowing. If you pour three bottles at once, the funnel can't handle the water and you either overflow the funnel or pour much more slowly. The new system is like a bigger funnel. It's 15 times bigger. That means that you don't have to work more slowly. And it also means there isn't any "overflow." When our old system "overflows," it stops. That's when we've had to ask some of you to get off the system.
Claim #2	The new system will be easy for you to learn.
Proof	Three offices have already converted to the new system.
Proof	The secretaries at these offices say they would never go back to the old system.
Development	Many of you know Peggy Rose at the central office. Peggy worked with the old system longer than many of you have been with us. Peggy told me that the new system is so easy to learn that she could get any new employee up and running within two hours.
Development	And I know that these three offices don't have nearly the talent and skills that we have in this office.

As you can see there is a definite relationship: A thesis is supported by claims, claims are supported by proof, and proof is supported by development. The relationship is very similar to the relationship you are used to seeing in an outline. If you convert the chart above to an outline, it would look like this:

Thesis: The introduction of the new software package will be smooth and gradual and will ultimately make our entire office work more efficiently.

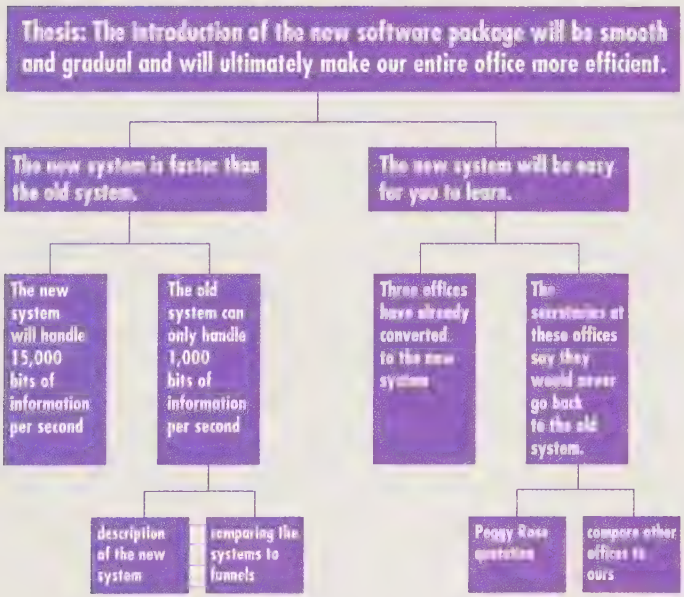
1. The new system is faster than the old system.
    a) The new system will handle 15,000 bits of information per second.
    b) The old system can only handle 1,000 bits of information per second.
        i) description of the new system
        ii) comparing the systems to funnels

2. The new system will be easy for you to learn.
   a) Three offices have already converted to the new system.
   b) The secretaries at these offices say they would never go back to the old system.
      i) Peggy Rose quotation
      ii) compare other offices to ours

Communication Management—Visualizing a Well-Developed Speech



Another way to view the relationship among thesis, claim, proof, and development is to think about the "depth" of a well-developed speech. The same outline above could be viewed like this:



Note how this "structure" reveals the level of development for the points being made in the speech. What would happen to the speech if you began cutting the smaller boxes? Since the smaller boxes develop and support the boxes above it, the speech loses impact. The claims aren't supported, so the thesis is not supported.

How important is the "structure"? Which of the points being made would have an impact on you? The claim is important, but without proof claims are assertions or opinions. The proof is very important, but sometimes doesn't have much impact by itself. The development helps the audience understand the proof. All are important, and a good presentation has all three. And everything—claim, proof, and development—are determined by what is appropriate for the situation, purpose and audience.

This graphic looks as if a speech always flows from thesis to claim to proof to development. While that is the logical relationship, often a speech will cover the materials in different order. For example, you might be making a claim that audience members will oppose. In that case, it might be better to advance development and proof, leading your audience to a claim that supports the thesis.

How Much Support Is Enough?

The best answer to this question is this: It is enough if it satisfies the needs of the situation, meets audience expectations, and realizes the speaker's purpose. That's a way of saying that there is no rule about the quantity of support in a presentation. You can tell when you have too much or not enough. These items are not foolproof, but they are good indications that you have hit the right amount of support material.

Not enough support material

- speech falls far short of expected time limits
- audience doesn't understand
- audience isn't convinced
- claims are unsupported
- audience has too many questions left at the end of the speech
- the introduction and/or conclusion occupies a very large section of the speech

Right amount of support material

- speech fits in expected time limits
- audience understands new material or new ideas
- audience is convinced
- audience asks informed and intelligent questions

Too much support material

- speech goes overtime
- audience becomes restless or bored
- audience doesn't feel as if they have heard anything new
- speech is unnecessarily repetitive

One rule of thumb is to think of support material as the substance of the body of the speech. For example, a four-minute speech will probably have a body length of 2-3 minutes…60% to 90%. If a speech is ten minutes long, the body of the speech will probably be 6-8 minutes…60% to 80%. But no formula replaces the most important question: What is the appropriate amount for situation, purpose, and audience?

Speech Length	Body Length
2 minutes	1 to 1.5 minutes
4 minutes	2 to 3 minutes
6 minutes	4 to 5 minutes
8 minutes	5 to 6 minutes
10 minutes	6 to 8 minutes

Proof

Since claims vary from speech to speech, let's begin understanding support material with proof. All speakers choose their proof from among three types: testimony, statistics, and facts. All three can be labeled "facts," because all three can be proven to be true or false.

Type of proof	Definition	It is a fact because...	Example
Testimony	The opinions of others, usually of experts, quoted as supportive material in support of a claim.	...we can "prove" that someone did or did not express the opinion.	Kala Jackson, president of the local user's group, stated that the new software package is a much improved approach to tracking accounts.
Statistics	Information that is presented numerically. Statistics often represent large quantities of information in numerical form.	...we can demonstrate the validity of the numerical representations.	When we upgrade to the new computer, the available memory will grow by 75%, while the speed of the system will increase 1500%.
Facts	Information that can be proven true.	...we can determine if the information is accurate.	Our southern office adopted the new software last month and set new records this month in numbers of accounts serviced.

Testimony. When you use another person's words or ideas to support the points in your speech, you are using testimony. Testimony is particularly valuable to you in three instances:

- First, it is useful when you don't have much firsthand knowledge about your topic. Often a speaker must present on a topic that he or she isn't familiar with. For example, if you are asked to investigate an issue and report back, you will likely need to rely on the opinions of others.
- Second, it is useful if the audience doubts your credibility or intentions. If an audience suspects that the speaker is attempting to fool them, quoting people whom the members of the audience trust will help the speaker be more convincing.
- Third, it is useful if the audience opposes your ideas. If an audience is opposed to the information, change, ideas, etc., a speaker can shift opinion by quoting others who are seen as unbiased and believable.

A source of testimony must be credible, or believable. What makes a source of testimony credible? The same things that make anyone credible: expertise, good intentions, and trustworthiness. Expertise is knowledge, experience, and skills. A source has good intentions if he or she is unbiased and seems to be concerned more with telling the truth than with promoting a particular issue. Trustworthiness means "worthy of trust," or reliable and honest. A person who meets these criteria is called an "authority."

One of the most common mistakes for speakers who use testimony is just "dropping in" a quotation without relating it to any other part of the speech. Remember: Testimony is used to support elements of the speech, so a speaker should be sure that the audience understands how the testimony fits in the speech.

1. Identify the authority. If necessary, explain why the person is an authority who should be believed. Be prepared to defend your use of the authority if challenged.
2. Avoid really long quotations. Don't be afraid to paraphrase, or put the authority's ideas into your own words.
3. When you paraphrase, don't misrepresent the authority by changing the words or the context of the situation.
4. Stay away from authorities whom your audience will perceive as unfair or biased. If you audience feels you are quoting from an unfair person, they might even perceive you as unfair.

5. Be sure your audience understands how the testimony supports your position. Some speakers rely on an old saying: "Tell them what you're going to say—say it—then tell them what you said." Applied to testimony, this means, "Make your claim—use your testimony—explain how the testimony supports your claim."

Statistics. A statistic is a fact presented as a number. Statistics are particularly useful in…

…representing the opinions of large groups of people	A recent study by the Jones Institute shows that 53% of the people who shop on-line have some concerns about sharing their credit card numbers.
…showing trends	In 1997, fewer than 1 in 10 consumers had bought something over the Internet. By the end of 1999, the number had risen to 6 out of 10.
…establishing a perception that the proof is more reliable than opinion.	While most of us feel that the Internet has only slightly changed our consumer habits, even a slight change spread out over 300 million people amounts to a dramatic shift in the economy. The Jones Institute for Internet Research reports that direct Internet sales combined with sales resulting from Internet research has accounted for close to $16 billion during this year.

Are statistics always reliable? No. Are they facts? Yes—if you think of a fact as being something that can be proven correct. That is not to say that all statistics are reliable. Too often, people misuse statistics, so speakers need to be on guard for audiences who mistrust numbers. You can make your statistics more believable and more useful by following these guidelines:

1. Make your statistics interesting and understandable with examples and illustrations. For example, if you say, "Our web site has received 5,120 hits since we began advertising on KKLR radio," you can make your point. But if you go further, you'll make it more understandable: "If those 5,120 hits had been telephone calls, it would have taken us over 50 employees two whole days to handle them. That means over 100 work days. And that means hiring far more people to answer phones."

2. Be sure that the source of your statistics is credible to your audience. Be prepared to name your source and defend it.
3. Keep statistics as simple as you can. Don't use so many numbers that your audience becomes confused and bored.
4. If you are going to use a lot of statistics, be sure you use visual aids to help your audience visualize what the numbers mean.
5. Above all, make sure your statistics say what you want them to say. It is easy to misunderstand and misuse statistics.
6. Use recent statistics.
7. Relate the statistics to the point you are making. Sometimes the relevance or importance of the numbers is clear to you but must be explained to your audience.

Communication Management—Where Do Speakers Get Statistics?



Like any other proof, statistics come from speaker experience and research. You can find statistics in many library and Internet sources. However, there are specific sources for statistics. In the library, you can find many statistics in almanacs. An almanac collects statistics on many topics. If you browse an almanac, you are likely to find statistics on topics from general population to sports. People collect statistics on subjects you have probably never thought of.

If you plan to use statistics from an almanac, you might want to remember a couple of hints: First, an almanac typically presents statistics in a straightforward, undeveloped manner. It will be up to you to make the statistics understandable and interesting to your audience. Second, the almanac collects statistics from other sources. If you use the statistic in a speech, note the original source.

What if you want statistics that don't exist? For example, if you want to statistically represent the opinions of students in your school on a topic? One of the means of gathering statistics is to do your own research. The kinds of data you can generate can be very interesting.

If you choose to do your own research, do so fairly. Don't simply ask ten friends their opinions; do a sampling of the school population. Statistics are of no value if they aren't believable.

Facts. A fact is a statement that can be proven true. Think back to the speeches you have heard. What do you remember from them? You might remember testimony and statistics, but chances are you remember specific facts that the speaker introduced. A teacher knows that illustrations, stories, anecdotes, and cases—in other words, facts—help students understand and remember.

As with testimony and statistics, there are some things to remember when you use facts.

1. Almost always, facts need to be developed. If you say, "The early growth of Amazon.com was a clue to many unbelievers that the Internet would change our behavior," that is a fact. If that is enough for your audience, it can be left at that. More often than not, however, your audience will need the point developed. What was the early growth? Who was involved? What happened?
2. Select facts that are interesting. You will probably have a choice among several facts. Put yourself in the place of your audience. Which would you want to hear about? Which would prove most interesting while supporting your point?
3. If necessary, cite where you got your example: personal experience? magazine or newspaper? Internet?

Development

As you might be able to tell from this discussion, proof usually doesn't stand alone. To be effective, it needs to be developed and presented to the audience in a particular way. Development is the amplification and clarification of the proof in your speech. To amplify means to "make larger or more powerful." To clarify means to "make clear." Developing your speech means making it more powerful and more clear.

Example	An example is a specific, typical instance.
Illustration	An illustration is a longer, more elaborate example.
Incident	Also called narrative or anecdote, an incident is an example in the form of a story.
Comparison/contrast	Comparison reveals similarities. Contrast reveals differences. They are often used together.
Description	Description is specific, physical detail.
Definition	A definition is an establishment of the meaning of a word or phrase.

Examples and Illustrations. An example is a specific and typical instance of something. It is also one of the most important ways of developing a speech. Examples are lively and interesting. They are usually easy to remember. They put a real-world look on proof. Statistics, testimony, and facts come alive with specific examples. Note how, in this passage from a speech, examples make the point more vividly.

> We are all in the middle of a remarkable revolution in the way people do business. (CLAIM) Major companies are doing things they would never have dreamed of in previous years. Ford Motor company has even extended the new e-commerce concepts to bidding contracts with other companies. (FACT) Ford has held contract "auctions" on-line, where bidders can watch in real-time the prices being posted. Can you imagine anything like this happening just a few years ago? (EXAMPLE)

The speaker makes a claim: We are in the midst of a e-Revolution. He supports the claim with fact: Ford Motor company has a new bidding system. He goes on to make this fact more vivid by showing a specific example of how it works.

You can make examples work for you as well:

1. Find typical examples. Don't defeat the purpose of an example by using one that doesn't make your point.
2. Find understandable examples that the audience can clearly relate to your speech.
3. Find interesting examples.
4. Introduce your examples; don't just drop them into the speech.
5. If you have time, use more than one example.
6. Avoid simply listing examples. Such a "laundry list" quickly gets boring.
7. Sometimes you make up an example. These are hypothetical examples. They aren't meant to fool the audience into thinking they are real. Clearly identify hypothetical examples.

If you extend an example, you create an illustration, which is a longer, more elaborate example. If you decide to extend an example to an illustration, do so for a good reason. A good illustration will help a speech by keeping an audience interested in the example or by making the example clearer. Follow these guidelines in using illustrations:

1. Choose interesting, colorful language.
2. Treat your illustration as a "word picture." Get your audience to see the illustration in the mind's eye.
3. Since illustrations are longer than examples, include a statement that ties back to the point you are making. Don't get so caught up in "telling a story" that the point of the story is lost on the audience.

Incident. Everyone loves to hear a story. An incident (also called a narrative or anecdote) is a story used to prove or illustrate a point. Be sure that the audience sees the relationship between the incident and the point you are making.

> Internet business has become part of our daily lives. (CLAIM) In fact, you can now order a pizza on-line. (FACT) Just think about how college is different nowadays during finals week. You are on-line studying a guide recently posted by your English professor. You e-mail a friend with a question that you just aren't quite sure about. Your friend sends you a web page that contains information from students in another state, who have studied the same material. And with a few clicks of the mouse and a few key strokes, you order a large, double-pepperoni thick crust for delivery in thirty minutes (INCIDENT). In a few minutes, without leaving your desk, you have studied, interacted with your professor, talked with a friend, gone across state lines, and ordered a pizza.

Comparison and Contrast. When you point out similarities, you are using comparison. When you point out differences, you are using contrast. You use comparison and contrast all the time. If you are trying to make up your mind about two things, you consider how they are similar and how they are different—comparison and contrast. Because it is so much a part of how we think, comparison/contrast appeals to audiences as a type of development.

> The Internet has revolutionized teaching. Ten years ago, we photocopied materials; now we can post material on the web. Ten years ago, we turned in grades; now we enter them from home and students can have them before New Year's Eve. Ten years ago, we had office hours that might (or might not) coincide with our students' schedules; now we spend much of our office hours answering e-mail from our students.

In this case, the speaker is contrasting examples of teaching activities to show how they differ now from similar activities ten years ago.

When you use comparison and contrast, note the following:

1. Comparison and contrast have no content of their own. In other words you are comparing and contrasting something: statistics, examples, opinions, etc. Comparison and contrast are methods of developing other support materials.

2. Maintain clear organization of your comparisons and contrast so your audience is not confused.
3. Use gestures to enhance the audience's understanding of comparison-contrast. Hand gestures, for example, can help the audience see that you are showing the similarities and differences between two separate items.

Analogy: A Special Kind of Comparison and Contrast. Sometimes a speaker will want to make an extended, more detailed comparison. In these cases, the speaker might choose an analogy as a form of development. An analogy explains to an audience something they do not understand by comparing it to something they do understand.

For example, you might not know exactly how the Internet works when you try to log on to a web site. If a speaker tries to explain the process technically, then she could lose a portion of her audience. However, everyone understands dialing a telephone, the use of area codes, dial tones, busy signals, etc. If a speaker explains the use of the Internet by comparing it to telephoning, the speaker is using an analogy. In this case, the analogy is a literal analogy, because the Internet and the phone are both technological means of communicating. While they are different in many ways, they are similar enough to be considered the same for the purposes of the analogy.

Perhaps a speaker is not interested in explaining how the Internet works technically, but in explaining the interconnectedness of the Internet. In that case, she might use a figurative analogy, which compares two essentially unlike things. If she compared the Internet to a web, explaining the term "world-wide web," she might explain how a web allows a spider to move in any direction. A small tug on one strand of the web can be felt in other parts of the web. This figurative analogy gives no clue on the technical workings of the Internet, but it does give the audience an image of the interconnected nature of the Internet.

Description. A description gives specific, physical detail about the topic. You will typically give details about people, places, things, and incidents. Description helps the audience "see" what you are talking about.

> Our lives are so much easier nowadays. Remember when a multimedia presentation used to be such an expedition? I can see it clearly. The speaker would show up at least an hour early. He *lugged* a tape recorder in a *huge black case.* He brought in from his *double-parked cargo van* a slide projector with a fan that *whirred louder than an attic fan.* For text, he *manhandled* a 2-foot-tall overhead projector. The heat of the

> overhead bulb caused beads of sweat to *pop out* on his forehead in the first two minutes of the presentation. He used reams of paper, *enough paper to damage the rain forests.* All this—the inconvenience, the time, the sweat—because the speaker wanted to have a speech with some pictures and some text.

In this example of description, the speaker uses description to develop the point that things weren't very convenient for speakers before the computer. The italics show how the speaker used language to paint a word picture for the audience.

When you use description, remember these guidelines:

1. Use clear, colorful language. Description should paint a picture.
2. If a real picture will help, use it.
3. Use only relevant detail. Avoid spending time on unnecessary or irrelevant description.
4. Use a concluding remark to tie your description back to the point you are trying to make. In the example above, the concluding remark was, "All this—the inconvenience, the time, the sweat—because the speaker wanted to have a speech with some pictures and some text."

Definition. Audiences will often need a word or term defined. This isn't unusual, considering that speeches often introduce new ideas and concepts. If you have a fact, statistic, or testimony that has an unfamiliar term, you won't be successful if the audience doesn't fully understand what you are talking about.

> Many Internet marketers will use cookies, small programs that the web page places in your computer to track your use and communicate it back to the owner of the page.

A definition can be as simple as this example, called an "appositive." You simply insert a clarifying word or phrase that re-names—defines—the word in question. Other times, you will have to define more clearly and at greater length. In fact, you could build an entire speech around a definition. For example, if you are talking to people without much technical training, you might take ten minutes defining "server."

1. Avoid using "according to Webster" or "according to the dictionary" or other overused introductions to definitions.
2. There are many ways to define a term in addition to a "dictionary" definition. You can use synonyms, contrasting terms, examples, and other forms of definition.
3. Don't talk down to an audience when you define a term. They could feel insulted.

4. The purpose of a definition is to make your speech clearer. Don't use an unclear, confusing definition.

Combining Types of Supportive Material

The sample speech below shows that a speaker can integrate many different kinds of supportive material to develop a speech. In fact, using different types of supportive material will give the speech variety and interest.

This speech was given on October 18, 1999, by Lea Soupata to the Business Women's Network at the 1999 Global Business Summit in Washington, D.C. Ms. Soupata was moderating a panel discussion on the growth in Internet commerce and women-owned businesses. The audience was largely women interested in the topic. The left column contains the speech. The right column contains labels and explanations of the speaker's use of supportive material.

Thank you, Toni [Ford] and good morning, everyone.	
Before introducing our panel, I want to spend a few minutes setting the context for today's discussion.	Gives purpose: "setting the context" for the panel discussion that she is introducing.
About a month ago, the *New York Times* ran a special section devoted to e-commerce. It ran 70 pages—nearly as big as all the rest of the weekday edition combined.	Fact—Developed with description ("70 pages—nearly as big as all the rest of the weekday edition combined.")
Suddenly, that little "e" is everywhere ...and "dot.com fever" is sweeping through offices, stores, homes, factories and warehouses at an incredible speed.	Figurative Analogy—compares the Internet to a fever.
This year, some experts are predicting that holiday shopping over the Internet will reach $10 billion in the U.S. That's 300 percent growth over last season.	Statistics—Developed by contrast with last season.

Forrester Research predicts, that retail sales on the Web will exceed $41 billion within two years. And that's just retail.	Testimony—in this case quoting an organization (Forrester Research) rather than an individual. This support combines testimony with statistics.
Just how big is the "electronic E-conomy?" The U.S. Department of Commerce says more that $300 billion—as of the end of last year.	Statistics (combined with the testimony of the U.S. Department of Commerce).
At UPS, we believe the growth in Internet commerce to date is just the beginning of a global electronic economy that will soon be measured not in billions, but in trillions of dollars.	Claim—This claim is really the thesis of the speech. The context that she wants to establish (see purpose above) is one that recognizes the rapid development of the Internet.
Our company has a unique perspective on e-commerce. We have deep roots in the physical world of package delivery.	Claim
But over the past decade we have spent more than $10 billion on information technologies to become a primary enabler of e-commerce.	Statistics/Fact in support of above claim.
More than any other enterprise you can think of, we feel the growing pulse of e-commerce because it passes through our hands quite literally every day.	Description supporting the statistics and claim above.
Last holiday season, for example, we delivered 55 percent of all the goods sold online.	Statistics—continuing to support above claim about the uniqueness of UPS.

What's fueling this extraordinary trend? An enormous worldwide movement. A movement that is empowering many...leveling the playing field for even more...and redefining our notions of commerce and customer service.	Claim
It extends from the boardrooms of large international corporations like the one I work for...	Description of the "enormous worldwide movement"—supporting above claim.
...to countless family rooms and kitchen tables where some of tomorrow's most successful new businesses are being conceived today, often by one person sitting alone at a computer.	Continued description.
This movement includes CEOs like Meg Whitman of eBay, who talks about how the Internet is creating a whole new kind of person-to-person commerce.	Example supporting the claim of "enormous worldwide movement."
It includes people like Jessica DiLullo and Jenny Lefcourt, who met at the Stanford M.B.A. school, where they first kicked around the idea of starting an online bridal registry business.	Example supporting the claim of "enormous worldwide movement."
They named their company Della and James. Less than a year and a half after start-up they have 70 employees and are working their way through a second round of venture capital.	Incident developing previous example.

Like many other online businesses, Della and James is aimed primarily at women. And as Jessica DiLullo says, "If you're going to sell to women, you've got to understand women—and there's no better way than to be one."	Continuation of incident, further developed with testimony.
The e-commerce movement also includes working women like Suzanne Richie, who earlier this year left her job as a photo editor at the *New York Times* to set up shop on the web.	Example
Her one-person company combines her passion and her expertise in collecting early American pattern glass. She describes her modest web site as, quote, "my Fifth Avenue store."	Example extended into an illustration. Uses quotation to establish an analogy between the web and "Fifth Avenue."
And she's right—the web can be Fifth Avenue...Rodeo Drive...the local mall...your favorite catalogs—and much, much more.	Elaborating on the previous analogy, and extends it beyond one region and one kind of retail outlet.
It's the business world not in microcosm, but in macrocosm. It's all about reaching out to new customers, suppliers and partners.	Defining "it"—the web—as "about reaching out to new customers."
What it's not about is artificial barriers and limits.	Definition by negation, showing what the web is NOT about.
Internet culture defies hierarchy. It rewards cooperation. The traits that matter most are imagination, intelligence, and innovation.	Claim—by this time, the speaker has offered statistics and examples in quantity. She then advances claims that the audience can tie back to the statistics and examples, "filling in" the support or development for each.

E-commerce values women as customers, obviously. But we are also valued as marketers, as innovators—and increasingly, as technologists.

Claim

Today there are more than 9 million women-owned companies in the U.S.—38 percent of all businesses. And according to IBM, those companies spent $67 billion on technology last year.

Statistics supporting the claim above.

Why is that so significant? Because with a greater voice in how these technologies are designed and used, women will help ensure that all the important aspects of our lives are in balance.

Claim

Technology tends to divide people into two kinds of groups—the digital "haves" and the "have-nots"—

Claim

...and the "cans" and "cannots."

So the issue for everyone here today is this: Can we master this new model of commerce?

Can we grasp what new waves of technology will mean—and then apply them strategically to our businesses?

And can we do it in "Internet time?"

Most important of all, can we share what we learn with our partners and co-workers to make everyone in our companies more successful?

E-commerce has redefined the value of knowledge.

Claim

If we try to lock up what we know, try to keep it to ourselves, we make it worthless.

Claim

But if we spread our knowledge out on the table, everyone profits.

E-commerce puts a high premium on immediacy. It is an impatient environment.

Claim

That's why *your* ability and *my* ability to manage the speed of knowledge is the key to our success in this incredibly exciting new world.

Claim

Now it's my pleasure to introduce to you the moderator of today's panel.

The remainder of the speech is an introduction of the first panel member.

She brings a truly global mindset to today's discussion, having lived in Europe, Japan, Mexico and the United States.

She has served as president of no fewer than 6 business organizations, including the Professional Services Council and the National Association of Women Business Owners.

She was a delegate to all 3 White House Conferences on Small Business and has advised economic development agencies in Washington, D.C., and Paris.

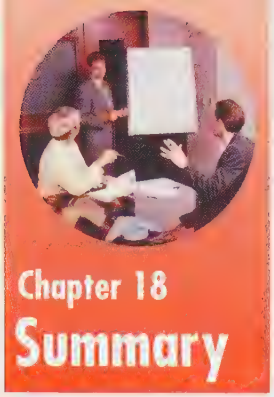
Currently, she is president of eXponentials.com, an international consulting firm with expertise in small and medium enterprises.

Please join me in welcoming...

...Virginia Littlejohn.



New technologies make visual presentation of support materials easy to accomplish.



Chapter 18 Summary

Too often, we think of communication as something that "just happens." Effective communicators know that learning about communication means planning, adapting, and reflecting. The key elements in planning, adapting, and reflecting are situation, purpose, audience, and method. By remembering the acronym SPAM, you can adjust communication to suit your needs and your audience's.

Remembering

1. Define support material.
2. Explain how an understanding of situation, purpose, and audience helps a speaker choose support material.
3. Explain the relationships among thesis, claims, proof, and development.
4. List and define the types of proof.
5. Demonstrate how proofs are developed.

Reflecting

1. Find a speech in the library or on the Internet. Select a section of the speech, length designated by your instructor. Label the claims, proof, and development. Use the speech in this chapter as a model.
2. Take the same selection used above and diagram "deep structure" in the speech. Remember: Your diagram represents a logical relationship, not always the order in which material is presented.
3. Consider a typical audience of students that you might address. What kinds of development do you think they would prefer? Why?
4. Look in one issue of *Vital Speeches of the Day*. See how many statistics you can find in 10 minutes. Jot down the statistics. Select one of the speeches and show how a speaker took statistics and did two things: a) related the statistic to a specific claim; b) developed the statistics so they were easily understood by the audience. (You might find speeches on the *Vital Speeches of the Day* web site—www.votd.com.)
5. Brainstorm a list of current issues about which people will be speaking on television. Brainstorm a list of authorities that are well-respected by most people who would be good sources of testimony. Remember that the sources should be credible.

Reaching

1. Select a topic about which you know a good deal. Assume you are going to give a speech to an audience of your peers. Develop a hypothetical situation, purpose, and audience. List the types of development covered in this chapter. Write an example of the type of development you could use in the speech. Use the examples in the chapter as models.
2. Working in small groups, develop a survey that you can administer to your student body. Select a topic of interest. Select a method of acquiring the information. Get your method approved by the instructor. Acquire the information. Develop a presentation in which you cover you methods and your findings.

Real Life

1. Prepare a speech in which you attempt to convince your audience. The speech should last about 4-6 minutes. The emphasis of the speech will be on your use of support material. Be sure you use at least two kinds of proof and at least four kinds of development.

19 Chapter Nineteen Application. Visual Aids

Key Concept

Sometimes the best method to accomplish a speaker's purpose in a given situation is to use pictures, charts, and other visual aids. The use of presentation software has made visual aid development easier—and more expected by audiences. Speakers can make appropriate use of visual aids by following the same SPAM guidelines that they do in other speaking decisions.



Chapter Objectives

- identify the common types of visual aids used by public speakers
- identify skills that can help a speaker use visual aids effectively
- identify the best practices in using presentation software
- understand when visual aids are appropriate

Key Terms

- charts
- font
- graphs
- presentation software

Scenario

Pilar's office has presentation software, but she has never used it to supplement a speech.

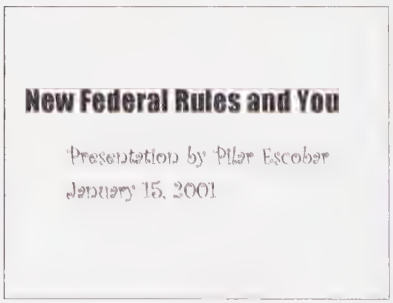
Situation: The firm's human resources department has asked managers to review some employment laws. They have given the managers a short script to follow.

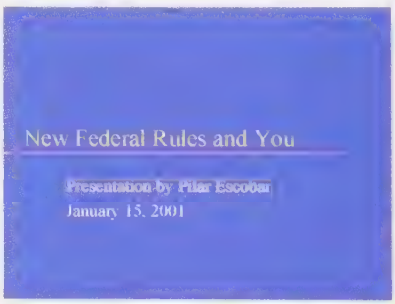
Purpose: To inform office employees about three sets of laws: Workers' Compensation, Family Medical Leave Act, and Americans with Disabilities Act.

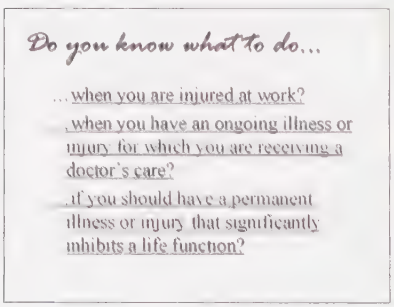
Audience: Pilar suspects that the audience will be uninterested in the topic

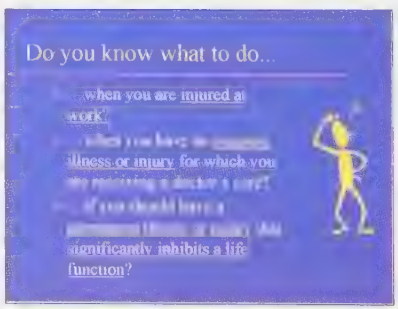
Based on the situation, purpose, and audience, Pilar feels the need to "spice up" her presentation with visual aids.

She has developed some "slides" she wants to use in a presentation. When she asked Alicia to review the slides, Alicia volunteered to review them and revise them. Pilar is very pleased with Alicia's changes. Can you see why?









Defining Visual Aids

Visual aids are support materials that an audience can see. We are covering them apart from other forms of development, but they serve the same purposes as other kinds of support materials. In other words, visual aids help a speaker develop proof. If a speaker uses statistics, the statistics might be better understood if presented with a chart or graph. If a speaker uses testimony, perhaps allowing the audience to read the quotation as well as hear it will make a greater impact.

One of the reasons that visual aids can be so important is the ways people learn. We know that some people learn best by reading. Others learn best by listening. Still others prefer pictures. If a speaker is going to reach all of a large audience, the speaker should consider how all members receive messages. While it might be impossible for a speaker to appeal to every audience member's personal preferences, some visual aids can improve the chance that the message will get through. When a message appeals to more than one of the senses, it is said to be "co-expressive." All public speeches are co-expressive, because a speaker uses words as well as gestures and other nonverbal elements.

Here are some other reasons for using visual aids:

1. Visual aids give a presentation variety. Especially if a speech is long, listeners sometimes like the message to involve more than listening.
2. Visual aids are sometimes the only way to convey a message. For example, if a speaker wants to show boundaries on a map, a picture could be the only way to make the boundaries clear.
3. Visual aids sometimes meet audience expectations. If a speaker analyzes situation and audience and determines that the audience expects video, handouts, etc., the speaker should consider the advantages of meeting those expectations.

The Ultimate Visual Aid—Yourself

Before we discuss other kinds of visual aids, think about the speaker as the ultimate visual aid. Nonverbal behavior—gestures, facial expression, movement, and so forth—communicate a great deal to an audience. For example, if you would like to suggest to an audience that a graph is sloping upwards, you could use gestures to show the upward trend. Or if you wished to express three points, you could simply hold up three fingers.

Using yourself as a visual aid has its advantages. You need no electrical outlets and no artistic talent. You don't have to bring along any equipment.

It has one further advantage. Being your own visual aid can be part of other

visual aids. You don't have to do one or the other; you can do both. You can use gestures and posters, facial expression and video, movement and handouts, and so forth.

Chalkboards and Marker Boards

From our earliest school memories, the chalkboard stands out as a common visual aid. Nowadays, the chalkboard has been replaced by a marker board, china board, or white board. Meeting rooms are often equipped with boards, or with large tablets of poster paper on which a speaker can draw and write. These innovations reduce chalk dust, especially around computers and other electrical equipment.

The marker board and its variations have several advantages:

- It can be used on the spur of the moment. If a speaker suddenly recognizes the need for a diagram or a list, the speaker can provide it quickly.
- The materials are easy to provide. If you know a marker board is available, all you need is a marker to allow yourself the flexibility of using the visual aid if needed.
- If you make diagrams and notes, you can choose to keep them or to have them copied onto paper.
- Since marker boards don't rely on technology, there is little to prepare. Moreover, little can go wrong. (On the other hand, the appeal of marker boards is limited.)

Here are some suggestions for using a marker board or chalkboard:

1. Check your writing. Remember that your writing on a marker board will likely look different than your handwriting. If your handwriting isn't clear, consider printing. If your printing isn't clear, choose another form of visual aid, if you can.
2. Make your writing large enough for everyone in the audience to see.
3. Writing on a board gives you something to do with your hands and allows for movement. However, don't let your board work get in the way of effective nonverbal communication. In other words, don't address so much physical energy to board work that you forget effective gestures, movement, etc.
4. Display your information in a logical manner. Audiences like to read left to right, so if you write up to consecutive points, move from left to right. A list should still read from top to bottom.
5. Avoid writing too high or too low on the board. The audience can't see easily and you will strain to reach, which will hurt your voice and hide your face.

6. Avoid blocking the board. Stand to the side of what you've written. Use a pointer if necessary.
7. Face the audience when you speak. You will be tempted to speak "to the board" as you write. Even if you must turn your back to the audience, write first, then speak. Some speakers who use a board a lot have learned to write while glancing at the audience to maintain eye contact.
8. Keep it simple. Since you are writing on a board, you can't afford to create huge sentences or drawings while you are talking. Use abbreviations to save time.
9. Erase frequently. If you don't, you'll have a jumble of information on the board, and you will confuse your audience.
10. If you are going to use a chalkboard, avoid wearing dark colors. The white chalk dust can spoil your appearance.

Posters

Posters have several advantages.

- You can prepare a poster ahead of time.
- Posters can be colorful and interesting.
- Although you might need an easel or other support for a poster, posters are technologically simple. You don't have to depend on technology, and little can go wrong.

You can use posters effectively to summarize material you've presented, to preview the organization of your presentation, to show charts, graphs, and diagrams, and to show your audience new terms.

1. Use dark markers; black, blue, green, and red are best.
2. Write in clear, large letters or create them with a computer.
3. Put one idea or concept on each poster so you can focus audience attention on one idea at a time.
4. If you don't have an easel, you can tape posters up so others can see. Holding posters yourself can restrict your movement and gestures.
5. Show a poster only when you are ready to review its content. Showing earlier can distract your audience.
6. When you practice your presentation, practice with posters. This kind of rehearsal helps you integrate the visual aid into your presentation.

Objects and Models

There are times when you will want to use an object or model as part of your presentation. For example, if an architect or safety specialist is giving a speech to inform an audience about a building, he or she might want to have a model of the building available. Similarly, a mechanic or technician could have a

machine part or electrical component available to show audience members how to use or repair it. Here are some guidelines for using objects and models.

1. Make sure it is safe. Don't bring models that can produce high heat, electrical current, and chemical reactions.
2. Keep it simple enough so your audience will benefit.
3. Keep the model out of sight until you are ready to use it. One exception to this rule is the use of the model as a focal point before the speech starts. It can help build curiosity and interest in your presentation.
4. Be sure the audience can see the model. Passing an object or model around is much less effective than having the audience observe the model together. The audience size will determine if you can accomplish this.

Handouts

One of the best features of handouts is that they give your audience something to take away with them that will remind them of your message. Many people like to hear a speech without taking notes, but want something to take away for future consideration.

1. Plan when to make handouts available. Use your understanding of situation, purpose, and audience to decide if the handouts should be made available at the start of the speech (so people can follow along with you), passed out during the speech (so the audience won't focus on the handouts before you are ready), or at the end of the speech (when the handouts are to be only notes for them to take with them).
2. Be sure you have enough handouts. Anticipate the size of your audience and prepare more handouts than you think you will use.
3. Know how you will get the handouts to the members of the audience. Some choices are a) a table at the entrance or exit; b) a pause for handing materials directly to the audience; c) an e-mail before or after the event.

Presentation Software

In the past few years, presentation software has made preparing and presenting visual aids easier than ever. Typically, presentation software produces one or more of the following:

- "slides" viewed on a computer screen, with a video projector
- overhead transparencies
- video clips
- sounds or audio recordings
- handouts of the slides for audience members to follow and/or take with them.

Situation	Purpose	Audience
• Use presentation software when you have time to prepare it. It is easy and convenient to use, but if you aren't familiar with it, a short deadline isn't the place to start. • Use presentation software when it will not intrude into the occasion. For example, projected video is a good idea as an aid in an informative presentation. It is probably not a good idea at a solemn, dignified occasion or an occasion that should be marked by a very personal tone. • Use presentation software when the presence of the computer and projector will be convenient. • Will you need to darken the room? If so, is that appropriate?	• Use presentation software when you know how it will suit your speech purpose. Not every speech — and not every purpose — will be furthered by computer-generated visual aids. • Consider what the use of presentation software will do to your ability to adapt. Sometimes, a speaker can become so dependent on prepared visual aids that he or she cannot react to the needs of the situation and audience to change purposes as needed. • Remember that basic speech purposes are sequential: You must entertain or interest before you can inform; you usually will have to inform before you persuade. Know which purpose or purposes the presentation software will help you meet.	• Will your audience like this type of presentation? Will they see use of presentation software as a positive step in message presentation? • Will your audience benefit? Will the visual and/or audio assistance help them better understand your message? • Will the technology itself detract from the message? Sometimes, this can happen. • Does the audience expect presentation software? • What will other speakers be doing? If you are part of a presentation from multiple speakers, your use of software could help you "blend in," or make you "stick out." Will the audience see your decision as a positive step?

Because presentation software is becoming the most frequently used visual aid, it is worth taking some time to consider its use.

So how do you use presentation software to its best advantage? Most software comes with instructions or tutorials to help you learn. There are many sites on the Internet with tips and samples. To see how you can start, this is a speech on using presentation software. Note that the speech and the accompanying slides at once instruct you on using presentation software and illustrate use.



One year ago, I wouldn't have given this speech.

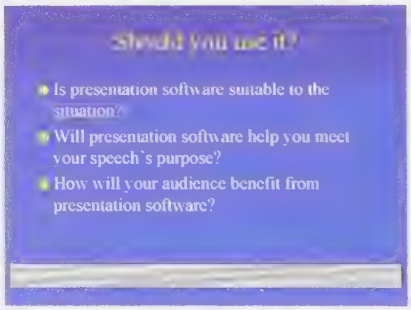
One year ago, I couldn't have given this speech.

And believe me…one year ago, you wouldn't have wanted to hear me give this speech. I hope you will now.

What's changed in that year? What could be so different that I can now give a presentation entitled "The New Visual Aids"? It was one year ago that I learned about presentation software. And now, I can have visual aids that will—I hope—help me share with you some of the new technology to help us all give better presentations.

To start with, you need to know this about me: I'm a disaster with diagrams, I'm a klutz with color, and I'm a horror with handwriting. Still, I can now make a new kind of visual aid that helps me overcome all three of these flaws.

As you all know, communication is a decision-making process. If you can follow a few basic suggestions, you can create appealing and interesting visual aids that can make even the most basic message exciting for your audience.



The first decision you will face is the decision to use presentation software or not. Ask yourself these basic questions:

Is presentation software suitable to the situation? You certainly wouldn't want to use presentation software to give a eulogy. Presentation software wouldn't be useful in a brief presentation. However, it could be very useful in many other situations. You will

have to decide if the situation makes presentation software a good communication choice for you and your audience.

Will the presentation software help your speech's purpose? Let's face it: The bottom line in speech presentation is, "Does it work?" If you are thinking about using a joke in a speech, you'll want to know if it will work...will it be funny? If you are using a story, you want to know if it will work...will it make your point? The same thing is true for presentation software. Ask yourself, "Will presentation software help me meet my speech purpose?" If the answer is "yes," use the software. But if the answer is "no," don't feel you must use software as part of your presentation.

The most important question is probably this last one: How will your audience benefit from presentation software? By keeping your audience foremost in mind, you will make good speech decisions in all areas... and especially in use of presentation software. If you are doing something on the computer, keep your audience in mind. Computer software can give you animation, sound effects, cartoons, Web access, and many other tools. The ultimate question is, "will it benefit my audience?" Take what is useful, and forget the rest.

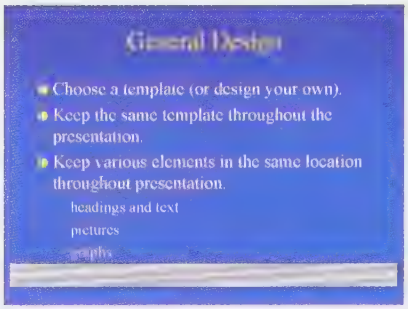


So once you've decided you will use presentation software...

- ...it's suitable for the occasion...
- ...it meets your purpose...
- ...it benefits your audience...
- ...you'll need to make several kinds of decisions.

These decisions are like all other speech decisions. They are driven by situation, purpose, and audience. You will make decisions about

- General design of the presentation
- The content of the slides
- Graphics use
- Use of color
- Use of fonts
- Layout

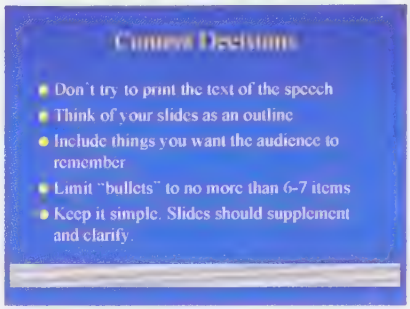


General design decisions deal with the general appearance of your visual aids.

The best way to guarantee a clear and pleasing presentation is to choose a pre-designed template. These templates—or patterns—come with your software package. They are designed to look good and to communicate effectively. If you are more of a computer user, you could design your own template. If you aren't, use the "pre-fabbed" models to help with color and layout.

Once you've chosen a template, use the same template throughout to give your presentation unity. It is very disruptive to audience perception when you start with one design and bounce around to many color schemes, backgrounds and fonts.

Be sure you keep elements of your visual aids in the same location throughout the presentation. Keep the headings in the same place, usually at the top of the slide. Keep text and bullets in the same locations and lined up. If you are going to use pictures and graphs, be sure they are located in the same location—left or right—throughout. Such consistency can help your audience interpret information immediately.



Once you have made decisions about general design, you'll need to keep in mind some very important content decisions. Your speech—built upon your understanding of situation, purpose, and audience—will drive the creation of your visual aids…not vice versa. To help you make clear, informative slides, be sure you make good decisions about the content of those slides. Keep these five simple ideas in mind:

First, don't try to print the text of your speech. You aren't reading the slides to your audience; you are using them to support and clarify your speech. In fact, you should avoid lots of text on a slide. Such slides are "dense" and boring.

Second, think of your slides more like an outline than a script. An outline does just that: outlines the main points of your presentation. Such clear slides will be much better than content-heavy slides.

Third, ask yourself, "What do I want my audience to remember?" This question will guide you in what

you write on a slide. If it is a key point, it belongs on the slide. If it is explanation and supplement, it probably doesn't.

Fourth, limit the number of bullets to no more than six or seven. Your audience will thank you for it. And they will spend more of their time listening to you and less time reading information. If you need more than six or seven bullets, ask yourself, "Are all these bullets necessary?" If your answer is "yes," maybe you need more than one slide for this point.

Finally, when in doubt, keep it simple. The visual aid is meant to supplement and clarify. Simple slides are more likely to accomplish these goals than complex ones.

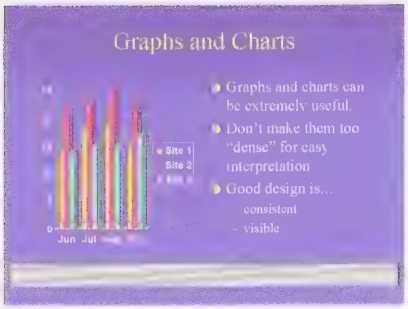


Aside from text, you will face decisions about clip art and other kinds of pictures. Clip art usually comes with presentation software, and you can download plenty of pictures from the Internet. But again, ask yourself the question, "Will it help me meet my purpose with this audience?" If the clip art will help you, then use it...with the following advice:

Be sure you use clip art to clarify and support the content of your slide and of your speech generally. If you use a cartoon, drawing, or photograph, be sure you know what it is doing for your audience. For example, I chose this cartoon figure because it portrays a person studying a drawing. This slide is about your consideration of drawings, art, etc. I determined that this picture was suitable to making my point. However, it would not have been suitable on any of the previous slides or any following.

If you are going to use clip art, be consistent. One style of art throughout the presentation gives your speech unity. Haphazard styles makes your speech look just like that: haphazard. When graphics match, your speech will appear professional and prepared.

Finally, don't toss in decoration. You really don't need scrolls and curlicues, even if they are available in most clip art packages. If the message you have on your screen is important, you'll want the audience to concentrate on it. And any graphic element should reinforce the message. If the message isn't that important, you have to ask yourself if the slide should be discarded.



One of the most beneficial modules in a package is the graph and chart software. In the past, speakers would have to painstakingly create charts and graphs by hand. Presentation software can make the presentation of statistics and other non-text data easy and visually pleasing.

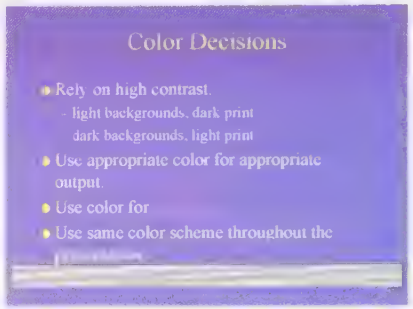
To get the most from graphs and charts, remember the following:

For easy interpretation, don't make your graphs and charts too dense. Very complicated graphs and charts can be presented better in a handout. The graphs and charts projected on a screen will have the best effect if they are simple and straightforward.

A well-designed graph or chart will be a) consistent and b) visible.

Consistency means that the graph or chart "matches" the color scheme. Also it will look like other graphs and charts. That is not to say you can't use a bar chart for one set of data and a pie chart for another. It is to say that a pleasing color scheme maintained throughout will be much more appealing to your audience.

Visibility means that the audience can really see what you are showing. If you are trying to show a trend, perhaps you should use a line chart. If you are comparing, as this chart is doing, a bar chart might be better. Whatever your choice, the audience should be able to see and read all elements of the graphic.



Now comes one of my very favorite decisions: decisions about color. The days of black and white transparencies are definitely behind us. Color presentations are attractive and interesting. They are so appealing that it is easy to go overboard. Remembering a few tips will help you produce effective color slides.

First, rely on high contrast. If you are using a dark background, as I am using here, use a light (or white) font, and vice versa. This contrast will make your text message far more readable to your audience.

Second, choose the appropriate color for your output. You can turn a presentation software file into a computer projection, transparencies for overhead projection, 35 mm slides, etc. If you are going to use transparencies, use color for design and fonts, but have a clear background. Other output can use more color in

the background. Again, consider your audience and use what will appeal to them.

Third, you can use color for emphasis. I've demonstrated that here by placing the word "emphasis" in red. By using color in this way, you can draw people's attention to key words, phrases, and data.

Four, as with everything else, maintain the same color scheme throughout your presentation. Don't treat your presentation software like a new toy and try to throw in every possible color and design. Restraint will pay dividends with audience reaction.



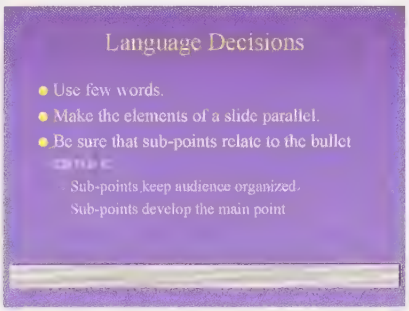
A font is a typeface of a particular size. Choosing a font is one of the most important decisions you face when using presentation software. A good font will be clear and easy to read. A poor font will frustrate an audience trying to read your message quickly and efficiently.

Remember, heavy fonts are easier to read. A heavy font is "thicker" or weightier. Good templates already set up font types that will be easy to read. For this presentation, I've chosen Times New Roman. Or rather, my template did. I hope you find it attractive and easy to read.

The size of the font will also play an important role in making your text reasonable. Headings must be larger to show their importance—about 40 to 44 in size. Text should be smaller, and descend in size with each level. Here, I've used 32 for the bullets and 28 for the subpoints. When you make a choice, stay with it and maintain consistency to help your audience understand the importance of the various text entries.

It's good advice to limit your presentation to no more than two font styles. More than two can create a "junky" look.

Finally, don't forget that fancy fonts are hard to read. Again, you'll do better to "keep it simple." A fancy font, like the one in the subpoint, might look good on your computer screen, but it won't look so good projected several inches tall.



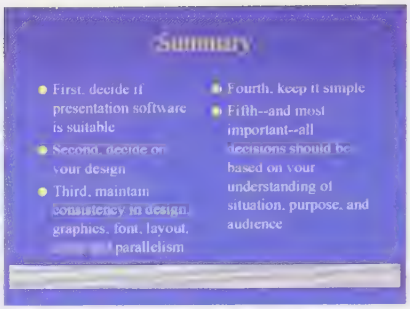
That brings us around to the kind of language you should use in your slides. If you've noticed a consistency with my message so far, you can

probably predict what I'm going to say: "Keep it simple."

Because you want to limit the number of bullets you use and because you want to use a large font, you'll want to limit the number of words you use. Again, your speech is the message. The visual aid is the support. Don't get them reversed.

Make sure your slide elements are parallel. The "bullets" on a single slide should be phrased similarly. For example, this slide uses bullets that are all sentences that start with a verb and make a command or request. Throughout this presentation, all bullets end in periods. None of the subpoints do.

Above all, be sure your subpoints relate to the bullet above it. This is vital to keeping your audience with you. If you are sure that the subpoints tie back to the bullets—or main points—the audience will stay organized. In addition, the subpoints will have more meaning because their relationship to the main point and the speech in general is immediately clear to the audience.



What are the most important things to remember when you are using presentation software? Well, communication is always a decision-making process, and here are some of the decisions you should keep in mind:

First, decide if presentation software is suitable. Only use presentation if you believe it is going to help you communicate your message.

Second, decide on your design. There are lots of templates for you to choose from. Select one that is attractive, interesting, and in keeping with your message.

Third, maintain consistency in design, graphics, font, layout, color, and parallelism. Consistency will help your audience follow your message. Moreover, graphic consistency is attractive.

Fourth, keep it simple. You should rely on the speech to make the point. Rely on the software to help you support the message.



Chapter 19 Summary

Visual aids are another type of support material. They help an audience better understand the speaker's message. Traditional types of support material include chalkboards and marker boards, posters, objects and models, and handouts. Don't forget that nonverbal communication such as gestures, movement, and facial expression is the most reliable and most important form of "visual aid." Since the computer has become part of the speaker's tool kit, presentation software has become a common form of visual aid. Using presentation software effectively requires an understanding of the software, an appreciation for audiences' needs, and practice.

Remembering

1. Identify five common visual aids used by public speakers.
2. For each of the visual aids above, list at least four suggestions that can help a speaker use visual aids effectively.
3. Identify ten suggestions for best use of presentation software.
4. Explain the advantages of using visual aids.
5. Use SPAM to explain a speaker's decision to use visual aids.

Reflecting

1. Review all the suggestions for effective use of visual aids. From the suggestions, you should notice a set of common themes developed. Identify at least two of the themes that the suggestions have in common. Explain the themes in terms of SPAM.
2. List all of the types of visual aids identified in the chapter. Arrange them in order according to the following criteria:
   - least complicated to most complicated
   - least technical to most technical
   - least flexible to most flexible.

   Justify each of your lists with a paragraph comparing the visual aids.
3. Put yourself in the place of an audience member listening to a presentation. Make two lists: The first should identify the characteristics of effective visual aids from an audience member's perspective. The second should identify the characteristics of poor visual aids from the same perspective.

Reaching

1. Many people in your school and community have expertise designing visual or graphic aids: advertising people, art teachers, yearbook teachers, journalists, and so forth. Interview one of these people or invite them to class for a question-answer period. If you interview them, develop an informative speech in which you share the person's point of view on graphic design elements such as font, color, layout, headlines, pictures, or any other elements contained in this chapter's speech.
2. On the Internet, you can find many presentations already prepared. You can download these presentations to show on your own computer. Select one and present the slides to the class. Critique the visual aids based on the criteria established in this chapter.
3. Review the fonts in your computer. Select the best fonts for use with presentation software. Select at least one font that would be a poor choice for presentation software. Explain your decisions.

Real Life

1. Develop an informative speech on a topic of interest to you—a hobby, a specialized skill, a job experience, etc. Using presentation software, develop a set of "slides" to support your speech. Your speech should have between 8 and 15 slides. Give the speech using the presentation software. Evaluate your speech based on the criteria in the chapter.
2. If you do not have access to presentation software, choose one of the other visual aids to support your speech.

3. Use a search engine to find "public speeches." Some of these speeches will come complete with downloadable presentations. Download one of these presentations and determine how effective the "slides" are. Use the content of the chapter to help you evaluate the slides.

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Chapter Twenty
Application.Research

Key Concept

The substance of the speech—all the proof and support materials—as well as the basic understanding of the speech topic can come from two sources: what you already know or what you find out from others. In many professional and personal speaking situations, you will have to rely on other sources. Research is the discovery of information that allows speakers to provide audiences with new and important information.



Chapter Objectives

- understand the role of research in speech preparation
- understand the difference between primary and secondary sources
- develop skills for efficient research
- identify research skills using electronic technology
- identify research skills for researching books and periodicals
- identify methods of using researched information in a speech

Key Terms

- attributing
- call number
- credibility
- Dewey decimal system
- Library of Congress system
- networking
- on-line catalog
- plagiarism

Scenario

Let's eavesdrop on Pilar's weekly meeting.

Pilar: *I appreciate you all responding to my e-mail so quickly. As I stated, I'm working on a speech for my monthly manager's meeting at the main office. I have become more and more concerned with employee absences. I asked each of you to do a little research for today's discussion. My problem is that I can share the problem without any difficulty. I have the statistics, and we've all agreed on the impact of absenteeism. What I don't have a good handle on is the solution. Could you report out on what you've found? Maybe we can start with each of us giving one important idea from our research.*

I'll start. My assignment was to network and find out what other businesses are doing. I've called contacts in five other businesses that are very much like ours. All agree that employee absences are a growing problem. However, I found only one idea for a solution that I thought was worth bringing up: Saul Associates, which is only slightly larger than we are, has an agreement with a child care facility. When employees' kids are sick, the employee doesn't have to stay home. For regular flu and cold and things, the child care center will work with sick children. Alicia, what did you find?

Alicia: *Well, my job was to search the Internet. The idea that came up over and over again was cross-training. I've e-mailed the links to you all. It seems that some companies think that if more people are trained in a variety of jobs, absenteeism won't have as great an impact on business. There were lots of others, but that's the first I would put on your list.*

James: *I spent my time in the library and with our professional literature. Cross-training was a big issue there, too. One of the ideas that I thought was interesting was paying for unused sick leave. I found a couple of great articles in* Business Week *and a human resources journal. At the end of each*

year, anyone with unused—or lightly used—sick leave gets a bonus. Some companies that do this around holiday time have seen employee use of sick leave go down almost 15%. The downside is that some employees don't stay home when they should.

JaRon: *Well, that comes to me. I was supposed to survey our own employees. I put together this survey to determine why employees are gone and what we can do about coping with absenteeism. I got a lot of ideas, but one of the most important was starting a long-term relationship with a temp agency. Some of our employees have friends in other places who tell them that temp agencies are expensive, but can save money in the long run.*

Pilar: *Great start. I really appreciate the handouts you've brought and the links I got on the e-mail. Let's continue the brainstorming. JaRon, will you put the list on the board?*

The Need for Research

Many times speakers find themselves in situations that call for speeches that ask for no research. In other words the speaker is an authority on the topic and can pull from background knowledge and experience to provide information for an audience that it will find believable, interesting, and persuasive. If that is the case, the speaker generates the information for a speech without much need for further research.

Often, however, a speaker—even a speaker with extensive experience with a topic—will need to research a topic to find just the right information that will make the speech entertaining, informative, or persuasive. In the example above, Pilar and her group teamed up to research a topic that she was going to speak about. Pilar knew that her speech needed to advance solutions, not just problems. She felt a need for fresh information.

People say we live in an "information age." That isn't a new feeling for public speakers, who are constantly looking for new information to form the substance of their speeches. Here are some of the motives speakers have for developing communication.

- Information can make a speaker more confident. Research allows you to know what you are talking about; you will be more relaxed, certain that you have an important and timely message.
- Proof and support material form the body of the speech. Research provides support material.

- Introductions and conclusions are sometimes the most important parts of a speech. Research can give a speaker great ideas for opening and closing a speech.
- Sometimes a speaker must speak on a topic the audience has heard many times. Research can give a speaker new angles and fresh insights.
- Speeches often conclude with question and answer periods. Research provides a speaker with a depth of knowledge to handle questions from the audience.

The raw material for speeches will either come from your own personal knowledge and experience or from information developed by others. A well-researched speech ensures that you have all the information you need to make sound communication decisions. If you rely only on your personal knowledge and experience, you are choosing from a limited amount of information. Research broadens your choices, increasing the likelihood that you will make the right one for situation, purpose, and audience.

Credibility

Credibility means "believability." A credible speaker is one who is likely to be believed by an audience. Speakers gain credibility from three things, all of which can relate to research.

Element of Credibility:	Role of Research
Expertise	Audiences want to hear from people who know what they are talking about. Expertise is specialized knowledge about a topic. Research allows a speaker to build his or her expertise and become an authority for the audience. If a speaker researches a topic thoroughly, the speaker can bring a message with accurate and up-to-date information that will convince the audience that he or she knows the topic. For example, Pilar knows she is not an expert on employee absences. Her audience will also know that. However, she can legitimately borrow expertise by quoting other experts. By sharing testimony, statistics, and facts from authorities, she builds her own expertise in the eyes of her audience.
Perceived good intentions	An audience must believe that a speaker has good intentions—that is, they must believe that a

speaker is speaking to accomplish something good and positive, not selfish or negative. Research helps a speaker display good intentions. A speaker who has gone to the trouble to research and understand the available information will be perceived as open-minded, hard-working, and helpful. A speaker who doesn't do the homework will be perceived as uncaring. If the speaker doesn't care enough about the topic to do the research, why should the audience care about the topic, the speech, or the speaker?

Trustworthiness

If an audience doesn't trust the speaker, the audience will not believe the speaker. One way a speaker builds trust is by consistently sharing accurate, believable information. If an audience sees that a speaker has researched the information fully and shared it honestly, the speaker becomes more trustworthy for them. In turn, the speech becomes more likely to accomplish its purpose.

Primary and Secondary Sources

Researchers find it convenient to divide sources into two types: primary and secondary. A primary source is an original source. A secondary source comments on or develops a primary source. For example, if you are called upon to give a speech on automobile emissions, you can depend on primary sources such as the original federal laws about pollution or the original government research on emissions. In addition, you can research secondary sources, such as articles in automobile magazines on the effects of government regulations or Internet articles on how effective such regulations are. Both primary and secondary sources are important to a public speaker.

Primary sources

- original documents
- diaries
- autobiographies
- film footage
- photographs
- artifacts
- letters

Secondary sources

- books about the originals
- articles explaining or interpreting
- textbooks
- biographies
- copies or reproductions of artifacts

Sometimes secondary sources will contain primary source information. For example, if you are giving a speech on pollution, an article in *National Geographic Magazine* (a secondary source) could very well contain quotations, selections, or photo reproductions from a primary source.

Benefits of primary sources	Benefits of secondary sources
Primary sources allow you and your audience to know firsthand what was stated or written.	Sometimes primary sources are difficult to understand or interpret. Secondary sources help you and your audience know possible meanings of primary sources.
Primary sources have a certain appeal, because their use shows that the speaker has been thorough enough to go to original sources rather than settle for what others have to say. They can build a speaker's credibility because they are seen as evidence of expertise.	Primary sources don't always come with credibility. For example, a federal document can be a primary source, but might not have any appeal to an audience. If a speaker quotes a recognized authority on the document—a secondary source—then the speaker "borrows" expertise from the authority.
Primary sources are great for background research. Even if you don't use all of your primary research in your speech, the information can be useful in answering questions.	Thorough research of secondary sources allows a speaker to know a variety of points of view on a subject. Broader knowledge can open up new ideas and support. At the very least, the speaker can know opposing viewpoints and be prepared to talk about them.

Where do you find primary and secondary sources? As you work in a library or on the Internet, you will find both sources everywhere. The key is knowing when you encounter each.

Research Efficiency

To make the most of your time, you must learn to research efficiently. That means you must get the most useful information in the shortest amount of time. The skills that will make you an efficient researcher are:

- narrowing your topic
- being prepared
- taking notes
- using search tools.

Narrowing Your Topic. Because there is so much in a media center and on the Internet, you must learn to narrow your speech topic. Ordinarily, you simply cannot read everything that a media center has on your topic. In fact, the media center can help you narrow your topic. To keep from being overwhelmed, you have to narrow your subject and focus your research. In short,

you have to know what you are searching for before you can know that you've found it.

The information in Chapter Seventeen tells you a lot about narrowing your topic. This section will focus on using research to narrow your topic. As you use the library, don't forget to bring along your audience—in your mind, keep your audience members with you so you will constantly be aware of what information they need and want.

1. Find and read a general article. You might want to use an encyclopedia, a web site, or a magazine article. A general article will often contain many ideas about your topic. You could encounter an idea that will spark your interest and creativity. More important, you could find an idea that you think will spark the interest for your audience.
2. Look in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* or other index—either on paper or on-line. These indices will do several helpful things.
   a] They will include sub topics, which can help you identify ways to narrow your topic.
   b] They will give you titles of magazine articles that will point you toward specific issues and topics.
   c] They will let you know where the majority of interest and information lie.
3. Do the same with a book on the topic. If you can find a book on your topic, browse the index. Read an interesting section.
4. Use a quotation source—book or Internet-based. You can often get an interesting idea by reading the quotations of important thinkers on the subject.
5. Work in reverse. Sometimes, you must look at the support materials available before you decide on your narrowed topic.

Preparing for Research. Real efficiency means being prepared. When you go to the library or start a session on the Internet, you must be ready to act when you find information.

1. Prepare mentally. Know your situation and your audience. You might begin your research without a good understanding of purpose, but without knowing something about your situation and audience, you cannot be an efficient researcher. If you don't know much about your audience, perhaps your first bit of research should be about them.
2. Bring the right tools. Don't forget to bring your research materials: pen, pencil, paper, note cards, previous notes, computer—whatever you use to take notes on and take notes with.

3. Set aside some time. Try to block time so you can research over a period of time. One longer research session might be more valuable to you than several smaller sessions.
4. Bring change. Using a photocopy machine might require change.
5. Make a folder. Keep all your speech materials together. Don't waste time searching your own materials before you can search the library or Internet.
6. Make decisions. As you research, you will be faced with a series of decisions. Where do you look? What do you write down? How much do you need? Don't delay your decisions too long. Once you have an idea, start deciding. You could end up discarding the decision, but deciding to move forward will keep you researching. Not deciding can lead to stalling out and losing research time.

Using Indices and Tables of Contents. Learn to use indices and tables of contents to skim, to take notes, and to stay organized. Many works contain indices and tables of context. ("Indices" is the plural of "index.") Both can help you focus your research.

1. To determine quickly if a book might be useful to you, glance at the beginning of the book for a table of contents. A table of contents can suggest that you go immediately to a chapter that looks promising.
2. A book will often have an index. Look in the index for your topic or for key words related to your topic. This simple tactic can focus your reading on a dozen or so pages in a 300-page book.
3. As you look at the index, look for related key words. Often, you will think of your topic in one way, but the author of a book might think of it another way. For example, if you are looking for information on the stock market crash of 1929, you should probably also look under such terms as "depression," "Great Depression," and "Black Thursday."

Skimming. Skimming is looking briefly over printed material to determine if reading it will likely provide valuable information. If you become a good skimmer, you can look through an index more quickly, evaluate a magazine article quickly, zero in on a good section of a chapter, etc. You probably already do skimming to find places in textbooks and newspapers. Here are some tips for effective skimming:

1. Use headings. Headings are like "mini-titles" that let the reader know what is in a section of a book, chapter, article, etc. Skimming headings will allow you skip some sections and focus on others.

2. Look for key words. As you think about your speech, you will know some of the key terms you're looking for. Keep an eye out for those key terms to show you the need for more detailed reading.
3. Look for transition words. If you skim a section and encounter a phrase like "in other words," you've probably found an explanation. "For example" will introduce an example, which might be exactly what you're looking for.
4. Skim at different rates. The faster you skim, the less content you can understand. When you come to a promising section, slow your skimming rate to get more information.

Note Taking. When you've found some important information, you'll want to take notes or copy the information.

1. Don't forget to take down or copy the author, title, page number, and other relevant information for your source. If you are taking notes, write it down. If you are photocopying, write it down or copy a title page.
2. Unless you want to use the exact words of a source, summarize or paraphrase. You will have to write less.
3. Use symbols and abbreviations. If you are researching the stock market, you might want to write "SM" to avoid writing out "stock market" dozens of times. You can use symbols such as "+" for "and" and "w/" for "with."
4. When you are copying a source word-for-word, don't forget to put quotation marks in. This will be your reminder that you are using someone else's words. Quotation marks can help you avoid plagiarism.
5. Research won't do you much good if you can't find what you've researched. Stay organized. Use a folder. You can put in notes, photocopies, and note cards.



Knowing how to prepare to research will make research time in a library more efficient.

Barrett, Marsha
"Following Through"
USN&WR, 7/11/00, p. 32

New generation of employees (Gen-Y) will want
1. immediate feedback..."Jobs explained to them"
2. quick advancement
3. meaningful jobs
4. access to technology
5. little motivation from loyalty to company

Using the Internet

Increasingly, the research tool of choice is the Internet. The Internet has several advantages over other tools:

- The Internet is available from many sites. While you could go to a library to use the Internet, it is also available at home, in offices, in classrooms, and other locations. With portable computers, it is also available "off-site," so it can help you research information on the spur of the moment.
- The Internet gives you large quantities of information. Because the Internet contains so many sites across the world, a speaker can find almost anything.
- The Internet is indexed in many ways. Search engines provide a speaker with a means of looking up web sites that will help prepare a speech.
- The Internet is current. It is updated daily by web users around the world. The only thing close to this currency are newspapers, many of which are also available on the net.
- The Internet is interactive. While you cannot initiate a conversation with a book or article, the net allows you to interact with other people.

While it seems that the Internet is the only research tool you need, it does have some drawbacks.

- Internet information is not always accurate. Just as with other media, something found on the Internet is not necessarily true. Unlike information in a library, it isn't selected. Generally, information in a public or school library is selected for reliability and accuracy. That doesn't mean it

is true, but it does increase the chances that it is true. Web postings can be made by anyone. That means that you must be careful using information from the Internet.

- There is so much information that you could have difficulty finding and using the best information. For example, if you search on the word "pollution," you could find over a million "hits." The Internet is still developing, and search tools have become more sophisticated. No doubt in a few years the search capabilities will be superior to those we have today.
- The Internet can sometimes provide you with sites that you will find offensive. You must be prepared to use the Internet well while avoiding sites which are inappropriate.

To begin, you should realize that using the Internet along with other sources will help you. For example, a print source can be very useful by giving you a web address. Newspapers, magazines, and television have their own web sites to help you go beyond what you read. Similarly, the Internet can point you to books, articles, and other media that can help you. For example, an Internet site that can't give you a detailed account of a law case can give you the source for the original court transcripts for you to look up in a library.



Use caution when researching on the Internet—anyone can post anything whether it is accurate or not.

Communication Management — Internet Vocabulary



Like any other new media, the Internet comes with its own vocabulary. The pace of change in the Internet is so rapid that you might already see some of these terms as old-fashioned. Still, knowing the vocabulary will help you talk with others about your Internet searches. What if you encounter terms and techniques you don't understand? First, you could ask someone, such as a librarian or media center specialist. Second, don't forget that the Internet comes with its own instructions. If you don't understand a term, look it up on the Internet! You can find Internet terms by using a search engine and looking for "Internet glossary."

applet

An applet is a small program embedded in a web page. An applet runs and provides the page with visuals, sounds, surveys, etc.

hit

A hit is an identification of a potentially useful site. For example, if you are trying to find a page on "day care," you might look in a search engine. The search engine could return 1,000 sites where the term "day care" is used. Each of these is a hit.

search engine

A search engine is a web site that will search and index web pages on the Internet. The engine then allows you to search its database and access those pages. Common search engines are
http://www.yahoo.com
http://www.lycos.com
http://www.altavista.com
http://www.search.com
There are many more.

web site

A web site is a collection of web pages. One web site could link a user to many pages that it contains.

Boolean expression

Not strictly an Internet term, a Boolean expression allows you to look up terms with accuracy. Some search engines allow you to look for terms by limiting with words such as AND, NOT, OR, NEAR, and so forth. For example, if you want to find sites on sports franchises, but you aren't interested in professional hockey, you could use a Boolean expression to ask for hits on sports franchises NOT hockey.

home page

A home page is the starting point of a web site. For example, if you look up a URL, you could get to the first page of a site that contains many pages. The home page usually gives you a map, index, or directions on how to access the remainder of the web pages on the web site.

URL

Uniform Resource Locator. This is the address of the web page you are looking for. For example, the URL for the search engine Yahoo! is http://www. yahoo.com.

zip Sometimes you will find a file to download that is compressed, or made smaller for quicker downloading. Such a file is "zipped." You must have software to "unzip" it and use it.

Of course this short glossary is only a start. In addition, it will change as rapidly as Internet technology changes.

To make the most of your Internet research, use the following tips:

1. Use a search engine. In fact, be ready to use more than one search engine. You could find something at the "www.hotbot.com" site that you wouldn't find at the "www.altavista.com" site.
2. Use key terms. If you are using a search engine, you must know the key words to look up. For example, if you are looking for samples of speeches, it will be are more efficient to look under "public speeches" than to look under "speech." (This is an example where conventional library indices have an advantage over the Internet. Library indices have been standardized over the years.)
3. Use summaries. On some search engines, you will get a brief description of the sites, or hits, you find. Use the summaries to decide what you will look at and what other terms you will put in the search engine to refine your search.
4. Use "cut and paste." When you find information you might like to use, highlight it and copy it using a copy command. If you have a word processor open at the same time you have your Internet browser open, you can paste the copied portion of the web page into your word processor. Don't forget to copy the source. You'll need the source to be able to quote or document your use of the information.
5. Use links. Sometimes you will find a web page that will recommend other pages. Usually, the recommendation will take the form of a link, a URL which you can access from the original page itself. Often these links are the results of another person's research. That person has found and recommended web sites that he or she finds useful.
6. Use other sources. Since the Internet is so handy, it might be tempting for you to rely solely on web sites for your information. Don't forget that print materials still have a great deal of value.

Print Sources

Print sources are more traditional research tools. They, too, have their advantages. The Internet, for example, contains web sites from anyone. While this freedom allows free flow of all kinds of information, it also can foster inaccuracies. Information is not disseminated under any policy of publication. And since there continues to be much information that is copyrighted and not available on the web, print sources remain important.

Books. The book section of a library is divided into fiction and non-fiction. Speakers will find the non-fiction books highly valuable in many research efforts. Since the average library contains thousands of books, the library is organized according to one of two systems: the Dewey Decimal system or the Library of Congress system. Both organize books by subjects using "call numbers." Call numbers identify the subject of a book, and books of like subjects are kept together.

000-099	General Works	general reference works, journalism
100-199	Philosophy	history of philosophy, ethics, morality, psychology, parapsychology
200-299	Religion	specific religions, the Bible, history of religion, mythology
300-399	Social Studies	sociology, anthropology, political science, law, education, business, women's issues, cities, customs, folklore
400-499	Language	dictionaries, thesauruses, foreign languages, history of language
500-599	Pure Science	astronomy, physics, chemistry, geology, oceanography, weather, biology, botany, zoology
600-699	Applied Science	medicine, engineering, agriculture, home economics, construction, drug and alcohol education
700-799	Arts	architecture, sculpture, drawing, handicrafts, cartooning, photography, painting, music, film, drama, recreation, sport
800-899	Literature	American literature, British literature, literature from the world, literary history, criticism
900-999	History	geography, ancient history, histories of continents, biographies (920-929)

A Dewey Decimal call number usually looks like this:

705.3

Cle

This call number tells you that you will find the book in the 700 section. In addition, the sections are further broken down by smaller subject, in this case 705.3. Finally, to distinguish this book from others like it, the call number includes "Cle," the first three letters of the author's last name.

The Library of Congress System works similarly, but uses letters as its initial category label.

A	General Works
B	Philosophy, Religion, Psychology
C	History—Auxiliary Sciences
D	History—except America
E-F	American History
G	Geography, Anthropology, Sports
H	Social Sciences
J	Political Sciences
K	Law
L	Education
M	Music
N	Fine Arts
P	Language
Q	Science
R	Medicine
S	Agriculture
T	Technology
U	Military Science
V	Naval Science
Z	Bibliography, Libraries, Library Science

A Library of Congress call number looks like this:
KN
601.5
P
The letters "KN" place the book in a subsection of "Law." The numbers and letters further designate the book to distinguish it from others in that section.

Catalogs. It used to be that all libraries had a card catalog in which to find all books held by the library. Increasingly, card catalogs are being replaced by on-line catalogs. Using either, you can find books to help in your speech research. You can think of a catalog as one huge index to the books in a library. Typically, you can find books in one of three ways: a subject entry, a title entry, or an author entry. Sometimes, on-line catalogs will also use key word entries.

Use the subject as the primary example. Assume you wanted to find a book on a topic—say, the stock market. If you look up "stock market" in a typical on-line catalog (also called an "OLC") you could see an entry such as this:

Database	Johnson County Library Network	This entry won't be on all OLCs. This shows that you've looked into this particular database.
Main Author	Katstra, Joyce, 1950-	Author, with birth (and death) dates
Title	The big crash	Title of the book
Edition	1st American ed.	Shows if this is the first edition, a subsequent edition, or special edition
Publisher	New York Kissel Press, 1997	The company that published the book
Format	Book	The format—this could be a CD-ROM, a video-tape, or other medium.
Description	205 p. ; 24 cm.	The size of the book
Location	King Library Stacks	The exact location of the book—this is especially important if the database covers more than one library site.
Call Number	HB3716 .W73 1997	This is the Library of Congress call number. It could just as easily be the Dewey number.
Status	Not Charged	Is the book checked out? Lost? On reserve?

HB3716 STOCK MARKET
W73 Katstra, Joyce
1989

The big crash
New York: Kissel Press (© 1997)
205 pages

A history of the stock market crash of 1929, including interviews with businessmen and women who remember it.

1. Economic depression 2. History of the United States

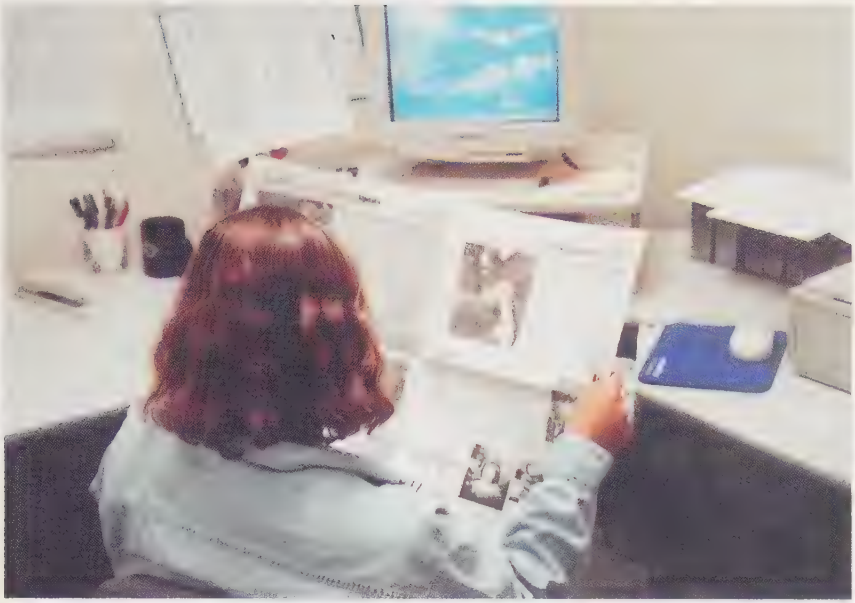
Call Number	SUBJECT HEADING Author's Name
	Title of book
	Publisher, place, and date of publication Number of pages
	Annotation—a brief description of the book
	Alternate entries in the catalog

Restricting Your Search. Using an on-line catalog, you can restrict your search to materials that will be most helpful. (You can do the same with the card catalog, but you will do it manually.) To restrict your search, your OLC usually has a "help" screen. Most often, you can restrict a search in these ways:

Date — You can select only materials which have been published within a date range. For example, if you are looking for new viewpoints of the stock market crash of 1929, you can ask for materials published since 1999.

AND search — In most OLC's, you have an option to use keywords. You might direct the database to return materials to you that mention two terms or more. For example, if you want interviews with people who survived the crash (primary sources), ask for "stock market" AND "crash" AND "interviews."

NOT search — Perhaps you know that if you look up "stock market crash" you'll get more materials than you want about the Great Depression. In that case, you might want to look for "stock market crash" NOT "Great Depression."



Support material can be found in traditional print form or on the Internet.

There are other means of restricting and enhancing your search. The best way to learn is to work with the OLC you use most often and to get help from the library-media specialist.

Reference Books. You'll find many reference books very useful. Reference books provide researchers easy access to large amounts of information. You are probably familiar with a general encyclopedia. But there are other reference books of great value. Moreover, reference works are now even easier to use on the Internet or on CD-ROM versions, which allow you to find information more quickly.

One of the most beneficial reference works for speakers is a dictionary of quotations, in book form or on-line. A quotation can help you introduce a speech, make concluding remarks, or provide a memorable line in a speech. Since quotation references collect some of the most memorable and insightful thoughts of speakers and authors, you can find many things to say about your topic.

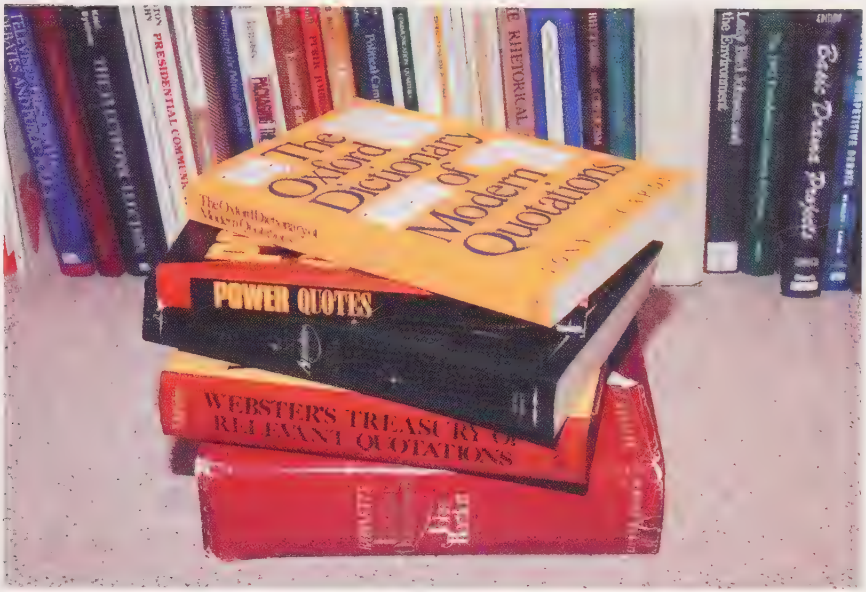
Periodicals. A periodical is a work published at regular intervals, or periodically. Periodicals that you are familiar with are magazines and newspapers. Libraries have other periodicals, however, such as journals, which are like magazines published with scholarly research in particular fields of study.

Just as with books, you must find an index if you are to research periodicals efficiently. There are several options, in book form or on-line. One of the most useful is the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature.* By learning to read an entry in the *Reader's Guide,* you can learn to read other entries in on-line indices. Here's what an entry in *Reader's Guide* would look like:

Re-living the crash: survivors of '29 tell their stories. D. Tate. il AmHistWk v22 p115 O 15 '01.

Reading the entry is simple, once you've read a few.

Title	Re-living the crash: survivors of '29 tell their stories	This is the title of the article in the magazine. In the index, only the first word is capitalized. A period ends the title and divides it from the rest of the entry.
Author	D. Tate	D. Tate is the author. If there is no author, the index skips this part of the entry. A period follows.
Special features	il	This article has illustrations. If the article has other special features, they are noted here.
Name of magazine	AmHistWk	The periodical is *American History Weekly.* Names of periodicals are abbreviated and the abbreviations are listed in the front of the *Reader's Guide.*
Volume and page numbers	v22 p115	The volume (22) and the page number (115) will help you find the right periodical and the right magazine.
Date	O 15 '01	The date of the magazine is even more helpful in finding the issue of *American History Weekly* that you are looking for.



Quotation books are excellent resources for short quotations for introductions and conclusions.

Using Quoted Material

Whether you get your information from the Internet, a book, a periodical, or any other source, all the information is used in the same way in a speech. You will use the information to create an introduction or conclusion or to support claims in your speech.

You begin by learning to attribute material. Whenever you borrow the exact words or unique ideas of someone, you need to attribute the material. To attribute is to cite the source of your material. Unlike a research paper, in which all information must be cited, speech citations are usually quite brief. You might refer briefly to an author and work.

> As Joyce Katstra, author of *The Big Crash*, stated, "We've never seen anything like the stock market crash of 1929, and with any luck we never will."

This attribution gives credit where credit is due, and avoids plagiarism. Plagiarism is the knowing use of another person's words or ideas without giving that person credit.

Another key to using quoted material successfully is to be sure your audience knows exactly why you are quoting it. As we've learned before in this book, introduce your quotation, use it, and then tie it into your speech. Here's what it will sound like.

There was nothing like the Crash before; there's been nothing like it since. After interviewing more than 150 businessmen and women who lived through the 1929 stock market crash, Joyce Katstra, author of *The Big Crash,* stated, "We've never seen anything like the stock market crash of 1929, and with any luck we never will." In other words, the people who were there—who saw World War I, World War II, the Depression, and countless other major events of the twentieth century—saw nothing else to compare with the economic collapse that occurred on Wall Street in October of 1929.

The formula is to tell them what you're going to say, say it, tell them what you said.

Tell them what you're going to say.	There was nothing like the Crash before; there's been nothing like it since.	In this case, the speaker makes a claim.
Say it.	After interviewing more than 150 businessmen and women who lived through the 1929 stock market crash, Joyce Katstra, author of *The Big Crash,* stated, "We've never seen anything like the stock market crash of 1929, and with any luck we never will."	The speaker uses this quotation as testimony from an authority to support the claim.
Tell them what you said.	In other words, the people who were there—who saw World War I, World War II, the Depression, and countless other major events of the twentieth century—saw nothing else to compare with the economic collapse that occurred on Wall Street in October of 1929.	The speaker elaborates on the quotation, tying it back to the claim and reinforcing it with examples of other major twentieth century events.



Chapter 20 Summary

Research allows a speaker to borrow the expertise of others in developing a speech. The Internet revolution has made research different than it was in the past, but some principles remain the same. Good research is efficient. Good research uses credible sources to add to the speaker's credibility. Good research is integrated into a speech honestly and effectively. You can use search engines on the Internet to gain quick access to huge amounts of information, but Internet research does come with some risks. The library or media center will likely offer Internet access, but it can offer much more. Traditional books and magazines still are highly valuable sources for research.

Remembering

1. Give two reasons why speakers frequently need to research.
2. Contrast primary and secondary sources.
3. List 5 specific skills that can improve research efficiency.
4. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of Internet research.
5. List three suggestions for improving Internet research.
6. Explain either the Dewey Decimal system or the Library of Congress system.
7. Write a short example of how to use a quotation in a speech.

Reflecting

1. One reason to use researched material is to build speaker credibility. If a speaker uses researched material, he or she can add to credibility by the way he or she uses the material. Explain how each of the following can enhance speaker credibility:
   a] identifying the person who originally provided the information (an author)
   b] identifying the title of the source
   c] giving the credentials of the person who originally provided the information
2. Explain why Internet research sometimes makes the tactics identified in #1 difficult.
3. Not everyone is credible in every subject. For example, a business person might be very credible speaking about business, but not about education. Identify three topics that could be the subjects of speeches. For each, identify the most credible person you can think of to quote. Explain the credibility of one in terms of the three variables identified in this chapter.

Reaching

1. Divide your school library into enough sections that each person in the class has a section. Each person will prepare a brief speech on that section, pointing out highlights and tips for use. Don't forget to include periodicals and visuals. Enlist the aid of your librarian or media center specialist.
2. Reference books are valuable sources of information. Work with your librarian or media center specialist to identify three reference books that could be valuable to a researcher. Include encyclopedia, dictionaries, yearbooks, indices, and any other reference books. Prepare a presentation to the class on the use of these reference tools.
3. Find a speech in *Vital Speeches of the Day* (or its web site, votd.com). In your speech, identify the sections that have clearly been researched. Analyze the way the speaker uses the information and cites sources. Share your findings in small groups.

Real Life

1. Almost all browsers, the programs that allow someone to use the Internet, have "bookmarks" or "favorites." A "bookmark" or "favorite" stores the URL so you can easily return to the location over and over again. Some web sites would be ideal for a speaker to use repeatedly—pages with quotations, statistics, sample speeches, tips on using presentation software, hints for speakers, etc. Prepare a set of bookmarks that you can use as a speaker.

2. Select a primary source as a topic for a 4-minute to 5-minute informative speech. Use both Internet resources and library resource to find the primary sources and secondary sources about it. Research the source. In your speech, include quotations from the primary source and from other sources. You might consider for your topic laws, speeches, diaries, recordings, photographs, autobiographies, etc.

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Chapter Twenty-One
Application.Organization

Key Concept

Effective organization is part of sharing meaning. A speaker's success depends as much on the arrangement of the content as on the conte

Chapter Objectives

- discuss the qualities of a good speech introduction
- examine the organizational patterns commonly used to create a speech's body
- review outlining skills
- discuss the qualities of a good speech conclusior
- explore the use of transitions
- app y principles of effective introductions, bodies conclusions, and transitions to a specific speecl



Key Terms

- cause-effect orde
- chronological orde
- c assification order
- climactic orde
- forecas
- logical orde
- mnemonic
- problem-solution orde
- signpost
- spatial orde
- subordination
- topical orde
- transitions

Scenario

James and JaRon have met after work to have dinner. Their dinner conversation turns to the topic of JaRon's upcoming day off.

James: *I see you're going to be off Friday. Going to take a three-day weekend?*

JaRon: *Yeah, it will be three days all right…but it's not really a vacation. My nephew asked me to come to his junior high school's career day. I'm supposed to give a speech on what I do for a living.*

James: *Ah, yes. I've been there. It was my cousin who got me.*

JaRon: *Well, you're just what I need…Mr. Experience. What's the secret? Frankly, I'm a little worried about speaking to a group of thirteen-year-olds.*

James: *Well, the content is pretty much a given. You have to tell them about the job…*

JaRon: *Right, but how?*

James: *Well, the situation is a junior high job fair, so your purpose is to give them an understanding of how it would be to have your job permanently. And junior high kids don't have the attention span you are used to dealing with. Well, my advice is to get a really catchy introduction. You'll probably follow some father who is a firefighter or something, so you need something to shift the kids' attention to you and your job.*

JaRon: *Right. I've got that covered. I'm going to bring the company's big cut-out of the our cartoon spokesman. Kids will go nuts for that.*

James: *Don't get them too focused on one thing. They'll never listen to your speech. Next, you might want to get an organizational pattern the kids will follow. I used "a day in the life" kind of thing. It's easy to follow and easy to cover. It's just a chronological organization.*

JaRon: *Yeah. I can do that. I can use that day we had the client in from Taiwan. That was a pretty interesting day.*

James: *Right. Then a conclusion that will give them something to remember. I used our company's mission statement.*

JaRon: *Great idea. Say, you've got this thing pretty will mapped out. How about giving the speech while I go skiing?*

James: *Thanks, but no thanks "Uncle JaRon." You'll do fine with my outstanding advice on speech organization.*

Sounds as if JaRon has asked the right person for advice. Not only does James have experience with this speaking situation, he has a really good appreciation of the role of organization in speech presentation. He knows that sometimes good organization will be the critical difference between a successful speech and a so-so speech.

The Importance of Organization

Many people fail to recognize that organization conveys meaning. Moreover, organization helps an audience understand the substance of a speech. For example, what does it mean if you cover something early in the speech rather than later? In a chronological organization, covering something first means that it happened (or will happen) before anything else. In a climactic order, it could mean that is least important of the points to be made.

This can be easily observed in interpersonal communication. If someone says to you, "I want you to do three things," you are prepared to hear three things. They could give them to you in the order the things need to be done (chronological), in their order of importance, or in some logical or related order—such as two tasks that belong together and another unrelated task. But what if they gave no indication of order. You could probably still perform the tasks, but would you understand them? Would you make a mistake?

Similarly, organization of a speech conveys meaning for an audience. Without a good organization, audiences can misunderstand.

The Introduction

The word introduction comes from the Latin word meaning "to lead in." A good introduction will lead an audience into your speech. It gives the audience a good reason to hear what you have to say. It prepares them for the important part of your message. In fact, an introduction can serve seven different functions:

1. Getting the audience's attention. A good introduction will get an audience to listen. It will focus a group of people's eyes and ears on you and your message.
2. Introducing the topic. When an audience hears your introduction, they should know what the speech will be about. Of course, the message must be developed, but if the audience is prepared to listen, they will know—at least generally—what they are listening to.
3. Sharing the importance of the topic. A good introduction lets the audience know why the topic is worth listening to. At the end of the introduction, the audience knows why you are speaking, why they should listen, and why the topic has merit.
4. Stating the thesis. Usually an introduction will state not only the topic, but the thesis. Remember: A thesis is the author's position expressed in a sentence. This concise statement helps the audience prepare for the topic and for the speaker's position on the topic.
5. Forecasting the major ideas. A forecast is a "map" of the speech. A forecast maps or outlines the major ideas of the speech, the body. It will help the audience follow the remainder of the speech.
6. Establishing credibility. A speaker—especially one who is unknown to the audience—can use the introduction to establish credibility. Remember that there are three components of credibility: expertise, perceived good intentions, and trustworthiness. If the speaker can establish one or more of these components, the audience will have fewer misgivings about the message. Frequently, credibility will result from establishing "common ground." That is, an introduction can show the audience that the speaker shares common characteristics with them. If the speaker is "like us" in some way, the result could be improved credibility.
7. Setting the tone. Tone is the speaker's attitude toward the subject. Unless the speaker wants to shock or surprise the audience, the speaker usually invites the audience to share his or her attitude. If a speaker wants the audience to enjoy the speech, laugh, and have a good time, the tone of the introduction can "give the audience permission" to do so. On the other hand, a somber, serious introduction lets the audience know that they are in for a serious speech.

Here's a section of an introduction from a speech. The title of the speech is "Cyberbabble and Other Facts," and it was delivered by Greg Farmer. Note what it does to get the audience prepared to hear the speech.

> The U.S. economy has undergone dramatic and fundamental changes in its communications infrastructure. Those changes have recast the very foundations that our country has rested on—but what has emerged today offers more potential for working together, living longer, and enjoying life more than anyone might have dreamed early on in our history, or for that matter a few days ago.
>
> You may have heard the stunning story of the Russian sailor who had to practice telemedicine—on himself. This sailor was participating in a race in South Africa. He was alone in his boat when he became injured, with a major infection his elbow. In true Internet style, he communicated his symptoms thorough satellite e-mail to an emergency room doctor in Boston. The Boston doctor became very alarmed, concerned that the sailor was in imminent danger. So he guided the sailor—via satellite e-mail—through surgery that the sailor performed on himself. He drained his abscess, stopped his bleeding, managed to survive all this and then, for good measure, he won the race.
>
> As astonishing as this story is, we have only just begun.



The story of the sailor who performed surgery on himself set the tone for the speech.

What does this introduction do?

Getting the audience's attention.	The story of the Russian sailor is a compelling one. It captures our attention and focuses it on the topic.
Introducing the topic	The topic — the dramatic changes in life brought about by technology — is evident in this introduction.
Sharing the importance of the topic.	If the topic concerns "the potential for working together, living longer, end enjoying life," then it certainly seems important.
Stating the thesis.	The first sentence is the thesis. (The largest portion of the speech deals specifically with communication and its impact on the economy.)
Forecasting the major ideas.	This particular introduction hints at the ideas to come, but does not "forecast" them. A forecast for a speech such as this one might be something like this: "The astonishment we feel each time we encounter a new change is evident in the pace of change, the development of the World Wide Web, and the recent developments in e-commerce." This forecast lets the audience know that the body of the speech will have three parts.
Establishing credibility.	This speaker was vice-president of a major communications firm, and needed no help in establishing credibility. Still, if you didn't know the speaker, his knowledge of the story of the Russian sailor could be his means of establishing credibility with you. First, he knew the story — not something everyone knows. Second, he is astonished by the story, just as his audience is astonished. He shares that in common with them.
Setting the tone.	The tone — amazement and astonishment at the changes that have taken place — is sustained in the remainder of the speech. Rather than concern or acceptance or any other attitude, the speaker gives the audience the cues that they are to be astonished by the changes.

This particular introduction depends on an incident, the incident of the Russian sailor. There are several other types of introductions common in public speaking.

Quotation. Speakers often use a quotation to start a speech. A quotation has several advantages.

- First, it can be very eloquently expressed. If you find a quotation that is really well-stated, you can borrow what was expressed so well.
- Second, a quotation can help your credibility. If you quote someone whom audience members know well and respect, you gain credibility.
- Third, a good quotation gives you a convenient tie to your topic. Moreover, you might be able to use the quotation for your conclusion, as well.

The author of the introduction went on to use a quotation: "'By means of electricity, the world of matter has become a great nerve, vibrating thousands of miles in a breathless point of time…the round globe is a vast…brain,



Someone giving a cooking demonstration would follow a chronological order.

instinct with intelligence.' Sounds contemporary, doesn't it? That's what Nathaniel Hawthorne said 150 years ago when describing that new invention, the telegraph."

Rhetorical question. A rhetorical question is a question that the audience is not expected to answer. It might remain unanswered or be answered by the speaker. In either case, it can be the basis for a good introduction.

- If it is well stated, the audience will become intrigued with the question and possible answers.
- If it is a question that the audience has asked itself, you can establish common ground by acknowledging that you have the same questions they do.

Take care. Rhetorical questions can be overused. If the question sounds too contrived or too simple, the audience might react negatively.

References to history, audience, or self. Historical references are often interesting, especially if you can shed new light on the reference. For example, the author of the introduction cited also said, "Who would have dreamed communications would have so far to go back in 1876 when Alexander Graham Bell spoke those famous first intelligible words into his "talking machine": "Mr. Watson, come here. I want you."

Humor. Humor is appropriate for most—but not all—kinds of speeches. Humor gets attention, sets tone, and builds credibility, but it can only work if it is in good taste. To be effective, a joke or humorous story should have some of these qualities.

- It should somehow be related to the situation, the audience, the speaker, or the topic. If not, it cannot focus attention.
- It should be tasteful. If you use offensive humor, your audience will be alienated and uncomfortable. You can lose credibility with tasteless humor.
- It should work. If the introduction is supposed to be humorous, be sure that it is.

For example, a speech on technology that focused on the misconceptions many people have could start with a humorous story such as this one.

> If you think that you are perplexed when your 7-year-old can set the clock on your VCR when you can't, think about these calls received by technology trouble shooters for computer firms.
>
> One user called and asked for help fixing her "coffee cup holder." It seems that the CD-ROM drive that slides out for the disk looks a lot like the cup holder in a mini-van.
>
> Another needed help getting her credit card out of the slot for the floppy disk. When he was buying something on the Internet, and the screen asked for his Visa number, he felt he needed to slide it into the slot.
>
> And when the voice mail directions said to spell the name of the person you wanted to contact, one highly educated person started pronouncing loudly and clearly, "S-M-I-T-H." It didn't dawn on her to use the phone's key pad to punch in the name.

Note that this introduction is amusing, but it's not a joke. While jokes can be the basis for an introduction, there's nothing wrong with an amusing story.

Startling Statement. A startling statement challenges the perceptions, knowledge, and opinions of audience members. By "shaking up" the audience, the author calls attention to the topic and, in a way, forces the audience to pay attention.

> I'd like you all to think about what you've learned about computers in the past ten years. Think about the programs you know; think about the tricks you've learned; think back on how you learned to troubleshoot problems. Recall all the creative solutions to various tasks you've learned. Recall the spreadsheets and the databases, the games and the screen savers. Do you have it all in mind? Now do one more thing: On that desktop that is inside your head, find that little thing that looks like a trash can. Take all those memories, drag them over to the trash can, and drop them. In five years—maybe less—the things you know now will be as out of date as a Model T or a buttonhook. You've just taken the first step in preparing for the new millennium of technology.

Encouraging your audience to forget about what they know is startling. Even if this introduction overstates the case, it does call attention to the idea of rapid change in technology.

Incident. An incident gives the speaker an opportunity to tell a story. A well-told story will grab an audience's attention. People enjoy hearing a story. The incident of the Russian sailor is a good example of this introductory type.

The Body

The body is the main portion of the speech. It contains most of the claims, evidence, and development. In short, an introduction gets the audience's attention, but the body does something with it. The body of the speech does most of the work. Since it contains most of the information in the speech, the task of organizing that information is particularly crucial. The goal of organization is to make the substance of the body meaningful for the audience. The steps in preparing the body are:

- select an organizational pattern
- outline the speech
- plan transitions.

Organizational Patterns. The most effective organizational patterns are simply variations of the way we think. By providing an audience with an order that is naturally appealing to a reasonable listener, you enable them to follow your speech from one point to another. The basic types of organizational patterns are included on the following page.

Organizational Pattern	Description
Climactic order (or order of importance)	The speaker decides which are the most important points in the body and places those last. The body builds to a climax, leading the audience from less important to more important points.
Topical order (or logical order)	Use topical order when the ideas you are presenting in the body seem to flow naturally from one to another.
Chronological order	Chronological order places ideas in order according to time: what happens first, second, third, etc.
Spatial order	Especially useful in description, spatial order places ideas in order according to physical space — for example top to bottom, left to right, west to east, inside to outside, etc.
Classification order	Use classification order when you place individual items into groups. You must still order the groups, so you can coupling classification order with other organizational patterns
Problem-solution order	This organizational pattern is useful in persuasive speeches. Generally, the first part of the body of the speech develops the problem. The second part of the body develops solutions.
Cause-effect order	As the name states, this organizational pattern establishes a cause (or causes) and follows with an effect (or effects). This is a type of chronological order, since the two events are related in time.
Combination patterns	Often, a speaker will find combining organizational patterns useful. For example, a problem-solution could also be chronological, if the problem is presented as it developed in chronological order. Classification order could combine effectively with climactic order if the speaker places the classes or groups in order from least important to most important.



Someone describing a piece of art might use a spatial order.

Let's assume that a speaker is giving an orientation to a group of new employees. The speaker would select the organizational pattern that would best fit the situation, purpose, and audience. Here are how points in the speech's body might be arranged with some of the organizational patterns.

S: Orientation of a group of new employees

P: Inform the employees of company policies they will need to know to get started in the job

A: Seven new employees, four of whom have their first full-time job

Climactic Order—Topic: Payroll

1. Filling out the time card
   a) Getting the first card
   b) Using abbreviations
   c) Turning in the card
2. Reporting absences
   a) Calling your supervisor
   b) Showing absence on time card
   c) Taking vacation
3. Receiving the first paycheck
   a) Picking up your paycheck
   b) Checking your pay
   c) Setting up direct deposit

For most employees, receiving the paycheck is the most important thing. This pattern climaxes with getting paid.

Topical Order—Topic: Customer Service

1. Taking a call
   a) Three-ring maximum
   b) Phone etiquette
   c) Taking messages
2. Handling dissatisfied customers
   a) Listening
   b) Defining problem
   c) Solving common problems
3. Forwarding a problem to a manager
   a) Documenting the call
   b) Selecting the correct referral

Logically, a customer contact will begin with a call. The employee must forward calls that he or she can't address.

Chronological Order—Topic: Employee Evaluation

1. Six-week performance review
   a) Purpose of the review
   b) Evaluation criteria
2. Six-month salary review
   a) Purpose of the review
   b) Evaluation criteria
   c) Salary options
3. Annual evaluation
   a) Purpose of the review
   b) Evaluation criteria
   c) Salary options
   d) Promotion options

This pattern goes from the first evaluation at six weeks, to the second, to the third. Note that the subpoints match, indicating the speaker wants to cover these basics in the speech.

Spatial Order—Topic: Office Organization

1. The east end of the building
   a) Accounting
   b) Payroll
   c) Purchasing office
2. The center of the building
   a) Receptionist
   b) Phone bank
   c) File clerks
3. The west end of the building
   a) Managers
   b) Managers' secretaries

This pattern asks the audience to see the organization of the office physically while they get the information about where everyone is located—east to west.

Classification Order—Topic: Types of Forms

1. Forms to mail or fax
   a) Letterhead
   b) Fax cover sheets
   c) Customer order forms
2. Forms for office use only
   a) Message forms
   b) Office supply forms
   c) Equipment repair forms
3. Forms required by company policy
   a) Time sheets
   b) Customer contact document
   c) Inventory forms

The speaker takes the forms he or she wants to talk about and divides them into types. This pattern "lumps" like items together so the audience understands better.

Problem-Solution Order—Topic: Continuing Education

1. Problem: Need for continued growth in the job
   a) No orientation is totally complete
   b) Examples of future issues
      i) Using file room
      ii) Using voice mail
      iii) Learning the jobs of others in the office
2. Solution: Several sources for continued learning
   a) Other employees
   b) Monthly employee meetings
   c) Bulletin board notices
   d) Employee handbook

The speaker shares that there is a need (problem) for more education. Once the audience understands the need, then they are prepared for the four-part solution.

Cause-Effect Order—Topic: Raises and Promotions

1. Satisfactory employee evaluations are the basis for raises and promotions
   a) Job efficiency
   b) Workplace attitudes and behaviors
   c) Attendance and punctuality
2. Raises and/or promotions result from satisfactory evaluations
   a) Six-week raise = $1 per hour
   b) Six-month raise = $1 per hour
   c) Annual raise depends on job re-classification
   d) Additional raises based on company performance

The result that the audience is interested in is a raise (or a promotion). The speaker shows that the way to get a raise (the effect) is to do well on evaluations (the cause for the raise).

Combining Patterns—Note how this problem-solution pattern makes use of logical order and climactic order.

1. Problem: Need for continued growth in the job
   a) No orientation is totally complete
   b) Examples of future issues
      i) Using file room
      ii) Using voice mail
      iii) Learning the jobs of others in the office
2. Solution: Several sources for continued learning
   a) Other employees
   b) Monthly employee meetings
   c) Bulletin board notices
   d) Employee handbook

While the body is divided into two parts (problem and solution), the problem half uses logical order. The solution half uses order of importance.

Communication Management — Mnemonics and Logical Order



There are cases where a body of a speech will be built around a mnemonic device. A mnemonic is a device—such as a rhyme, some initials, a story—that helps a person remember. A mnemonic organization helps organize a speech while helping the audience remember the message.

For example, if you are giving a speech on how to handle customer complaints, you could use a mnemonic to organize part or all of the speech body.

L Listen carefully to what the customer is saying.

E Explain what happened. Customers appreciate explanations, but they don't want to hear excuses.

A Apologize for the difficulty. We want our customers to know that we regret inconvenience or other problems we caused.

R Make it Right. Do what you can to solve the problem. If necessary, get a manager involved.

N Take the Next Step. Tell the customer exactly what you are going to do—then do it.

This mnemonic works because it covers the steps of the process in order.

Mnemonics will not work as an organizational concept if they are phony or forced. Moreover, mnemonic devices aren't available for most speeches. Still, it is worth noting as a device that can be used from time to time.

Outlining

Outlining can be a key skill for a public speaker. The brief outlines on the previous pages show you how a speaker can quickly sketch out the body of a speech. Experienced speakers can speak from an outline alone. Also, outlining can help a speaker organize thoughts into a unified speech.

Outlines show two things: order and relationship. Both order and relationship are very important to an organized, understandable speech. When a speaker places material in a correct order, the audience can comprehend the message. When the speaker clearly shows the relationships among the parts of the speech, the audience's comprehension increases.

Standard Outline Form. A typical outline form uses Roman numerals for major points, capital letters for subpoints, and Arabic numerals for information under subpoints. A subpoint relates directly to the main point. The information under a subpoint relates directly to that subpoint. Often, but not always, the information under subpoints is the kind of development we saw in chapter nineteen. An outline also uses indentation. The numbers, letters and indentations show both order and relationship. The process of dividing your information in this manner is called subordination. One "level"—a Roman numeral, a capital letter, an Arabic numeral, etc.—is a unit of subordination.

I. Major point
    A. Subpoint
        1. Development
        2. Development
    B. Subpoint
        1. Development
        2. Development
            a) Further Development
            b) Further Development
        3. Development

II. Major point
    A. Subpoint
        1. Development
        2. Development
        3. Development
            a) Further Development
            b) Further Development
        4. Development
    B. Subpoint
        1. Development
        2. Development
            a) Further Development
            b) Further Development

Rules of Outlining

Outlining can sharpen your thinking and sharpen your speaking. If you follow simple rules of outlining, you can improve substance and style while improving your organization.

Rule One: One item per unit of subordination.

Wrong

1. Using file room and using voice mail

Right

1. Using file room
2. Using voice mail

Rule Two: Maintain distinct levels. In the example below, bomb threats are part of emergency procedures. Why would the speaker not cover them in the same category as other emergency procedures?

Wrong

1. Emergency procedures
   a) Fire emergency
   b) Severe weather emergency
2. Bomb threats
   a) Procedures for receiving the threat
   b) Procedures to a threat alert

Right

1. Emergency procedures
   a) Fire emergency
   b) Severe weather emergency
   c) Bomb threats
      i) Procedures for receiving the threat
      ii) Procedures to a threat alert

-or-

1. Fire emergency
2. Severe weather emergency
3. Bomb threats
   a) Procedures for receiving the threat
   b) Procedures to a threat alert

Rule Three: Maintain equal value. The items in one level of subordination should all be of the same type.

Wrong

1. Written materials can help you learn more
   a) Other employees
   b) Monthly employee meetings
   c) Bulletin board notices
   d) Employee handbook

Right

1. More information is available to you
   a) Written material
      i) Bulletin board notices
      ii) Employee handbook
   b) Opportunities for your questions
      i) Asking other employees
      ii) Attending monthly meetings

Rule Four: If you are going to use complete sentences, use them for major points only. If you write sentences for all the points, you could end up reading a speech, which will often be unappealing to your audience.

Rule Five: Treat a very long speech as three separate outlines: one outline for the introduction, one outline for the body, and one outline for the conclusion.

The Conclusion

A well-organized speech will end gracefully. The audience will know the speech is over. There won't be any awkward phrases such as "That's it" or "I guess I'm done." Like every other "method," the conclusion will suit the situation, the purpose, and the audience.

There are three goals for most conclusions:

1. Informing your audience that you are about to close. An audience appreciates knowing when the speech is drawing to a close. They expect a nice "tidying up." If you let the audience know that the speech is closing, they will help. They will likely pay closer attention. They might prepare to applaud or ask questions.
2. Summarizing the major ideas. You don't have to review everything you said in the speech, but a short review reminds your audience of what is important. Often, a summary statement can serve this purpose.

3. Leaving the audience with something to remember. A good conclusion hits a high point. When the audience reaches the end of the speech, they have something to take away with them. This "something" helps them remember the speech itself.

To accomplish these goals, experienced speakers use several techniques or tools. One thing to keep in mind is that any of the techniques used for an effective introduction can also be an effective conclusion. For example, a quotation can summarize the speech's content and leave the audience with something to remember. An incident can apply the content of the body to a specific, memorable example. Humor can work as well for a conclusion as an introduction.

One effective technique is to return to the speech's introduction. For example, if the speech started with a rhetorical question, the conclusion could return to the question. If the speech began with a startling statement, the speaker can ask members of the audience to reconsider the statement, in light of what they have learned in the speech. Returning to the introduction has the added advantage of "closing the loop" and giving the audience a sense of completeness.

The Transitions

A transition is a word, phrase, or sentence that move the audience from one idea to another. An audience needs help moving from one idea to another. Without effective transitions, even two consecutive sentences might seem unrelated. Effective use of transitions does three important things:

1. Transitions develop a speech's unity. They allow the audience to see the speech as a unified whole.
2. Transitions help members of the audience know where they are. In fact, some transitions are called "signposts," because they mark important divisions in a speech. These signpost transitions help the audience make the move from introduction to body, from body to conclusion, and from one major point to another.
3. Transitions show relationship. When a speaker moves from one part of the speech to another, the audience can get lost. Transitions help show relationships between ideas.

Most important, transitions meet audience expectations. Audiences are used to having transitions to guide them. As a result, a speaker is obliged to provide transitions. Here are some of the most commonly used transition skills:

key word transitions

A speaker can use key words to show the relationship between sentences, ideas, or parts of the speech. Here are some commonly used transition words. Note that these words can be used between sentences, between ideas, or between major parts of a speech.

another	in other words
because of	moreover
either/or	neither/nor
finally	next
first, second…etc.	not only/but also
for example	on the other hand
furthermore	since
however	then
if/then	therefore
in addition	to begin with

repeated word or idea

A speaker can make an effective transition from point A to point B by repeating a key word from A in B. For example, if a section of the orientation speech we've been using as an example is about filling out timecards and the next section is about getting paid, this is a natural transition.

> …the timecard, correctly filled out, goes to your manager for a *signature.* The manager forwards it to accounting.
>
> That *signature* means one very important thing: Payday is one week away.

The word "signature" is italicized because it is the repeated word that gets the audience's attention moved smoothly from the topic of timecards to the topic of getting paid.

Organizational Principles Applied to a Speech

The title of this speech is "Mending the Body by Lending an Ear: The Healing Power of Listening." It was given by Carol Koehler, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Communication and Medicine, to the International Listening Association Business Conference, at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Kansas City, Missouri, March 19, 1998.

Speech	Comments on speech organization
I would like to start this morning by telling you two different stories. Each story has the same two characters and happens in the same location. Both stories occur within a twenty-four hour period.	The first paragraph of the introduction tells the audience what to expect from the introduction. In this case, she forecasts the structure of her introduction. This helps the audience know she will have a two-part introduction.
Over the Christmas holidays, my husband and I were invited to a formal black-tie wedding. This was to be an elegant event, so we put on our best evening clothes. Adding to that, I wore my mother's diamond jewelry and this fabulous mink coat that I inherited. Just before we left the house, I telephoned my 86-year-old mother-in-law for her daily checkup. When she answered, her voice sounded a little strange so my husband and I decided to stop at her apartment to make sure she was all right before we went to the wedding.	Both parts of the introduction are incidents, so they are sequential. Narration is usually self-organized according to time sequence. Note that this speaker chooses to repeat a sentence pattern that begins with words like when and while. These sentences help the audience know that some things happen in sequence (when) and some happen simultaneously (while).
When we arrived she seemed slightly disoriented (she was 86 years old but wonderfully healthy, sharp-witted and self-sufficient). We called her physician to ask his advice, and he said to bring her to the local Emergency Room and have her checked out. We did that. This was a Saturday night so the Emergency Room was pretty active. When we arrived, I in my mink and my husband in his tux, we looked noticeably different from the general population in the waiting room. While my husband filled out forms, the doctors	This part of the introduction builds some suspense. Is the mother-in-law going to be all right? Why is the speaker's formal dress important?

took my mother-in-law into a makeshift curtained room. When I noticed that the staff had removed both her glasses and her hearing aid, I realized she would experience some anxiety, so at that point I decided to stay with her to keep her from being frightened. As I went into the room, a young doctor said, "Ma'am, you can't go in there." Without missing a beat I said, "Don't be ridiculous." With that I went and found a chair in the waiting room, brought it into the examination room and sat down. I remember thinking the staff looked a little bewildered but no one challenged me at any time. When my mother-in-law's hands felt a little cool, I asked for a heated blanket and one was brought immediately. So it went for the entire evening. We missed the wedding but finally got my mother-in-law in a permanent room about 2 A.M.

The next morning I went to the hospital about 10 o'clock in the morning, dressed in tennis shoes, a sweat suit, and no makeup. As I arrived at my mother-in-law's room, an unfamiliar doctor was just entering. I introduced myself and asked him to speak up so my mother-in-law would be aware of why he was there and what he was doing. I told him that she tends to be frightened by the unexpected and without her glasses or hearing aid; she was frightened enough. This thirty-something male doctor proceeded to examine

"The next morning" makes the transition from the first story to the second by showing a passage of time between the two incidents.

my mother-in-law without raising his voice so that she could hear, and without acknowledging me or my request in any way. Actually, he never really looked at either one of us.

In both scenarios, I was listened to not by ears alone, but by eyes, by gender, by age judgments, and by social status assessments. That started me thinking…

This paragraph calls the audience's attention to the similarities and differences between the situation. "That started me thinking…" is a transition linking the stories to the specific topic, given in the next paragraph.

Why did a recent article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* indicate high dissatisfaction in traditional doctor-patient appointments? Why is it the *Wall Street Journal* claims that perception of physician concern and not physician expertise is the deciding factor in the rising number of malpractice suits? Why did the *New England Journal of Medicine* report that the care and attention quotient is causing "alternative" medical practices to grow by leaps and bounds? Given this litany of events, what does it really mean to listen? And why, in the name of science, don't we produce better listeners in the medical profession?

The author chooses to introduce the specific topic by asking a series of rhetorical questions.

This final rhetorical question summarizes the speaker's topic: making doctors better listeners. By this time the speaker's thesis, though unstated, is clear.

The reasons are so obvious that they are sometimes overlooked. First, listening is mistakenly equated with hearing, and since most of us can hear no academic priority is given to this subject in either college or med school. (This, by the way, flies

The author begins the body of the speech with the reasons why people generally don't listen well. She begins the body of her speech by starting to answer the rhetorical questions. When she says "the reasons are obvious" she transitions from the general

in the face of those who measure daily time usage.) Time experts say we spend 9% of our day writing, 16% reading, 30% speaking, and 45% listening—just the opposite of our academic pursuits. Second, we perceive power in speech. We put value on those who have the gift of gab. How often have you heard the compliment, "He/she can talk to anyone"? Additionally, we equate speaking with controlling both the conversation and the situation. The third and last reason we don't listen is that we are in an era of information overload. We are bombarded with the relevant and the irrelevant and it is easy to confuse them. Often it's all just so much noise.

nature of the introduction to the specifics of the body.

The speech's general organization is problem-solution. Along with the illustrations in the introduction, these reasons establish the nature of the problem.

To help the audience track her analysis of the problem, the speaker enumerates the points: first...second... third. Enumeration serves as a transition from one reason to the next.

How can we address this depressing situation? Dan Callahan, a physician and teacher, argues that primacy in health care needs to be given to the notion of care over cure. Caring as well as curing humanizes our doctor-patient relationships.

The speaker uses a rhetorical question to move the audience from problem to solution. She further uses the contrast of "care" and "cure." This is an effective memory anchor that moves her and her audience to an audience-participation section of the speech.

Let's talk about what that might mean for health care. What comes to mind when someone is caring? [*The audience responded with the words "giving," "interested," "genuine," and "sincere."*] Now, what comes to mind when you think of the opposite of care? [*The audience volunteered "cold," "uninterested," "egotistical," "busy," "distracted," and "selfish."*]

The speaker asks for the audience to provide responses to her questions. Again, this focuses their attention on the fact that "health care" contains the word "care." She will use care for the remainder of the body of the speech and equate "care" with "listening."

What might a caring doctor be like? If we take the word CARE and break it down, we find the qualities that are reflective of a therapeutic communicator—in other words, someone who listens not with ears alone.

Another rhetorical question. The speaker then uses CARE as a mnemonic acronym to set up the suggestions in her speech. This tactic clearly identifies four things doctors can do to become better listeners.

"C" stands for *concentrate.* Physicians should hear with their eyes and ears. They should avoid the verbal and visual barriers that prevent real listening. It may be as simple as eye contact. (Some young doctors have told me they have a difficult time with looking people in the eye, and my advice is when you are uncomfortable, focus on the patient's mouth and as the comfort level increases, move to the eyes.) In the placement of office furniture, try and keep the desk from being a barrier between you and the patient. Offer and alternative chair for consultations—one to the side of your desk and one in front of your desk. Let the patient have some control and power to decide their own comfort level.

The speaker begins her suggestions with a repeated pattern: "'C' stands for...'A' stands for...'R' stands for... 'E' stands for." Because of this repeated pattern, the audience needs no further transitions. When the audience hears the next letter, they know they are moving to the next point.

Notice that the suggestions all use verbs in the same form. These verbs—which make a request, demand, or suggestion—are called imperative verbs. With this kind of consistency, the audience knows they are still hearing advice on "C."

"A" stands for *acknowledge.* Show them that you are listening by using facial expressions, giving vocal prompts, and listening between the lines for intent as well as content. Listen for their vocal intonation when responding to things like prescribed medication. If you hear some hesitation in their voice, say to them, "I hear you agreeing, but I'm getting the sound of some reservation in your

The speaker moves on to "A." Because the audience already knows she is going to break down the word "care," they are prepared to follow her into this stage of the body. Notice she continues using imperative verbs for her advice. This consistency keeps the audience listening for the specific suggestions she has to make.

voice. Can you tell me why?" And then acknowledge their response. Trust them and they will trust you.

"R" stands for *response.* Clarify issues by asking, "I'm not sure what you mean." Encourage continuing statements by saying "and then what" or "tell me more." The recurrent headache may mask other problems. Provide periodic recaps to focus information. Learn to take cryptic notes and then return your attention to the patient. (Note taking is sometimes used as an avoidance tactic, and patients sense this.) Use body language by leaning toward the patient. Effective listening requires attention, patience, and the ability to resist the urge to control the conversation.

The speaker repeats the pattern. Note that the repetition of the previous patterns for "C" and "A" establish a clear and reliable way for the audience to understand the author's suggestions.

"E" stands for *exercise emotional control.* This means if your "hot buttons" are pushed by people who whine, and in walks someone who does that very thing, you are likely to fake interest in your patient. With your mind elsewhere, you will never really "hear" that person. Emotional blocks are based on previous experiences. They are sometimes activated by words, by tone of voice, by style or clothes or hair, or by ethnicity. It is not possible for us to be free of those emotional reactions, but the first step in controlling them is to recognize when you are losing control. One of the most useful techniques to combat emotional responses is to take a long, deep breath when confronted with

The speaker repeats the pattern.

the urge to interrupt. Deep breathing redirects your response, and as a bonus it is impossible to talk when you are deep breathing.

Who of us would not choose the attentive, caring physician?

This summary question lets the audience know that this section of the speech is over. There is an elegance to using the word "caring" again as a word and not as an mnemonic acronym.

As it nears time for me take the deep breath, I would just like to reiterate that listening is a learned skill and learning to listen with CARE has valuable benefits for health care professionals and patients. As a wise man named J. Isham once said, "Listening is an attitude of the heart, a genuine desire to be with another, which attracts and heals."

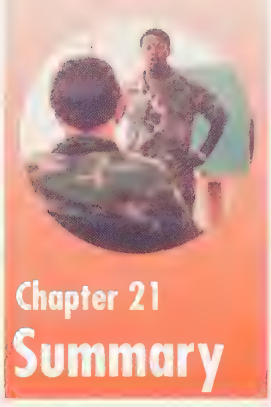
The conclusion begins with a phrase that the audience just heard in the body: "deep breath." The speaker says you can't talk when deep breathing, so she is noting that she will shortly stop talking. The audience is thus prepared for the end of the speech.

The speaker ties back to her purpose: making health care professionals better listens.

She summarizes with an inspiring quotation that relates to her topic and gracefully concludes the speech.

Thank you very much.

These final words do two things: First, they do express her gratitude to her audience (for being invited and/or for listening). Second, they officially notify the audience that she is finished. The audience has "permission" to stop listening—to applaud, to ask questions, etc.



Chapter 21
Summary

To be successful, a speech must have a clear organization. The introduction moves the audience into the speech by gaining attention and focusing it on the speech topic. Furthermore, the introduction will give the speaker's point of view and set tone. Introductions help build credibility. The body of the speech does the majority of the "work" in a speech. There are several organizational patterns commonly used to help audiences follow a speaker's thoughts. Outlining is the most common—and most effective—method of planning the organization of the entire speech, especially the body. A conclusion lets the audience know the speech is over in a graceful and memorable way. The speaker helps the audience move from idea to idea clearly and smoothly.

Remembering

1. List five purposes of a speech's introduction.
2. List four common methods of introducing a speech.
3. List and describe five common organizational patterns for the body of a speech.
4. List four rules for good outlining.
5. Identify two qualities of a good outline.
6. Identify two purposes of a speech's conclusion.
7. Explain the purposes of transitions. Use examples in your explanation.

Reflecting

1. Compare the information on organization you find in a composition or writing text to the information you find in this chapter.
2. Outlining the work of another person can help you understand their use of introductions, organizational patterns, conclusions, and transitions. Find a speech written by another person. Outline the speech. After you have outlined the speech, identify the organizational techniques used by the speaker.
3. Select a speech from *Vital Speeches of the Day* (also www.votd.com) or from any other speech collection. Photocopy the speech. Underline the transitions used by the speaker. Be prepared to explain three of the transitions to a small group.

Reaching

1. Human thought patterns form their own organizations. The organizational patterns often fall into the ones identified in the chapter. Research the idea that there are styles of learning and ways of organizing. Center your research on psychology and brain studies. Prepare a speech sharing your research with the class.
2. The chapter notes that selection of an appropriate organizational pattern for the body is based on the speaker's understanding of situation, purpose, and audience. Imagine and describe a situation, purpose, and audience for which each of the following would be a good organizational pattern.
   a] chronological
   b] classification
   c] order of importance
   d] mnemonic order

Real Life

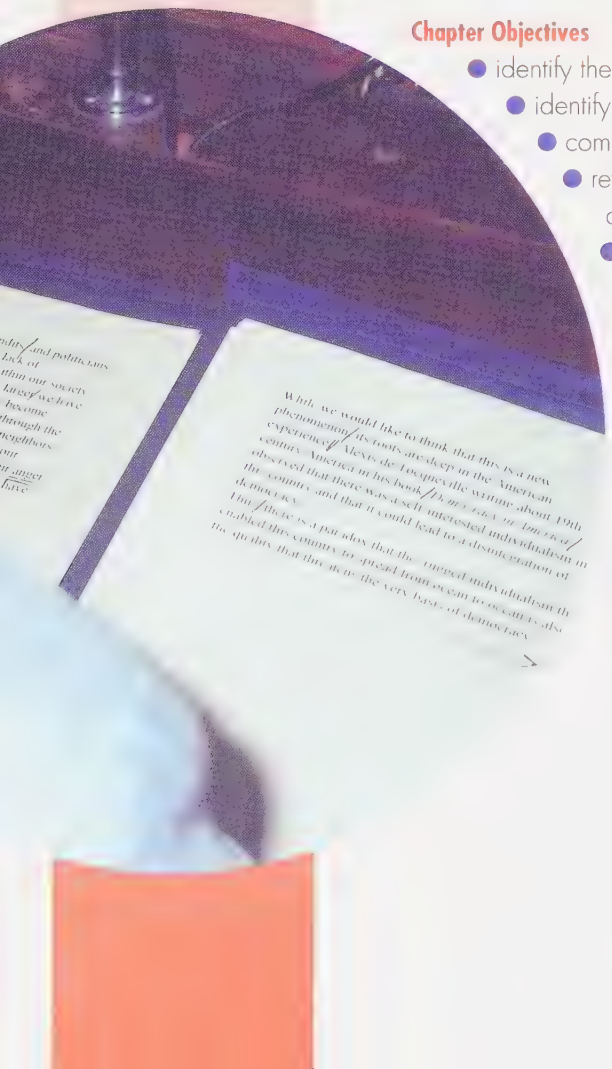
1. Prepare a speech of 4-6 minutes in which you suggest three ways to improve high school education. The speech should be persuasive. Select an appropriate way to organize the three reasons you selected. Following the speech, explain the basis for your selection of this organizational pattern.
2. Prepare a one-minute introduction to a speech to inform. Select the topic from subjects you know a great deal about. In your introduction, be sure you accomplish the following goals: gain the attention of the audience, establish credibility, introduce topic.

22

Chapter Twenty-Two
Application.Delivery

Key Concept

There are four distinct delivery styles. A speaker should select a de ivery style that suits situation, purpose, and audience. Whatever style the speaker chooses, delivery should be natural and lively. Effective delivery contributes to a speech's unity when it aligns with the message.



Chapter Objectives

- identify the qualities of effective delivery
- identify the four basic delivery formats
- compare and contrast the four basic delivery formats
- review guidelines for preparing speech notes and manuscripts
- develop methods of handling question and answer sessions

Key Terms

- alignment
- extemporaneous delivery
- fluent
- impromptu delivery
- manuscript delivery
- memorized delivery

Scenario

Pilar has been asked to fill in for someone at a week-long meeting out of town. As a result, she has to rearrange her schedule. Covering important speaking engagements is the subject of this quick meeting.

Pilar: *I'm sorry to do this, but I don't have much choice. The head office has asked me to fill in at this meeting in Dallas. I've canceled or rescheduled everything I could, but there are three events I can't cover. Alicia, the first is the press conference next Monday to announce our expansion plans. Can you cover that? I have the speech written up and it was reviewed by our contact in public relations.*

Alicia: *Sure, I'd be glad to help. If the speech is already written, I'll just need to rehearse it a bit.*

Pilar: *Thanks. JaRon, you've seen me give the talk on the company's community outreach program. Could you take that speech at the Chamber of Commerce breakfast on Tuesday morning at 7:00?*

JaRon: *Sure, Pilar. Do you have the slides?*

Pilar: *Yes, I have them on my laptop. If you want to take my laptop to the meeting, that would be fine. There's no script for the speech. I use the slides and a few notes to give the speech. I'd be happy to review it with you.*

JaRon: *No problem. The slides and notes will give me enough to work from.*

Pilar: *Thanks. Now, the last one. James, I'd like you to represent us at a question and answer session at the community college. It's tomorrow morning at nine. Since I was scheduled to be part of a panel, I couldn't reschedule. I haven't prepared much, since I don't know what the questions are likely to be. These will all be questions on the current labor market. Do you feel okay with doing that?*

James: *Off-the-cuff remarks are my specialty. Sure, I'd be happy to.*

Pilar: *Thanks to you all. I'm sorry to do this to you, but it's nice to know our team can pitch in and take care of business. I'll keep in touch via voice mail, so if you have questions, just leave a message and I'll respond.*

Pilar is lucky to have such a flexible team. The differences in these speaking situations are many, but one key difference is the style of delivery expected for each. The situation, purpose, and audience require different skills from each speaker. She has asked one speaker to deliver a scripted speech, one to speak from a set of prepared notes, and one to speak entirely without preparation. As diverse as these speech situations sound, all three are fairly common in the business world. An effective public communicator learns to handle all three situations and to learn skills for differing kinds of delivery.



Inpromptu speaking requires no notes and little preparation, but it should be done with an organzational plan in mind.

Qualities of Effective Delivery

Delivery is the manner or style of speaking. Good delivery will include both vocal techniques and nonverbal techniques. Before we learn about the differences among various types of delivery, we should consider the qualities that all effective deliveries have. Whatever the situation, audiences appreciate delivery that has four qualities. All four qualities are based on audience perception:

Effective delivery is natural.	• Audiences feel that someone who speaks naturally is letting his or her personality show. • When an members of the audience feel delivery is natural, they believe in the sincerity of the speaker's message. I forced or "phony" delivery leads to the opposite, belief that the speaker is insincere. • A natural delivery lets the members of the audience feel that the speaker is talking directly to them. • Natural delivery is fluent. Speech is fluent when it is smooth and free from unnecessary, distracting interruptions.
Effective delivery is lively.	• We know that a speaker must gain and keep and audience's attention before he or she can do anything else. A lively delivery gains and keeps an audience's attention. • Audiences perceive a lively delivery as evidence of credibility; hence, audiences are more likely to believe a message that is delivered in a lively manner.
Effective delivery aligns with the situation.	• When a delivery style matches the situation, we say it "aligns." If a delivery style aligns, the audience gains a sense that the speaker is making appropriate communication choices. • Sometimes the speaker needs to alter the audience's perception of the situation. The audience will take their cue from the speaker's delivery style.
Effective delivery aligns with the message.	• An audience wants a delivery style that will align with the message. If the message is saying one thing—say, that the topic is very serious—then the delivery style should convey that seriousness. If message and delivery style don't align, the audience can be confused or doubtful, neither of which will help the speaker get the message across. • Sometimes, the way a message is delivered is as important is the message itself.
Effective delivery is clear.	• We will discuss this more directly in the next chapter. Obviously, the style must be audible and understandable or the message can't get through.

Four Delivery Formats

As with all other speaking decisions, the choice of how to deliver a speech will be based on the speaker's understanding of situation, purpose, and audience. A speaker will necessarily choose from four delivery formats: impromptu, extemporaneous, manuscript, and memorized.

Impromptu. A speech given with little or no preparation is called an impromptu speech. An impromptu delivery format requires a speaker to develop the substance and organization of the speech on the spur of the moment. In the real world, a person can be asked to deliver a short talk

updating a group on a recent issue or developing project. In one way, impromptu speeches are the easiest to do because, by definition, there is no preparation. In another way they are very difficult. Here are three suggestions for giving effective impromptu speeches.

1. Even if you have only seconds to prepare, your decisions about your message should be based on your understanding of situation, purpose, and audience.
2. Remember that the audience will likely know that the speech is impromptu. Their expectations for a well-developed introduction, carefully crafted transitions, and so forth will be lower. They will "cut some slack" for speakers who are called upon to make impromptu remarks.
3. If you have some time—even the time it takes to walk to the front of the room—decide on your thesis and a clear, easy-to-follow organization. Draw upon your knowledge of the topic to develop or explain your thesis.
4. Be brief. Try to meet your purpose efficiently. When you know a great deal about a topic, you might have a tendency to ramble.
5. Don't forget to have a conclusion, even if it is a brief comment, letting the audience know that your remarks are concluded.

Extemporaneous. An extemporaneous delivery format is given from key words and phrases in the outline. It is not read to an audience. The notes allow the speaker to follow an organization and to include certain points in a particular order; the words of the speech, however, are developed by the speaker "on the spot" after careful preparation and rehearsal. This delivery format is the most flexible and the most common in business and professional situations. These suggestions will help you in developing an effective extemporaneous speech.

1. Preparation time allows you to carefully make communication decisions based on your understanding of situation, purpose, and audience.
2. The outline or notes should be reminders, nothing more. If you must quote something word-for-word, that quotation can be included in notes. But if you want a natural and lively delivery, prepare an outline showing the order and relationships of your ideas.
3. Extemporaneous delivery allows a speaker to be lively and spontaneous while still being prepared.
4. Don't become tied to notes. If a speaker looks too much at notes (or at presentation slides on a screen), eye contact will suffer.
5. One considerable advantage to extemporaneous format is that it allows a speaker to respond readily to audience feedback. If a speaker can see that an audience is puzzled, the speaker can spend more time on development.

On the other hand, if the speaker notes that the audience is somewhat bored, the speaker can alter content or shorten the speech. This flexibility makes extemporaneous delivery very valuable.

6. To improve the effectiveness of the extemporaneous format, rehearse the speech until you are comfortable that you have the components of effective delivery noted previously.
7. Because extemporaneous delivery allows freedom of movement, rehearse as if you were standing in front of an audience. Think about your movement and gestures as you rehearse.

Manuscript. When a speaker reads a speech word-for-word from a prepared manuscript, the speaker uses the manuscript delivery format. Actual instances requiring this delivery format are not nearly as common as the situations requiring extemporaneous delivery. In fact, situations requiring a manuscript are limited to those in which speakers must have a complete and accurate record of their statements. For example, the speaker might need to give copies of the speech to the press, match his or her message word-for-word with someone else's message, or choose words extremely carefully for legal reasons. Perhaps the speech must fit a time frame exactly. If a speech doesn't have these requirements, a speaker is probably better off using an extemporaneous delivery. These suggestions can help a speaker use this delivery format effectively:

1. Manuscript speeches are not flexible. If a speaker is going to prepare a message and write it into a script, it is crucial that the speaker anticipate audience reaction. If the speech is given from a manuscript, the speaker will likely not deviate from the text. Therefore, the speaker must anticipate the audience's needs for explanation and clarification.
2. Since the speech is prepared beforehand, allow someone else to read the speech and make suggestions about wording. In a business situation, a speaker could even ask someone to read for content and someone else to read for style.
3. Rehearse aloud. Not only will you get a better understanding of how long the speech will last, you will hear the language you are going to use.
4. One of the few advantages of manuscript delivery is that it allows careful rehearsing of timing. Timing is using pauses and rate of speech to enhance meaning. Since this is an advantage of manuscript speaking, make use of it when you are in a situation requiring a manuscript.
5. Remember that written English differs from spoken English. Don't forget to "hear" your language in your head…as your audience will hear it. Strive for natural delivery.

Communication Management—Written Style vs Oral Style



When you create a manuscript speech (or a memorized speech based on a manuscript), you will naturally fight the tendency to produce a speech in a written style rather than an oral style. As you write a speech, you will draw upon all the composition lessons you have had in your education. Most of those lessons—organization, transitions, support, and so forth—will be very helpful in creating the speech. On the other hand, there is a real difference between oral style and written style. Chapter Four covers many of those differences. Here's a reminder to "hear" the speech as you write the manuscript and maintain an oral style. There are some common traits of oral language that aren't common to formal written language.

1. Spoken style relies on a smaller vocabulary. Typically, we use about half the words in speaking that we do in writing. For example, the word "hirsute" means "hairy." How often will we hear to word "hirsute" spoken?
2. Spoken style prefers contractions. You've probably been asked to avoid contractions in your formal writing.
3. Spoken style allows incomplete sentences. An incomplete sentence is called a fragment in written style. Spoken style has the advantage of tone of voice and gestures to help convey meaning without words. Incomplete sentences, if clear, are allowable.
4. Spoken style uses more repetition. Repetition of words in a speech is not as awkward as in writing. The word doesn't remain on the page to remind the listener of its presence. The speaker modifies the word with voice and gesture, so the repetition sounds natural.
5. Spoken style uses shorter sentences, often linking sentences together. Written style uses punctuation. While a manuscript will also use punctuation, the sentences' structure will be conveyed vocally. The shorter sentences can even be linked in spoken style, while that linking would create a run-on in written style.
6. Spoken style sometimes contain digressions. A digression is a message that departs from the main message. Digressions should not be allowed to diminish the intended message to confuse the listener, but spoken style tolerates digressions much better than written style.

Here is the same basic message as it might be conveyed in a memo and in an oral announcement.

Memo—Written Style

This is an important notice for all employees. There as been an alteration in the means by which we will compensate retiring employees for unused temporary leave. The new policy, which was adopted by the board on August 5, will compensate all retiring employees who have worked for the company for at least three years. It will pay each person 30% of his or her per diem for up to 100 days of accumulated leave.

Announcement—Oral Style

Here's something we're all going to be interested in. Our company's changing how it pays retiring employees for their unused sick leave, so as of last Wednesday, anyone who retires'll be paid for up to 100 days of sick leave at the rate of 30% of daily pay.

Memorized. Memorized delivery is just that: delivering a prepared script from memory. It is not delivering a speech without notes. If a speaker has a set of notes, but can deliver the speech without referring to them, the delivery style is still extemporaneous. The words are coming spontaneously to the speaker based on the notes, rehearsal, and knowledge of subject. A memorized speech will be memorized word-for-word from a manuscript. There are very few real-world situations that call for a memorized speech. Professional speakers, for example, could have a memorized speech that they give time and again. Speaking contests often require memorization. But how often do speakers encounter those two situations?

1. All the suggestions for manuscript speeches also apply to the memorized format.
2. A memorized speech has one tremendous disadvantage: memory failure. What happens when you forget? Worse yet, what happens when you realize—too late—that you've skipped an important part of your speech? There are two answers to this question. First, rehearse, rehearse, rehearse. Simply, don't forget. Second, be prepared to extemporize if necessary.

As you can tell from the description of the delivery formats, the extemporaneous delivery style has the most advantages.

- It requires less preparation time than either manuscript or memorized.
- It is more flexible than either manuscript or memorized.
- It allows a more natural speaking style than either manuscript or memorized.
- It provides a more carefully considered message than impromptu.
- It is not as nerve-wracking as impromptu or memorized.

Whenever appropriate, a speaker will benefit from selecting the extemporaneous delivery style. To become very good with this style, a speaker should gain experience in public speaking and take every opportunity to practice.

Preparing Notes for Extemporaneous Delivery

Since extemporaneous delivery is appropriate for most professional speaking situations, let's concentrate our discussion of preparing notes on the outline and the note card. Outlining, discussed in the previous chapter, can give the speaker the memory assists to make extemporaneous presentations effective. Some speakers prepare an outline on a piece of paper; others prefer note cards. With practice, either can be effective. Here are the guidelines you should follow:

1. Don't be afraid to write out key elements of the speech, such as the introduction, the conclusion, and important transitions.

2. Use large printing or oversize type. Large print or type helps you find your place easily when you refer to your notes.
3. Use lots of white space. That means don't cram too much onto your paper or note cards so that you can't find your place easily.
4. If you use paper for your outline, put the paper in a folder that you can have with you as you wait for your speech and that will keep your papers in order. Number the pages of your outline—if you have more than a page—so you can keep them in order. If you are using note cards, number them so you can put them in order quickly and reliably.

For example, here is an outline for a speech as it would appear on paper and on note cards. (Here, it is produced in normal type. Following our suggestion, we would recommend type of a much greater size, such as 18 point font size, shown here:

I. The need is obvious.
   A. Many of you have expressed concern that you can't meet the needs of our Spanish-speaking customers.
      1. Kathy's difficulty working through Mr. Lopez's problems.
      2. Our problems placing ads in Spanish-language publications

Introduction:

I would like all of you to think back to what we as a business were like three years ago.

- We had just started the business.
- We had only 4 employees.
- No one in the industry really knew who we were.

In short, we had nowhere to go but up. And up we have gone.

Now, one thousand days after we opened our doors,

- We have a growing list of satisfied customers.
- We have 15 employees.
- And everyone who hears our name knows who we are and what we do.

Much of the credit for our progress is due to you. You have grown with the business and have made us as successful as we are now.

Today, I would like to announce the next step in growing to meet the needs of our customers and our community. I hope you will find this new stage of development as exciting as I do. Put simply, we have a growing number of customers for whom English is a second language. The majority of these customers speak Spanish. To further our growth, we will hire new customer service representatives who are bilingual to help our customers.

Body

I. The need is obvious.
   A. Many of you have expressed concern that you can't meet the needs of our Spanish-speaking customers.
      1. Kathy's difficulty working through Mr. Lopez' problems.
      2. Our problems placing ads in Spanish-language publications
   B. The Spanish-speaking community is growing
      1. The Chamber of Commerce data
      2. The national trends
   C. Our own experience with growth shows we lag behind
      1. Compared to our growth two years ago
      2. Compared to other companies

   Transition: How have other companies done so well? They've found the solution, and now so have we:

II. The solution is to hire Spanish-speaking employees
   A. Spanish-speaking employees reduce the burden on you
   B. Spanish-speaking employees can recruit new customers
   C. Spanish-speaking employees can solve problems for existing customers

   Transition: But it's not enough to say we're going to do something. We have to have a plan—

III. Our plan has three parts
    A. Working with Dos Mundos consulting firm
    B. Recruiting from the local Hispanic community
        1. ads in Spanish papers
        2. attending job fairs at community centers
    C. Making ourselves bilingual
        1. printing our pamphlets in Spanish
        2. providing a Spanish-preferred phone extension
        3. joining the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

    Transition: Since we are coming to this decision later than we would like, we must begin our plan to reach out to the Hispanic community as soon as we can.

IV. Starting the plan
    A. Linda Hernandez will be our Dos Mundos contact
        1. reception at 4 P.M., Friday, in our office
        2. everyone's invited
    B. Dos Mundos—helping update printed material
    C. New phone lines wait until we've hired sufficient employees
    D. First ads in newspapers appear when Dos Mundos advises we're ready

    Transition: As in everything else in our company, we all have a role to play.

V. Your role
    A. You've already done much to help our Spanish-speaking customers
    B. Provide input to Dos Mundos for phone lines
    C. Help bring aboard employees for new bilingual positions
        1. interviews
        2. orientations

Conclusion

This is the first stage in a plan to broaden our client base. Over the next year, we anticipate other announcements. We need your help in making this change. You are the ones who have brought us in three years to the status we enjoy now. In three more years, we hope to be as important to our Hispanic community as we have become to the city generally. We'll start by saying to all our Spanish-speaking friends: *Hablamos español.*

Here's how sections of the speech would look on note cards.

Introduction:
I would like all of you to think back to what we as a business were like three years ago.

- We had just started the business.
- We had only 4 employees.
- No one in the industry really knew who we were.

In short, we had nowhere to go but up. And up we have gone.

Now, one thousand days after we opened our doors,

- We have a growing list of satisfied customers.
- We have 15 employees.
- And everyone who hears our name knows who we are and what we do.

Much of the credit for our progress is due to you. You have grown with the business and have made us as successful as we are now.

Today, I would like to announce the next step in growing to meet the needs of our customers and our community. I hope you will find this new stage of development as exciting as I do. Put simply, we have a growing number of customers for whom English is a second language. The majority of these customers speak Spanish. To further our growth, we will hire new customer service representatives who are bilingual to help our customers.

1. The need is obvious.
    A. Many of you have expressed concern that you can't meet the needs of our Spanish-speaking customers.
        1. Kathy's difficulty working through Mr. Lopez' problems.
        2. Our problems placing ads in Spanish-language publications

B. The Spanish-speaking community is growing
    1. The Chamber of Commerce data
    2. The national trends
C. Our own experience with growth shows we lag behind
    1. Compared to our growth two years ago
    2. Compared to other companies

The transitions can be written onto note cards just as they've been written onto the outline on paper.

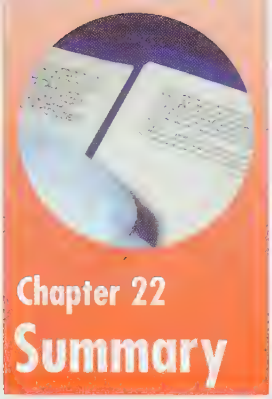
As you can see, the number of ideas per note card is limited. If a speaker attempts to put too much information on the note card, the information is too difficult to find easily. A speaker should be so familiar with note cards (or outline) that he or she knows exactly where to look for information.

Q and A

Whatever delivery format you use, there is a high likelihood that you will be faced with a question-and-answer period, or Q and A. Allowing an audience to ask questions is a good decision in most situations. Audiences can ask you to repeat information they didn't understand. They can help you refine your message. The Q and A session is feedback at its best. The audience asks what it feels are important questions and the speaker uses these questions to sharpen and focus what he or she has to say.

In many ways, a speaker's role in Q and A is impromptu. You aren't certain what questions you will get. You don't know the order questions will come. You can get surprised by comments made by the questioners. You can adopt some methods for handling questions.

1. Anticipate the audience's questions. As you prepare your speech, know where audiences will likely want to know more. As you give your speech you can read an audience's reaction; therefore, you can anticipate questions. If you've given a speech more than once, you will have experience with audience reactions. By anticipating the questions, you can prepare responses. By having information and ideas in mind, you can make the Q and A session less of an unknown.
2. Restate the question. After the audience member has asked the question, you can gain some time by restating the question for everyone else to hear. This is only useful if you are addressing a large group in which some audience members might have trouble hearing the question. In such a group, restating not only gives you time, it also helps people put your answer in context of the question asked.
3. Address the entire audience. Even though the question might have come from only one audience member, address your response to everyone. This method of responding will keep everyone involved in your message.
4. Be polite. Even if a question is challenging, be polite to the questioner. Sometimes a question will come from someone who disagrees with you. They will use the question to challenge your message. You will not usually build a relationship with your audience by responding defensively.
5. Use the opportunity to restate and refine. Most of the time, you can relate a question to your speech. Further your purpose by using Q and A to rephrase or re-explain your position.
6. Decrease formality. Usually a Q and A session is less formal than the speech. As such, it provides an opportunity to show a natural, spontaneous delivery style. Don't be afraid to interact and enjoy your time with the audience.
7. When you don't know, say so. Sometimes you will encounter a question that you don't really know the answer to. An audience would much rather hear a speaker say "I don't know" than hear a speaker attempt to evade a question. You can further your relationship with the audience by volunteering to look into the question. If you say you'll look into the question, don't forget to follow through and get back to the questioner.
8. Announce your final question. If you say, "We have time for one more question," the audience will know that you've reached the end of the question-answer period. You can then end your presentation gracefully by thanking everyone for the questions. You won't have to end your speech with a dozen hands in the air for the next question.



Chapter 22 Summary

Whatever the situation, purpose, or audience, the speaker will likely have four choices for delivery formats: impromptu, extemporaneous, manuscript or memorized. While each has its advantages, the most useful and most common delivery format is extemporaneous. It allows the speaker to reach the goals of effective delivery:

- naturalness
- liveliness
- alignment with message
- alignment with situation
- clarity

A speaker's notes can also help reach these goals of effective delivery by being organized and easy to use.

Remembering

1. Identify the five qualities of effective delivery.
2. List the four basic delivery formats.
3. Identify three suggestions for using each delivery format.
4. List three suggestions for producing effective notes for use in extemporaneous delivery.
5. Explain four methods of handling question and answer sessions.

Reflecting

1. This chapter identifies the qualities of good delivery. Take the negative approach. Rephrase the suggestions to reflect what a speaker should not do. Try to give an example of each of the negatives.
2. Select a speaker from public life whom you feel has an effective delivery style. In small groups, share your selection and explain what elements of effective delivery the speaker exhibits.
3. Do the same with a speaker whom you feel has an ineffective delivery style. This time, explain why the style is ineffective. Do so in terms of the elements of effective delivery in this chapter.

Reaching

1. Presentation software usually contains—in addition to slides—an auto-outline and a notes page. Print out samples of each and discuss how they could be used as notes for a speech.
2. C-SPAN often broadcasts speeches delivered before the National Press Club. View a speech. Be sure to view the question and answer section at the end. Discuss how the speaker managed the Q and A session. Use the suggestions in this chapter to determine strategies the speaker used.

Real Life

1. Find a copy of a speech given by someone else. You can find such speeches in the library, in *Vital Speeches of the Day*, or on the Internet. Select a 2-3 minute section to deliver. Rehearse the section and deliver to the class, focusing on meeting the goals of effective delivery.
2. As a class, prepare a list of impromptu speech topics. Be sure everyone can relate to the topics. Ask for a volunteer to draw a topic. Give the volunteer 5 minutes to prepare a speech of 2-3 minutes. (While the speaker is speaking, another person can draw and prepare, and so on.) Each speaker should focus efforts on providing an organized message and fluent delivery. After the speech, allow two questions for the speaker to respond to.

23 Chapter Twenty-Three Application.Voice

Key Concept

Speakers vary the volume, rate, and pitch of their voices to generate interest in their speech and to convey meaning to their audience. Used properly, the voice can improve audience understanding of speech substance and organization.

Chapter Objectives

- identify the basic variables in vocal delivery
- investigate how variables in vocal delivery can be used to increase audience appreciation and understanding of message
- develop suggestions for improving articulation
- develop guidelines for speaking with a microphone



Key Terms

- articulation
- framing
- inflection
- intensity
- pitch
- rate
- volume

Scenario

This discussion takes place in Alicia's office. She has asked JaRon to visit with her.

Alicia: *JaRon, I think we need to record a new message on our voice mail.*

JaRon: *What in the world made you think of that? We've had the same voice mail greeting since it was installed.*

Alicia: *I know. But have you listened to it recently?*

JaRon: *No…the minute I get voice mail I either press "#" to go to the message center or hang up. I haven't really listened to the message. It takes too much time.*

Alicia: *I know. None of us hear it, but our customers sure do. So do the folks who call in from other offices.*

JaRon: *Well, what's wrong with it exactly?. It's a pretty standard greeting. You know—"you have reached blah, blah, blah…your message is important…blah, blah…leave a message at the beep.*

Alicia: *It's not what the message says, it's how it says it. For example, when the voice says "your message is important to us," does it really sound as if the message is important to us? The voice has three problems: First, it just rattles through the message. I know time is important, but the speed of the message makes me feel like I have to hurry up and get off the phone. Second, the voice sounds bored. Just because it's a recording on a machine doesn't mean it has to sound like one. Finally, I can barely hear some of the words when I'm on my cell phone. If anyone calls in and the voice is so weak they can't hear it, they'll probably hang up.*

JaRon: *Wow. I never even thought about the impression our recorded voice could make. So let's record a new one. I'm for it. What do you want me to do?*

Alicia: *JaRon, you are going to be our new voice.*

JaRon: *What? Are you…*

Alicia: *Listen. I heard the speech you gave for Pilar last week. Your voice sounds friendly, but professional. It's easy to listen to. You have what it takes. Will you do it?*

JaRon: *Okay. I'll give it a shot. Thanks for the compliment on my voice.*

Alicia: *I really mean it. Your voice is one of your best communication tools. Let's hope you don't get laryngitis.*

From this conversation, it sounds as if Alicia has been doing some careful listening. Not only does she listen to the recorded voice on the telephone, she listens to JaRon's voice. Not surprisingly, many people do listen to the voices of those who communicate publicly and personally. People might not comment directly on the voice if the person can communicate effectively, but when voice interferes with the creation of meaning, people notice.

Effective vocal delivery can be a great tool for effective communication, or it can interfere with communication. Even if a speaker has outstanding substance and organization, vocal delivery can still be the difference between a good speech and a poor one.

Using Vocal Variety

One of the strengths of outstanding public speakers is vocal variety. If you are like most people, you appreciate variety. The same thing again and again—food, entertainment, work—quickly becomes boring. You long for some relief, more variety. Similarly, an interesting, communicative voice isn't the same thing again and again. An interesting, communicative voice provides variety in several ways: volume, rate, pitch.

Volume. Volume is the relative loudness of the speaker's voice. A speaker's first concern with vocal delivery is volume.

1. The speech should be audible; that is, members of the audience—all members—should be able to hear the speaker's voice.

2. The volume should vary appropriately. In other words, when a part of the speech should be loud, it is loud. When a part of the speech should be softer, it is softer. Volume should align with the message.
3. The speaker should use volume to emphasize important words and phrases.
4. Increased volume isn't the same as shouting. A loud voice doesn't have to be harsh and unpleasant. Since many people associate shouting with anger, a speaker should concentrate on projecting the voice rather than yelling.
5. Variety in volume is the key. Almost all speeches give the speaker an opportunity to emphasize key words and phrases. Most speeches also let a speaker use a relatively low volume and a relatively high volume. The contrast between high and low provides the listeners with variety.

Think about this example. It is the conclusion of a speech by Geneva B. Johnson, retired president of Family Service of America. The conclusion is printed twice with italicized words for increased volume. How do the different uses of volume alter the meaning and impact of the conclusion?

A	B
We humans have *shown* ourselves capable of nobility, of kindness, and of generosity. We must *draw* on our strength from those who exhibit the best that is *in* them. And, let us remember, "to everything there is a *season*, and a time to every purpose under heaven." And if this be not your *season*, it will *come*. At least, let them say of you in the future — *you* cared enough to do the very best. This was the time you planned to *serve*: this was your *seed* time for reform. And remember — "Man is the *only* animal that laughs and weeps, for he is the *only* creature that is struck with the *difference* between what things are, and what they *ought* to be." Peace be with you.	We humans have shown ourselves capable of *nobility*, of *kindness*, and of *generosity*. We must draw on *our* strength from those who exhibit the *best* that is in *them*. And, let us remember, "to *everything* there is a season, and a time to *every* purpose under heaven." And if this be not *your* season, it *will* come. At least, let them say of *you* in the future — you *cared* enough to do the very *best*. *This* was the time you planned to serve: *this* was your seed time for reform. And remember — "Man is the only animal that laughs and weeps, for he is the *only* creature that is struck with the difference between what things *are*, and what they *ought* to be." Peace be with you.

Now, neither of the versions is "correct," but is one more effective than the other? Look at the emphasized words:

A	B	
shown	nobility	you
draw	kindness	cared
in	generosity	best
season	our	this
season	best	only
come	them	are
seed	everything	ought
only	every	
only	your	
difference	will	
ought		

These lists show something about how the use of volume can alter the meaning of speech. List B emphasizes pronouns (you, your, them, our). This emphasis draws the listener's attention more to applying the speech to themselves personally. Even the first sentence changes meaning with change in volume and emphasis.

A	B
We humans have *shown* ourselves capable of nobility, of kindness, and of generosity	We humans have shown ourselves capable of *nobility*, of *kindness*, and of *generosity*.

Sentence A emphasizes the act of showing ourselves capable of the attributes. Emphasizing "showing" through increased volume suggests that proving ourselves capable is the important point. Sentence B, by increasing the volume on the qualities nobility, kindness, and generosity, it decreases the importance of showing and increases the importance of the qualities.

Communication Management—Using a Microphone



Microphones are meant to increase volume so that speakers can reach all audience members in large rooms. The microphone, when used appropriately, enhances a speech. Used inappropriately, it becomes a distraction. Here is some advice on using microphones.

1. If you can, rehearse with the microphone.
2. Don't begin by tapping on the microphone or blowing into it to see if it is working. Don't approach the microphone and say "Is this working?" Instead, begin your remarks with a greeting such as "good afternoon" or "hello." You can immediately hear if your voice is amplified or check the on-off switch.
3. Establish a microphone distance. With practice, you can know how close and how far away you can be from the microphone. If you are too close, words with "p" and "b" will "explode" into the microphone, distracting your audience. If you are too far away, the microphone can't do its job.
4. Adjust the microphone to suit yourself. Often, you will be introduced by someone taller or shorter than you. If that's the case, take a moment before you start your speech to adjust the microphone.
5. Avoid feedback. Feedback occurs when the amplified sound from a speaker reaches the microphone and is re-amplified. This repeated cycle develops into loud shrieks and whines. To stop feedback, stop speaking and back away slightly from the microphone. If reducing the volume of your voice doesn't work, the microphone might have to be relocated so the amplified sound doesn't feedback.

Rate. Speakers can also use variety of rate to communicate more effectively. The rate of speech is the pace or speed at which a person speaks. While we sometimes forget about rate, it can communicate a speaker's attitudes and beliefs all by itself. For example, a rapid rate can indicate excitement or impatience. A slower rate could indicate caution or thoughtfulness.

1. Just as with volume, the important skill is using variety in rate. Not every part of a speech is delivered at the same rate as every other.
2. Pauses are an important part of rate. Pauses—the silence between words and phrases—break up a speech into meaningful portions. Audiences appreciate pauses that are meaningful, but become frustrated with pauses that are random or meaningless.
3. Pauses on either side of a word or phrase, called "framing," can set of that word or phrase for special emphasis. The audience will understand the pauses as vocal directions to consider carefully what is between the pauses.
4. Too rapid a rate can create problems for a speaker and an audience. If a speaker is talking too fast, he or she can begin to have problems speaking clearly. If the audience begins to struggle just to keep up with rapid-fire speech, the audience could give up on the speech entirely.

5. Pausing is part of timing. The timing of delivery, while very difficult to describe, can be funny or dramatic. It can change the meaning or the effect of a word or phrase with subtle pauses and changes in rate generally.
6. The most obvious place to look for effective pauses are the places where periods and commas go. In a manuscript, periods and commas are markers for pauses. In an extemporaneous speech, periods and commas don't exist on paper, but they should exist in your speech—in the form of pauses.

Here's a passage from a speech by James W. Compton, president of the National Urban League of Chicago delivered to the Carter Temple Mentoring Program. The audience was composed of young African-American males. This passage is marked for emphasis with italics, pauses with /, and long pauses with //. Note how all contribute to developing the speaker's meaning.

> The truth is that it doesn't matter *how* old you are if you have *not* learned some of the basics / of what it takes to be a man. It's *not* automatic. There is a *necessary* and *continuous* period of development, / nurturing / and mentoring. Too often / our children are just left to raise themselves, / and never learn how to assume the *awesome* responsibility that goes with being a *real* man in this society.
>
> Being a man means that you learn to accept *responsibility* for your actions. It means being able to say / *'I'm sorry'* / when you are wrong. It's learning how to reach *down* / and help someone else make a way. It's understanding that you can gain *more* in this life by being *cooperative* / rather than competitive.
>
> It's being *respectful* to the women in your life. It's being willing to *clean up* and *build up* your community. It means contributing to your *household*, / rather than always taking. It's understanding that being *respectful* and *courteous* are examples of strength, / not weakness. It's understanding that it takes *courage* to feel so strongly about something that you cry. That's simply giving into the spirit that's inside all of us.
>
> It's understanding that our community has raised up some *sorry* 40-year-old boys, / as well as some *magnificent* 15-year-old men. Which will you be?
>
> The 40-year-old boy is your neighbor who lives in the corner of his mother's basement and just can't seem to hold

a job. Or if he holds one, / it's *not* for very long. He's always borrowing money. He always seems to be *cursing* somebody out, / usually a woman, / and seems always involved in some kind of physical violence.

He lives from one day to the next and seems to always be blaming *someone else* for his problems. Everyone / but himself. He went into a real deep depression when he realized a few years ago that as a single, / able-bodied man, he would no longer be receiving welfare checks. In fact, one day he became so upset he dressed up and / almost / went out looking for a job.

The 15-year-old *man*, / also your neighbor, / is an *overachiever. He's* on the honor roll, / while also holding down a responsible job. *He's* a volunteer tutor in his community. *He* knows who the gangbangers are, / but *he's* smart enough to go his *own* way and make his *own* decisions.

He's often from a single female head-of-household family, / and he has several brothers and sisters. You almost never see him just / hanging out. / He always seems to have *purpose,* and *direction.* He *carries* himself in a certain way that says, / 'I'm going to make my way in this world. And if you follow *me* / you can make your way too.'

He's a *leader*, / not a follower. He's wise for his years, / but not *too* wise to ignore good advice about his future. He realizes that there is honor in *all* types of work. He is a man of his word, / and he *always* pays his own way, / and sometimes *your* way, / if you happen to be a little short that day.

He is a man of responsibility.

Future men, / it's *rough* out here. Just when you think you've got things under control, / something else happens. You have to learn to accept adversity as just another part of this puzzle called life. Every time you're knocked down, / you need to be thinking of how you're going to *get up*, / even before you hit the ground. And then *get up* and move on.

Don't dwell on the bad times, because there are always more out there waiting for you.

Also, don't dwell too long on the good times, because there are always more challenges to meet.

No matter how smart or talented you are, / remember there's always someone out there smarter and more talented.

> Take what gifts you have and *improve* on them. We all are gifted at *something*. Use your talents to help someone else, and you too will prosper.
>
> And above all else, // be *proud* of who you are. As young African-Americans / you are unique. Look at how others imitate you. And because of all of the sacrifices of your elders there is nothing in this world that you cannot do.
>
> Never fear to fail. And as a famous song once said, / 'Never walk in someone else's shadow.' / I'm saying, / be great enough that others will want to trail you and walk in your shadow. / You *can* be just that great.

The pauses, along with the added emphasis, help convey meaning. Consider the drama in this sentence:

And above all else, // be *proud* of who you are.

The pause builds a sense of suspense. The speaker has given his audience several pieces of advice. The transition "and above all else" tells his audience that he is giving his most important advice. The long pause sets up the advice, and sets it apart from the words around it. The advice "be proud of who you are" stands out in a positive way.

The passage also uses framing. Think about the sentence, "You almost never see him just / hanging out. /" The pause before "hanging out" and between this sentence and the next, gives the opportunity for the speaker to make his disapproval of "hanging out" obvious to the listeners.

Pitch. Pitch is the relative highness or lowness of a voice. Now we all know that some people have higher and lower voices than others. No matter if your voice is high or low, you can use variety of pitch to build interest and convey meaning. The easiest way to note how pitch is used to convey meaning is to think about asking a question. Take a very easy question: "Are you going to go on the trip?" The voice naturally goes up at the end of this and most other questions. We have learned that a raised pitch at the end of the word "trip" indicates that this is a question. The use of change in vocal pitch is called inflection.

Changes in pitch—while easy to hear—are difficult to represent on the printed page. Here is the first part of the passage above. To hear the importance of inflection, read through once in a monotone—that is, without a change in pitch, like a "computer" voice. Read again with normal rise and fall of vocal pitch.

> The truth is that it doesn't matter how old you are if you have not learned some of the basics of what it takes to be a man. It's not automatic. There is a necessary and continuous period of development, nurturing and mentoring. Too often our children are just left to raise themselves, and never learn how to assume the awesome responsibility that goes with being a real man in this society.
>
> Being a man means that you learn to accept responsibility for your actions. It means being able to say 'I'm sorry' when you are wrong. It's learning how to reach down and help someone else make a way. It's understanding that you can gain more in this life by being cooperative rather than competitive.
>
> It's being respectful to the women in your life. It's being willing to clean up and build up your community. It means contributing to your household, rather than always taking. It's understanding that being respectful and courteous are examples of strength, not weakness. It's understanding that it takes courage to feel so strongly about something that you cry. That's simply giving into the spirit that's inside all of us.
>
> It's understanding that our community has raised up some sorry 40-year-old boys, as well as some magnificent 15-year-old men. Which will you be?

Can you hear the difference? Obviously, the question "Which will you be" only becomes a question when the voice rises at the end.

While we've considered volume, rate, and pitch separately, they work together to help a speaker develop a vocal delivery that is appealing and meaningful.

Articulation

Another dimension of vocal delivery is articulation. Articulation is the physical act or process of speaking. Good articulation is vital to good vocal delivery because it improves understanding. Poor articulation causes audiences to miss words and ideas. Like poor volume, poor articulation can frustrate an audience into giving up on a speaker.

Another advantage of good articulation shows your audience that you are careful about your speech and your speech topic. Like dressing neatly, good articulation says something about the speaker's overall attitude toward situation, topic, and audience. Inarticulate speech suggests a lack of caring.

There are several common articulation problems that you can hear in your own speech:

Dropping word endings	If a speaker tries to rush (or has developed a habit), the speaker can drop the ending consonant sounds to words. For example, "speaking" becomes "speakin." "Turned" can become "turn." Dropping word endings conveys an extremely casual, even lackadaisical, tone that is not appropriate in most speaking situations.
Running words together	Also the result of speed or bad habits, running words together also mostly effects consonant sounds. For example, the two words "did you" become "didja" and the phrase "there are many ways to do it" becomes "thermany ways to do't."
Substituting sounds	This articulation flaw primarily affects vowel sounds. A word like "your" become "yer." (The ooo sound is replaced by an rrr sound.) "Computers" becomes "compuders." "Secretary" becomes "secutary."
Adding sounds	Sometimes, a speaker will even add a sound that doesn't belong in the word at all. "Permit" becomes "permint."

How can you improve your articulation? You can begin by listening to yourself and evaluating your own speech. Here are some other suggestions:

1. Work on unfamiliar words. Use a dictionary to help you with pronunciation. This is especially important the first time you use a new term. If you learn the pronunciation incorrectly, it will be difficult to change later on.
2. Listen to how other people use words, especially new terms.
3. Rehearse your speech aloud. As you rehearse, listen to yourself. You can hear when speed is causing a problem. Slow down and approach the words and phrases more carefully.
4. Don't let your posture get in your way. Looking at your audience will do more than improve eye contact; it will also improve your speech. You will be projecting your sound out toward the audience.
5. Keep your hands away from your face as you speak. If you cover your mouth, you will hurt articulation.

Vocal Delivery and Manuscript Format

When a speaker prepares a manuscript to read from or to memorize, the speaker can carefully plan variations in volume, rate, and pitch. As we have done in the previous examples, the manuscript can include markings to remind the speaker of when to pause, when to frame a word, when to increase volume, etc. Here is an example of how you could mark a manuscript so that it contains many of the vocal variations to develop the speech. This is a short portion of a speech given by Sue Suter, former president of the World Institute on Disabilities. Its title is "Disability Is No Big Deal." Her audience was

composed of representatives of industries who make products for the severely handicapped. As before, we'll note it is difficult to include markings for pitch. As you read, think about where pitch variation could develop the meaning of the speech.

Other business surveys also show a growing interest in hiring people with disabilities. A 1995 Mason-Dixon poll revealed that *87 percent* of businesses that reported hiring people with disabilities said that they would encourage *other* employers to do the same. And a Harris poll reports that *75 percent* of managers surveyed said they were *likely* to make *greater* efforts to hire qualified people with disabilities in the next three years.

Yet the key word here is //"*qualified.*" // If the people you serve are to take advantage of these opening doors, / we'll need to focus much greater effort on training. What are the benefits to those who are ready? The benefits go well beyond a good paycheck. A job gives a person with a disability the chance to make a difference in the world, ///"I matter."

Vocal Delivery and Extemporaneous Format

Extemporaneous format has the advantage of allowing the speaker to deliver a fluent speech without the problems which come from reading the speech or trying to memorize it. But how can a speaker develop variety in volume, rate, and pitch if the speech is given extemporaneously?

1. The fact that the speech is not read or memorized allows freshness and spontaneity to take over. The immediacy of the words can help the speaker develop the same variety in volume, rate, and pitch you will discover in normal conversation.
2. Rehearsal is important. As you rehearse aloud from your outline, listen to your vocal style as well as to your content. In fact, rehearse enough so that you have confidence in your ability to find the words and can spend rehearsal time on vocal delivery.
3. Get experience. The more experience you can have with speaking, the more comfortable—and the more expressive—you can become.
4. Record yourself. Some people reject listening to themselves because the voice on a tape doesn't sound right to them. That's because they are hearing their voice as other people hear it. Without a tape, you don't really know how you sound because you hear your voice "from the inside." A recording will help you extemporize better because it allows you to know what others hear.
5. Take advice. Before you give the speech, you can give it for someone as practice. Choose your practice audience well and listen to them. After the speech, listen to those who give you feedback on your vocal delivery.



Chapter 23
Summary

Variety in vocal expression appeals to audiences. Specifically, audiences usually respond positively to variations in volume, rate, and pitch—when the speaker uses variety to develop meaning. Along with volume, rate, and pitch, speakers should pay attention to articulation and solve common articulation problems. Vocal qualities vary with different delivery modes. A speaker can use a microphone to assist in developing an effective vocal delivery

Remembering

1. List and define the three basic variables in vocal delivery.
2. For each variable, write a sentence that exemplifies how changing the variable can change meaning and appeal of a sentence.
3. Identify four common articulation problems.
4. List five suggestions for using a microphone effectively.

Reflecting

1. What constitutes an appealing voice? In a small group, identify people who have appealing voices. Develop the reasons why people on your list have appealing voices.
2. Take the passage below (from "Disability Is No Big Deal") and copy it. Mark it to show where you would place pauses and increased or decreased volume.

   A few minutes ago, I mentioned an informal survey of agency executives I performed. One of the questions asked was what they dreamed the year 2000 would look like. Most of the dreams focused on this theme: That having a disability will be no big deal. Put another way, it means that everyone will feel they belong. Ladies and gentlemen, you are messengers for a society that is struggling to become more inclusive. More humane.

Reaching

1. Give a short speech on a topic chosen by you or your instructor. Record your speech on audio or video tape. Listen to yourself while you are accompanied by a classmate. Help each other develop an evaluation of your vocal delivery. Include the following in your evaluation:

   overall volume
   variety of volume (emphasis)
   overall rate
   variety of rate, including pauses
   variety of pitch (inflection)
   articulation
2. Some of the best (and worst) speaking is done on C-SPAN, the network that carries the proceedings of the United States Congress. Many of the speeches on C-SPAN are manuscript speeches. Record a speech—or a section of a long speech—that is delivered from manuscript. View the speech as a class. Assume you are advising the congressman or congresswoman who gave the speech. What advice would you give them on improving vocal delivery?

Real Life

1. Literature can provide you an opportunity to practice vocal variety. Select a poem, short anecdote, passage from a novel or other book to read aloud to the class. Copy the selection and mark it for appropriate variety in volume, rate, and pitch. Be sure to look up any unknown words for correct pronunciation. (For additional entertainment, select children's literature. Read the literature to children and videotape yourself for later analysis.)
2. Arrange to give a speech or read a piece of literature in your school auditorium using the microphone. Sit people in various parts of the auditorium. Practice the skills identified in this chapter for using a microphone. Experiment with getting closer to the microphone, creating feedback, etc.

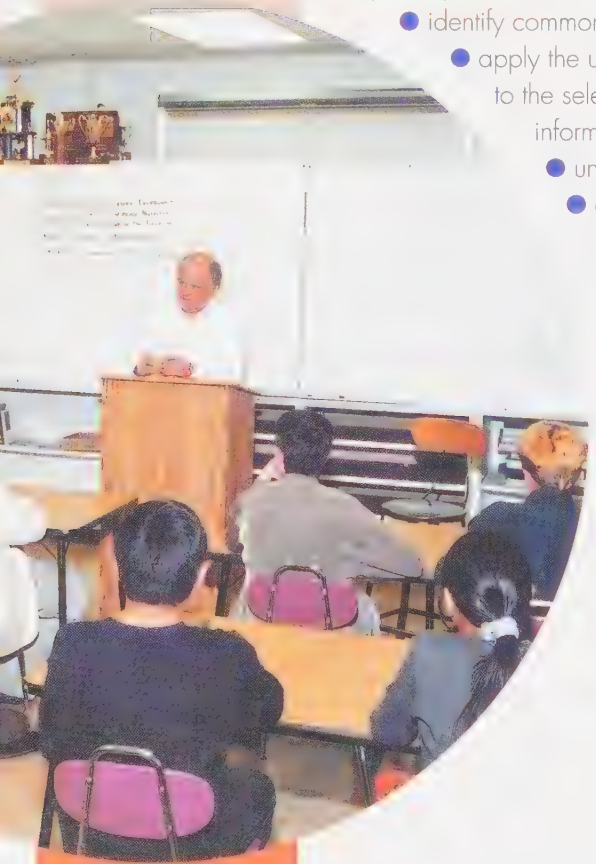
24 Chapter Twenty-Four Application.Informative Speaking

Key Concept

Speaking to inform is one of the most common kinds of public address. Preparing and delivering the speech to inform becomes easier when the speaker is aware of the typical methods employed by experienced speakers.

Chapter Objectives

- identify common types of informative speeches
- apply the understanding of situation, purpose, and audience to the selection of appropriate methods of presenting an informative speech
- understand how to give informative speeches purpose
- apply speech principles to developing and analyzing informative speeches
- identify bases for evaluating informative speeches



Key Terms

- demonstration speech
- historical process
- scientific process
- thought process

Scenario

Alicia has been asked to give a "status report" to the upper level management of her company. She has just seen James give his status report, and she is impressed with his speech. She's come to James to ask about his experiences.

Alicia: *Your speech was very good. I'm giving my status report next week. Tell me how you put yours together.*

James: *Thanks for the compliment. What would you like to know?*

Alicia: *Well, you only had ten minutes, and you've been working on your project for six months. How did you know what to share with them?*

James: *This is just like any other speech to inform. I put myself in the place of the managers and tried to determine exactly what they need to know. The update I gave to my own staff was about forty-five minutes of detail and very technical information. This speech was ten minutes of what is essential to know. The key is getting the information across in an interesting, brief way and in answering any questions that come up.*

Alicia: *I hope I can do it as well as you.*

James: *Come on. You've done this before.*

Alicia: *I have? You must be confusing me with someone else.*

James: *Remember the training you did for new employees? That was an informative speech, right? And the explanation you gave for all of us at Pilar's meeting? That was an informative speech. This speech is different because of the audience and situation, but the basics are the same. Think about your audience. Figure out what they need to know and how you can best tell them what they need to know. I'll be happy to help, if you want.*

Alicia: *That would help my confidence. Thanks for the offer, and the advice.*

Alicia is understandably nervous. She knows that she will give an important speech, but James is right: One informative speech is very much like another. The purpose of the speech is to educate or teach the audience. All informative speeches have certain things in common.

Types of Informative Speeches

The informative speech is a very important part of the business culture. While information can be covered in memos, e-mail, web pages, brochures, and so forth, personal presentations are far more common. We rely on personal communication because it is efficient and flexible. We want to hear about things directly from people who know. We can see the importance of informative speeches when we note some of the terms we've developed for specialized informative speeches.

announcement
committee report
informative
project review
review
status report
summary
synopsis
training session

Each of these terms designates either a different situation or a different set of information to be delivered. All, however, are types of informative speeches.

As with our previous information on topic selection, you must balance your need to express yourself with the needs of your audience and the situation. Choosing a topic for informative speaking will strike the same balance. You'll want to express yourself, your own message. But you must do so in a way that has meaning for your audience.

In short, why should you speak about a particular topic? Why should your audience listen? What in the situation makes a particular topic appropriate? When you can see the importance of a topic from both your perspective and your audience's, then you can feel secure in selecting that topic. The various categories of informative speeches can help you choose a topic.

Process informative speech. An informative speech can tell the audience how something works or how it is done. For example, if a group of employees would like to know how company policies are developed, a speaker could give

a speech outlining the process for developing and approving those policies. Such a speech is usually organized chronologically. The goal is typically to allow members of the audience to participate in the process themselves, to understand their role in the process, or to keep abreast of how a particular process is going.

Process informative covers three types of processes: historical, scientific, and thought processes. A historical process speech covers an incident in the past and how it developed. A scientific process describes a sequence of events that occurs according to natural laws or scientific principles. A thought process describes how to think about something in a productive manner. Here are three purpose statements from each of the three types to illustrate each.

Historical

The purpose of this speech is to inform the managers how the current policies on the dress code were developed so they can understand the background for the current discussions on accepting casual wear in office situations.

Scientific

The purpose of this speech is to inform employees about how the new security system works so they can feel safer while knowing enough to avoid setting off the system accidentally.

Thought

The purpose of this speech is to inform clerical staff how to think their way through a computer's error message so they can either solve the problem themselves or describe it accurately to the help desk.



A demonstration speech is one of the first types of informative speeches students are asked to give.

Communication Management—"So What"



One way of helping your informative stand out is to think about "so." If that sounds puzzling, think about this: Why should the audience be informed about this topic? What good will the information do them? When people hear an informative, they should never ask themselves, "so what?" The answer to "so what" usually starts with "so."

The purpose of this speech is to inform the senior class about registering to vote *so* they can participate in the democratic process by voting in the next election.

The purpose of this speech is to inform the people who interview employees how the process should work *so* they can avoid asking prohibited questions.

The purpose of this speech is to inform job applicants how the process works *so* they will not have to call the office as often to check on their application status.

The "so" in these purpose statements might never be delivered to the audience, but it certainly should be kept in mind by the speaker. If the speaker remembers that the information exists for a reason, the speaker can make good choices about what information is necessary. For example, assume the purpose of the speech is "to inform the people who interview employees how the process should work so they can avoid asking prohibited questions." What information should be included in the speech? Only the information that will help the interviewers avoid asking prohibited questions. All other information would only detract from the main purpose.

Members of an audience should understand why they are being informed. In most cases, they will understand, but frequently a speaker will need to make it clear to them. For example, if a speaker tells an audience how the new security system works without telling them that a better understanding will avoid false alarms, the audience won't know what to listen for. Worse, they'll likely not listen at all, since they are not motivated to do so.

Demonstration informative speech. The demonstration speech does more than tell someone how to do something. It actually shows someone how to do something. The purpose of a demonstration speech is usually to enable a person to accomplish a task alone. For example, assume you are in a training class. The speaker is giving a demonstration informative on how to book a flight on an airline. The ultimate goal is for you to be able to do that yourself. A demonstration speech is actually a type of process informative. It's arrangement is usually chronological, since most processes are dependent on following steps in a sequential order.

Object/place informative speech. Speeches can inform an audience about specific objects or places. For example, if you are in charge of moving a group of people from one office to another, you might begin be giving an informative talk on what the new office surroundings will look like, how they're arranged, and so forth.

Biographical informative speech. Strange as it might seem to you, biographical informative speeches are not that uncommon. Assume you are informing a group of a new employees who will be transferred into your work group. Naturally, you won't give a complete biography, but you might give a short speech on the person, their previous jobs, their outstanding qualities and skills, and so forth. You might give this speech so that other employees aren't anxious or so that they can prepare an appropriate welcome for the new person.

Event informative speech. Business and professional speakers often find this type of speech very useful. For example, if you have attended a convention or conference, you might give a summary of the activities at the event so that others can acquire the information or even decide if they'd like to attend some day.

Idea informative speech. All speeches are about ideas, but the idea informative is meant specifically to inform an audience about a concept. The challenge of this type of informative is to make an abstract idea understandable to others. For example, free trade is an idea, a concept. To make this concept understandable to others, a speaker must use plenty of examples and explanation. The idea is explained if the audience can then explain it accurately to others.

Oral reports. It is common practice in business to request an oral version of a written report. The oral version is supposed to be a shorter, more understandable version of the written report. It is often given at the release of the written version. The oral report is a summary of the wealth of ideas and facts contained in the written version.

Combined approaches. Not every informative fits comfortably in one category. For example, an oral report could require a speaker to summarize the development of a project (process), outline an upcoming event, and summarize ideas.

Putting It All Together

All the skills covered in this textbook can be used to develop and present a good informative speech. Of course, we can't cover everything from all other chapters all over again. But we can review some key principles with informative speaking in mind. To make our review more relevant, we'll go through the stages of developing a typical kind of business informative…a training speech.

The steps and stages will apply to all kinds of informative speeches, but the examples will center on one speech. At the end of the review, we'll have the speech that resulted from this process. The person making the decisions—you—are an employee in a personnel or human resources department.

Analysis. We need a basis for making decisions. That basis comes from our analysis of situation, purpose, and audience. You can review SPAM in earlier chapters, but here is an application to a real-world situation.

S Assume that this is the situation. Recently, a rival company has been tied up in a complicated and expensive case involving discrimination in hiring. You have been asked by your boss to "refresh" managers on how to avoid such problems. You have a regularly scheduled managers' meeting coming up. Your boss has given you the majority of the meeting time to give this presentation. Unlike your boss, you are aware that the managers will usually ask members of their work groups to participate in interviewing.

P Given your boss' direction, you want to be sure to inform the managers of the company's policies and the law, as you understand it. In this regard, your topic is chosen for you. You have developed a purpose statement with a "so."

Purpose Statement: The purpose of this speech is to review office managers on appropriate questioning for interviews so they can avoid making illegal and costly mistakes and train their employees to do the same.

A Your audience is composed of 15 managers. Each of the managers interviews applicants about 10-12 times during the year. Because your company is growing rapidly, some of the managers lack much managerial experience. They have all been given information on interviewing, but their day-to-day responsibilities, you feel, has kept them from paying close attention to company policy. Their time is valuable.

Based on this information, you will begin selecting your methods for meeting your purpose.

Research and Support. To gather the information on interviewing you'll want to look at three sources: yourself, immediate sources, outside sources. When you look at yourself, you check your experiences, knowledge and background. When you look at immediate sources, you check people around you, sources within your own work group, and anything you already have on file. When you check outside sources, you check books, periodicals, and the Internet for additional information. These questions can help you inventory all three to find the material you need.

- What is the subject?
- Why is it important to you?
- How is it defined? Do people agree on its definition? If no, where are the disagreements?
- Why is it important to your audience. (Or why should it be important to your audience?)
- What does the audience already know? Does the audience have misconceptions?
- What important terms are part of the subject? Does the audience need to know their meaning as part of gaining understanding?
- What are its parts, features, stages, or steps?
- Are any parts, features, stages or steps more important than the others? Why or why not?
- Is it like something else? In what ways? Are these similarities important? Why or why not?
- Is it unlike something else? In what ways? Are these dissimilarities important? Why or why not?
- Are there causes and effects related to the topic? Which are important for your purpose?
- Can the subject/topic be divided into parts and features? If so, does it help an audience gain a better understanding? Which of the parts or features are important? Why?
- What have others said about the subject or topic?
- Are there any statistics that will help the audience understand the subject or topic?

In the case of our example, the information may be gained from all three sources.

Support. The support materials for informative speeches are the same as those for any speeches.

Proof	Development
Facts Statistics Testimony	Examples and illustrations Incident Comparison/contrast Description Definition

Delivery. You choose the extemporaneous delivery style. It will allow you to prepare thoroughly, but maintain a spontaneous, interesting style.

Language. In this case, you will use formal, spoken language. Your language, while friendly and conversational in tone, will be precise to reflect the preciseness of the message you bring to the managers.

Organization. A suitable organization emerges as you analyze the situation and audience while researching the topic. Here's an outline of the speech:

Your Role in Interviewing: Obeying the Law

I. Introduction
   - A. Comparing traffic and other laws to interviewing laws
   - B. Thesis: Obeying the rules and laws will protect you and this company.

II. Review of current interviewing process
   - A. Candidates start at the personnel department
   - B. Candidates go to managers
   - C. Managers recommend hires to personnel department

III. The role of the manager is vital
   - A. Managers know the job's requirements
   - B. Managers work with the new employees day-to-day
   - C. Managers evaluate the new employees
   - D. Managers train the new employees
   - E. Managers must see that the interview process follows the correct process
     1. Process must be fair
     2. Process must be legal
     3. Manager is supported by the personnel department
     4. Manager and personnel department must be sure that your team is trained

IV. The legitimate bases for hiring
   - A. Education
   - B. Training
   - C. Work experience
   - D. Work habits
   - E. Ability to work well with others

V. All these can be determined with good questions
   - A. Good questions elicit the desired response
   - B. Good questions don't give away "the answer"
   - C. Good questions focus on knowledge, skills, and attitudes

D. Good questions DO NOT include requests for information that violate the law

VI. Certain subjects are off-limits for interviews
   A. Race
   B. Gender
   C. Marital or family status
   D. Religion
   E. National origin
   F. Physical or mental disability
   G. Age

VII. Why these topics are off-limits
   A. They get information not legal for hiring
   B. Identified by EEOC as off-limits
   C. Place company at risk of legal challenge
      1. financial impact
      2. public relations impact
   D. Repeat the off-limits topics

VIII. Examples
   A. "Do you have any children?"
   B. "Are you Islamic?"
   C. List of off-limit questions

IX. Contrasting unacceptable and acceptable questions
   A. Are you from this country?
   B. Do you have physical or mental disabilities?
   C. Do you have kids?
   D. Do you go to church?
   E. Does your husband mind?
   F. Are you divorced?

X. Review company policies
   A. Certain topics are prohibited
   B. Prepare relevant questions before the interview
   C. Ask the same questions of all applicants
   D. Seek help from the personnel department
   E. Train all employees who will be involved in interviewing

XI. Responding when the applicant brings up the subjects

XII. Conclusion—Managers have the key role
   A. Train your staff
   B. Obey the law
   C. Seek help from the personnel department

XIII. Questions

Visual aids. Because you want the managers to have something to bring home with them, you will prepare handouts of your presentation. Since the wording of questions is important, you have decided to use presentation software that will allow the managers to follow your presentation visually. The presentation software will also allow you to repeat some of your points so the managers can hear your message more than once.

There are many other decisions about methods to be made. Rather than review every one, here is the final speech.

Your Role in Interviewing: Obeying the Law



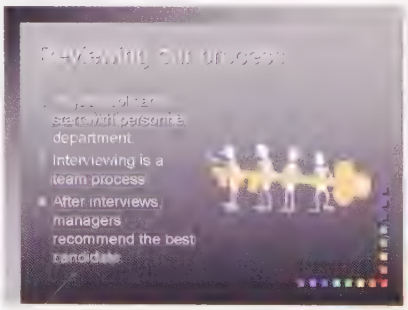
Thank you all for coming to this training session. I know several of you had to drive some distance to meet, and I'd like you all to think about how you got here:

- did you run any red lights?
- did you speed?
- did you break any federal laws? Any state laws?
- will what you did to get here place yourself in jeopardy?
- will your trip here potentially cost our company thousands of dollars?

I hope you all answered "no" to all these questions. There are rules and laws governing how you drive. You all know the rules and laws. You took a test on them to get your driver's license. You all know the penalties for running red lights and speeding. You might get a ticket, pay a fine, lose your license.

Our topic today—interviewing—has rules and laws as well. As managers, you are all involved in interviewing job applicants all the time. But none of us took a test on interviewing. And none of us has a "license" in interviewing.

Today, we are going to discuss your role in interviewing, with an emphasis on obeying the laws and rules governing interviewing. Obeying the rules and laws will protect you and this company.



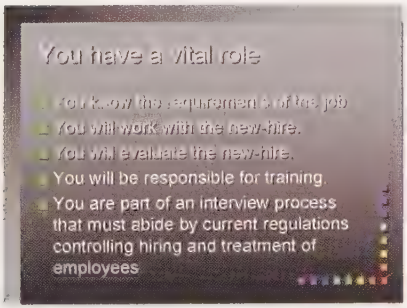
I know you all know our process, but let's quickly review the approach we have to hiring.

All applicants start with the personnel department. You've told

us your needs and provided a job description. We advertise the position and take applications. We screen the interviews for the qualities that you are looking for—the training, the experience—everything you've told us is important.

We send candidates to you. All of you involve several people in the interview process. That's great. It gets several people involved and helps us make the best decision.

When you've decided on the person you want, you managers make that recommendation to us in personnel. You leave it to us to make the job offer itself, but it has always been our company policy to entrust the final decision to the managers.



So as I've told many of you before, you managers have the vital role in interviewing and hiring. You are the front-line. You are important for a number of reasons:

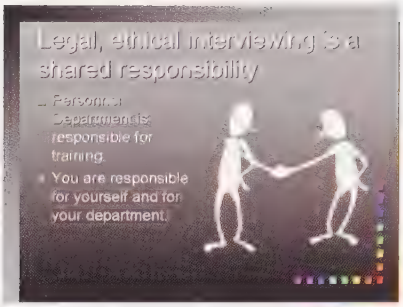
First, you know the requirements of the job. Therefore, you know the kind of person we should be hiring to fill the job.

Second, you are the people who will work day-to-day with the new-hire. It is only right that you have the final decision on the person who will be in your office every day for years to come.

Third, as managers you will evaluate the new hire. You will be responsible for determining if he or she is doing the job. If not, you will be the ones who will recommend that the person be transferred or terminated. It's not an easy job, but it's yours. And you should have the choice of the candidates for your open positions.

Fourth, you will be responsible for training. It only stands to reason that you hire the "raw material" that you will help become a valuable employee.

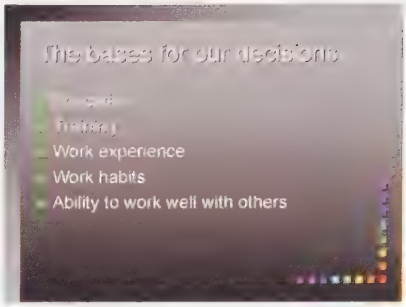
But with all these responsibilities comes one more: You are part of an interview process that must abide by current regulations controlling hiring and treatment of employees. How you can be fair and be legal are the two things we will spend time on today.



But you aren't all alone. Remember: Legal and ethical interviewing is a shared responsibility.

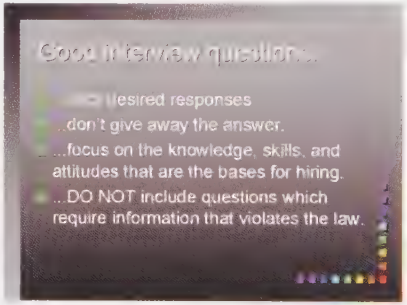
Our responsibility is to train you and your interview team. We are very committed to upholding this responsibility, and I want you all to know that we will come to your site and train anyone who will have a role in interviewing. Today's training is part of our responsibility.

Your responsibility is to be sure that you and your department comply with the rules and guidelines. While this sounds simple, I know that it can be a difficult job. Not everyone understands the rules of interviewing. Sometimes—without thinking—people make mistakes. Between us, we can be sure that the mistakes are few and the hiring decisions are the best we can make.



How do we make effective decisions? These are the factors we use. These are the factors you've told us are the key ones in making your decisions.

- Education
- Training
- Work experience
- Work habits
- Ability to work with others



To get at these qualities, we have helped you develop good interview questions. Good questions will do these things:

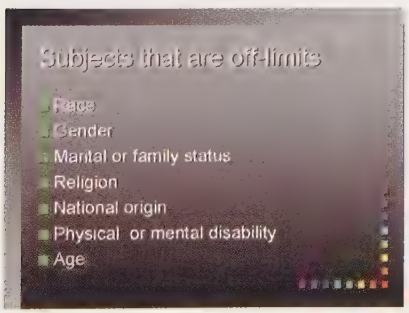
Good questions elicit desired responses. They will get for you the data you need to make a good hiring choice. You each have a management notebook containing suggested questions. As always, the personnel department will help you develop

new questions as new job skills are required.

Good questions don't give away the answer. In other words, if you ask "Do you work well with others," the answer that you'll get from 9 out of 10 applicants is "Yes, of course I do." But we both know that far fewer than 90% of our applicants are team players. This question gives the applicant the answer. Instead, ask "Tell me about the relationships you had with other employees at your last job." That gives the applicant a chance to talk...and it gives you a chance to gather authentic information.

Good questions focus on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are the bases for hiring. Your time is far too valuable to ask questions idly. Every one of your questions should be focused on getting an answer that you can use in making the hiring decision.

Good questions DO NOT include questions that require information that violates the law.



Now, I know that none of you would consciously ask illegal or unethical questions, but you should all know questions that are definitely not to be part of the interview. Now remember: The job applicant can—and will—talk about all these topics, but these subjects are off-limits to us in job interviews.

Any questions about race are off-limits. For example, you may not ask a candidate if she is African-American or American Indian.

Any question about gender is off-limits. Don't ask about the candidate's views on women's rights, for example.

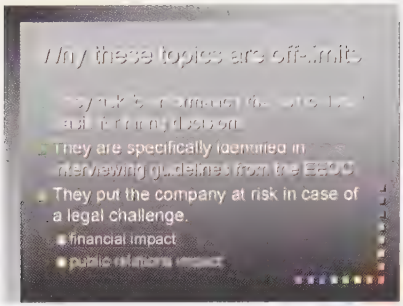
Any question about marital or family status is off-limits. Don't ask if the candidate plans to start a family soon. Don't ask if he is married.

Any question about religion is off-limits. Don't ask if the candidate is a Christian...or a Jew...or anything else.

Any question about national origin is off limits. Don't ask, "Are you from Mexico originally?" Don't ask if the candidate's name is Chinese.

Any question about disabilities is off limits. You have job descriptions for each of your positions. There are questions on those descriptions to help you ask if the candidate can meet the essential functions of the job.

Any question about age is off limits. Don't ask when the candidate was born; don't ask how old he is.

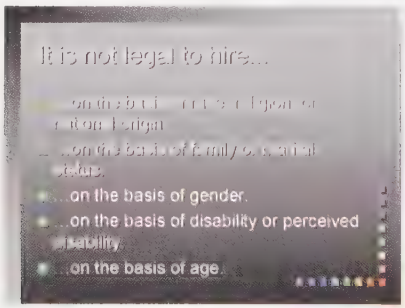


There are reasons why these questions are off limits.

First, they ask for information that cannot—and should not—be used in hiring decisions. It would be illegal to do so.

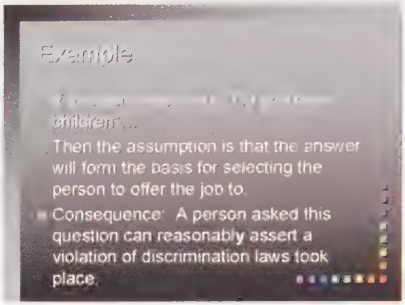
Second, these questions are specifically contained in material from the EEOC, the equal employment opportunity commission, as prohibited questions.

Third, these questions will place the company at risk for legal challenge. Simply put, we can be sued. I don't have to remind you that there is a financial impact as well as a public relations impact.



I'd like to make sure you all can advise your employees on the company's position. We will not be hiring on any inappropriate basis.

...race, religion, national origin
...family or marital status
...gender
...disability or perceived disability
...age

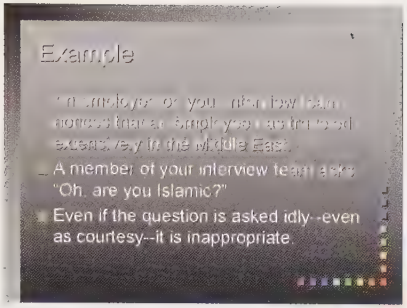


Why are the questions off limits? Think of the implications. One of your employees notices a pacifier in the purse of an applicant. Out of idle curiosity, the employee asks, "Oh, do you have small children?" Now that seems pretty harmless, doesn't it? What could possibly be wrong with that?

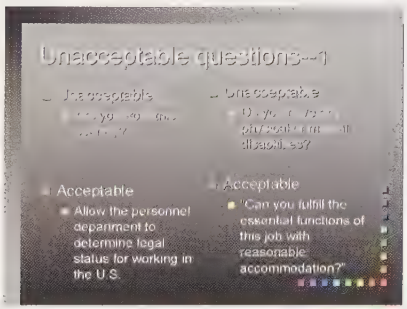
The problem is that the question asks for information that is off limits. The assumption is that the answer to the question will form the basis for selecting a person for the job.

The consequence is this: That person does not get the job and can reasonably assert that family status was part of the interview and part of the basis for her not receiving a job offer.

Result? We are placed at-risk.



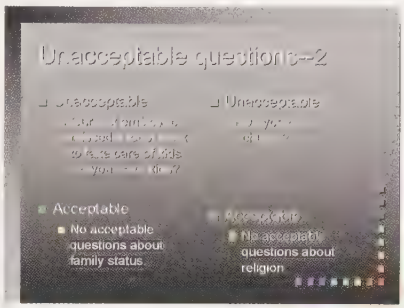
The same thought process applies to this example. Someone on your interview team notices that an applicant has traveled extensively in the Middle East. She asks, "Are you Islamic?" Now this person is probably not biased. Perhaps she is Islamic herself. However, asking the question, even idly, is inappropriate. It is not a proper subject for a job interview.



Let me share with you examples of unacceptable and acceptable questions. I hope these examples will help you inform your employees about their responsibilities in interviewing. All of these examples are available in printed form for you to take back to your office.

Note the example on the left. Rather than ask "are you from this country?" allow the personnel department to use its staff to be sure that the applicant can legally work in this country.

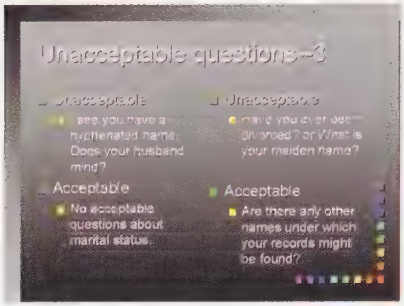
On the right, the unacceptable question asks for any physical or mental disabilities, not the ones that are related to the job. Simply give the candidate the list of essential job functions. Ask only if they can perform the job's essential functions.



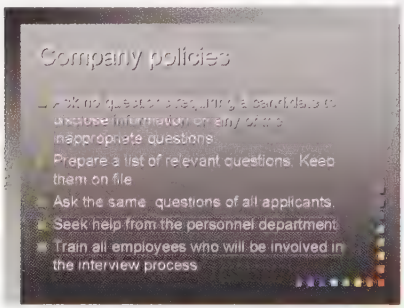
These examples cover family status and religion.

On the left, the question asks "Do you have kids?" Now, we all know that everyone at work talks about their children all the time. But not in a job interview. There aren't any acceptable questions about family status.

On the right, the candidate is asked "Do you go to church?" Why? Maybe the interviewer wants to know if the candidate can work on Sunday. If that is the issue, ask that question: "Can you work on Sunday?" There are no acceptable questions about religion.

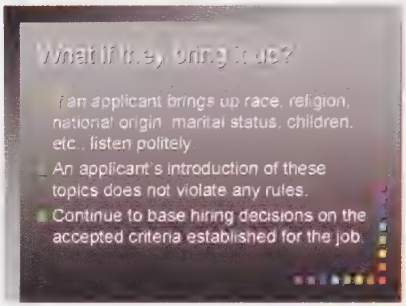


The unacceptable question on the left asks "Does your husband mind?" To answer that question, the candidate must provide insight into marital status. What is the alternative? Merely ask the candidate what we really need to know: What name should we do reference checks under? Don't ask if he or she has been divorced, for example. Ask if there are any other names we should know about.



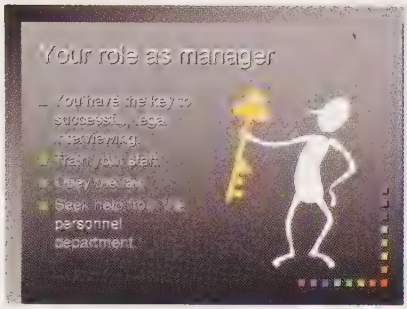
These are the company policies. They are simple, clear, and easy to comply with.

- Ask no questions requiring a candidate to disclose information on any of the inappropriate questions.
- Prepare a list of relevant questions. Keep them on file.
- Ask the same questions of all applicants.
- Seek help from the personnel department.
- Train all employees who will be involved in the interview process. We are all bound by these policies.



I'm frequently asked, "What if the candidate brings up one of the subjects that are off-limits?"

That situation arises all the time. Note that the rules cover us as interviewers, not the person we're interviewing. They can—and very frequently will—refer to husbands, wives, children, religion, national origin, and every other topic you can imagine. If they do, your response is simple. Listen politely…relax, you haven't violated any rules…and base your hiring decisions on established criteria for the job.





In conclusion, you as managers are on the front line. You are making the contacts that will produce good employees. You have the power and the responsibility. To be sure that we are doing the right thing, remember:

- You have the key to successful interviewing.
- You have the staff, and they need to be trained.
- You know the law and the importance of obeying it.
- You know the phone number of the personnel department. We will help you whenever you want.

I have worked with some of you for quite a while. I know you are some of the best managers anywhere. If anyone can do the job, you can. I know some of you have questions, so let's get to them. What questions can I answer for you?

Communication Management—Recognizing Excellence in Informative Speeches



Here is one evaluation form that can help you think of how to achieve or measure excellence in informative speaking.

	Needs improvement	Satisfactory	Excellent
Audience analysis	• speech leaves many audience questions unanswered	• speech responds to audience's needs • speech is appropriate to audience's level of understanding	• speech anticipates needs of the audience, needs they might not even be aware of
Understanding of situation	• speech doesn't acknowledge the needs of the situation • speech is not appropriate for the situation	• speech responds adequately to the situation • speech is appropriate for the situation	• speech helps the audience understand the situation better
Purpose	• audience largely unaware of the importance of the topic	• audience understands the importance of the topic	• audience develops appreciation for the speech topic
Substance/content	• audience confused about the information • audience receives no new information relevant to topic	• audience receives new information appropriate to topic • audience understands information clearly	• audience receives new information that it highly values • audience understands the information well enough to pass it on to others
Introduction	• the introduction confuses the audience • the introduction fails to gain the audience's attention	• the introduction gains audience attention and focuses it on the topic	• the introduction creates enthusiasm in the topic
Body	• the body of the speech is disjointed	• the body of the speech is organized for clarity	• the body of the speech is organized for clarity and facilitates understanding and memory

	Needs improvement	Satisfactory	Excellent
Conclusion	• the conclusion of the speech leaves the audience uncertain	• the conclusion effectively wraps up the speech	• the conclusion effectively wraps up the speech and sustains audience interest and enthusiasm for topic
Language	• the language is inappropriate for the situation • the language is unclear • the language is unnecessarily wordy	• the language is clear and economical	• the language is clear and economical • the language is graceful
Verbal delivery	• delivery does not flow smoothly	• delivery is fluent and easy to listen to	• delivery is fluent and easy to listen to • audience enjoys the delivery
Nonverbal delivery	• few meaningful gestures • poor posture • poor eye contact • little or no movement	• gestures, posture, eye contact and movement are appropriate for situation	• in addition to being appropriate, gestures, posture, eye contact, and movement significantly contribute to speech's effect
Visual aids	• visual aids ineffective • visual aids inappropriate	• visual aids help audience understand the speech content	• visual aids significantly contribute to audience's understanding of the speech
Question and answer	• questions unanswered	• questions answered to audience satisfaction	• answers actually reinforce and extend the message



Chapter 24
Summary

Informative speeches are very common in business situations. The principles for developing messages apply to informative speeches as well. Good information speeches answer the question "so what?" by showing an audience the relevance of the topic. There are several kinds of information speeches—many of which are commonly used in the business world.

Remembering

1. List five synonyms commonly used in the business world for informative speeches.
2. Explain how analyzing situation, purpose, and audience help to select appropriate methods for developing and presenting an informative speech.
3. Explain how to use "so what?" as a means of sharpening the purpose for informative speeches.

Reflecting

1. As a student, you are frequently the audience for informative speeches from your teachers. List the speeches (or lectures) you've heard in the past two weeks. Use the list of types of informative to classify them.
2. From your list, select the three best lectures you heard. What made them good lectures? Use the criteria listed in this chapter to aid your evaluation.
3. In small groups, discuss topics that you believe people need to hear information about. Agree on four topics and explain your choice. Explain by identifying an audience that would benefit from the information and a "so that" statement.

Reaching

1. Teachers frequently attend training sessions, many of which are composed of informative speeches. Get permission from your teacher to attend a portion of the training. Take notes and evaluate the presentation.
2. Watch a television program designed to inform the audience. Examples include shows about cooking, crafts, sewing, home design, gardening, and so forth. What do the hosts of the shows do to increase the effectiveness of their informative presentations? What can you as a speaker learn from them? Discuss your findings in small groups.

Real Life

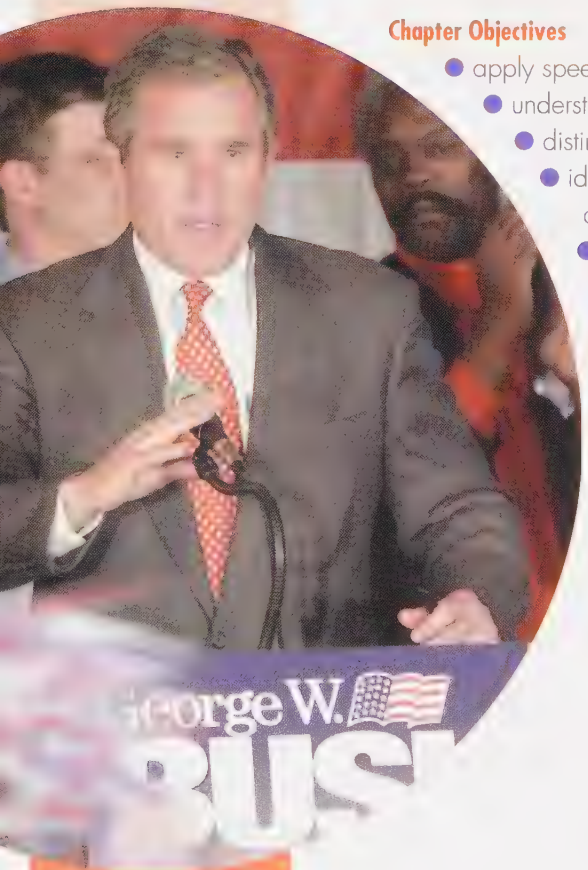
1. Use this chapter to prepare a checklist to help you develop an effective informative.
2. Use your checklist to help you prepare and deliver an informative speech. Be sure your topic meets the needs of the audience you have in mind. Your classmates can play the role of your ideal audience. The speech should be 5-7 minutes long.

25

Chapter Twenty-Five
Application.Persuasive Speaking

Key Concept

The most challenging type of speech is the speech to persuade. Effective speakers meet the challenge by understanding situation, purpose and audience. They adapt many tools of organization and development to try to change the attitudes or behaviors of their audience members.



Chapter Objectives

- apply speech principles to persuasive speeches
- understand motivation as component of persuasion
- distinguish among categories of persuasive appeals
- identify key questions to help generate ethical persuasive appeals
- identify steps of the motivated sequence

Key Terms

- demagogue
- ethics
- motivation
- motivated sequence
- persuasion

Scenario

JaRon has set a job target to promote school-business partnerships. He oversees his company's partnership with a local high school, and he has been very successful. Because of his partnership's success, he has been selected to give a speech to the Chamber of Commerce. Members of the Chamber are usually business people who promote the community's business and real estate interests. JaRon has written this e-mail to the chair of the Chamber's Program Committee to gather information. From his notes, can you tell what kind of speech he is planning?

TO: Rene Haines
RE: May program

Dear Rene,

I'm really looking forward to speaking to the Chamber of Commerce. I have been truly excited about our school-business partnership with Southwest High School, and I would like to spread the good news. You could be of great help to me. I know a great deal of information about partnerships, but I'd like a little information about the business people in your group:

- How long have most of your members been with the Chamber?
- Could I have a list of the businesses represented?
- What are the current needs that your members have? Do any relate specifically to education?
- Do you have a community-wide economic report I could read?
- Have your members been approached by other programs such as this one? If so, what has been the reaction of your members?
- If I plan a ten-minute speech, will I have time to answer questions?
- Are your members generally interested in education topics?
- Are your members generally interested in community support programs?
- Will group members prefer a more emotional, motivational speech or a more logical, business oriented one?

If you could respond with an answer to a few of these questions, I think I can prepare a speech to meet your audience's needs. As you know, I want to increase the business community's participation in our program. This information will be of great help.

Thanks very much.

JaRon

JaRon is doing his pre-speech homework. He is trying to analyze his audience. He knows that audience analysis is very important if he has any chance at all of changing people's minds. Why do you think he asked the questions he did? What would he do if his contact person said that the audience wasn't usually interested in educational topics? How would he develop his speech if the audience was intensely interested in education? What if they had already heard presentations such as his?

Persuasion

JaRon is going to try to persuade his audience. Persuasion is communication intended to change attitudes or behaviors. It is a challenging task for communicators. Think of what a public speaker must do to persuade an audience. First, a speaker must interest an audience. Promoting interest or entertaining an audience is a purpose all by itself for some speeches. Creating interest in an audience can be an especially demanding task if the audience is opposed to the speaker's message. Next, a speaker must inform the audience. Changing someone's attitudes or behaviors usually requires educating an audience. Again, educating an audience is a purpose all by itself for an informative speech. When a speaker's purpose is to persuade, the speaker might have to interest and educate before even thinking about persuading.

Sometimes, we don't think very much about the persuasive dimension of communication. In a way, we can think of all communication as persuasive. For example, if you ask a simple question (say, "Did you read the sports page today?") you might not be thinking about that questions as an instance of persuasion. However, you can ask that question in a way that really invites an answer or in a way that almost dares the other person to answer. If you say sarcastically, "Did you read the sports page today?" you might change a person's attitude toward you and the topic you are trying to bring up.

S: Situation and Persuasion

As with all communication, understanding the situation is critical to preparing a good persuasive speech. It might even be more important for persuasive communication than any other. If you are going to speak with people about changing, you don't want to appear ill-informed. You must understand the situation they face…and you must understand it from their point of view. Think of it this way: How persuasive can you possibly be if your audience doesn't believe you have a feeling for their situation? If they think you lack empathy or understanding, you can never get them to change their minds or their actions.

P: Purpose and Persuasion

You can quickly determine how important persuasion is by thinking of the words we use when expressing our persuasive purpose:

advocate
convince
defend
dissent
encourage
motivate
discourage
support

Note that all these words—and many more—show an intent to change the attitudes and behaviors of others. If you are going to encourage, you want people to feel positive and to act on that feeling. If you are going to discourage someone, you want them to refrain from a certain attitude or behavior. Even if we don't say the word "persuade," we are all involved in persuasion every day. When you develop a purpose statement, you can use any of the listed words and several more. Here are examples of purpose statements using three of the words listed.

- The purpose of this speech is to support the new proposal before the managers to shift advertising efforts from newspaper ads to Internet postings.
- The purpose of this speech is to convince the student drivers to use seat belts whenever they drive or ride.
- The purpose of this speech is to discourage our project managers from using overtime instead of hiring temporary help during the busy season.

A: Audience Motivation and Persuasion

There are many ways of viewing persuasion, but almost all deal in some way with motivation. If you want to persuade someone, you must understand what motivates them. A motive is a reason for doing something. Think as an advertiser might think. Advertisers are always concerned with persuasion. If you are developing an advertisement for an automobile, you can try to use those things which motivate people. What kinds of ads do you see?

- An ad about fuel economy shows how to save money. The advertiser expects the audience to be motivated by economics.
- An ad about luxury stresses the comfort of the car. The advertiser expects the audience to be motivated by a desire for comfort.

- An ad showing the car on a race track displays the car's speed and sportiness. The advertiser expects the audience to be motivated by a need for excitement.
- An ad showing a group of people camping and having fun with a van promises togetherness. The advertiser expects that audience to be motivated by a need for belonging.

Here's one application of motivation to persuasion. We've reviewed one of the models already: Maslow's hierarchy of human needs.



The hierarchy shows that there are basic needs (physiological and safety) and that there are higher order needs. People must have basic needs met before they can respond to higher order needs.

How can a speaker make use of these ideas in planning communication? Assume you are giving a speech favoring the expenditure of $125,000 to update computers in your school. On the surface, you probably don't think of computers as meeting physiological needs. But if you can show that updating the computers will cause graduates to be more employable, you can appeal to pretty basic needs—money can mean meeting needs like food and shelter. You can also appeal to higher order needs. For example, if your school's graduates are already getting good jobs, better computers can lead to better training, which can lead to even better jobs. In this case, you might explain those better jobs into higher order needs, such as self-esteem (you will have a high status job) or self-actualization (you will have a job that will make you happier). In both cases, you are trying to develop a motive for members of your audience to change their minds or behavior.

Remember: To apply motivation to attempt to change someone's mind or behavior you must understand motivation from the person's point of view. Not everyone sees the world as you do. As you read your audience, you must think about what motivates them, not yourself. Think about giving a speech on auto

seat belt safety. If your goal is to persuade others to use seat belts whenever they are in the car, you will have to understand the issue from their perspective. Your research might indicate that a person with a seat belt who is injured in an auto accident will spend $2000 less in recovery than a person without a seat belt. You might feel that multiplying that amount by the number of accidents per year is a huge amount of money that the health insurance industry must support. You might see this as a very good reason (motive) for changing behavior. But the speech isn't about you. You've already made up your mind that wearing a seat belt is a good idea. The speech is about your audience. Will this be a sufficient motive for them? They might respond to a different kind of approach. Perhaps an emotional description of a family's loss will mean more to them than the economics of the situation.



Coaches give motivational speeches as well as instruction.

Communication Management—Persuasion and Ethics



Ethics is the understanding of right and wrong, good and bad. When a speaker consciously attempts to persuade an audience, there is always an ethical dimension to the speaker's decisions. After all, it is possible to convince people to do things that are not right. History is full of leaders who used their speaking skills to deceive others. They might have persuaded others to do things that the leader knew was wrong. Sometimes, speakers believed that the end justified the means; that is, they believed that what they wanted to happen was good and so any persuasive means were acceptable, even if they were deceitful and manipulative.

As a speaker attempts to change attitudes and behaviors, the speaker must constantly check his or her own motives. Will this change in attitudes or behavior be good for the audience? Be good for society? Is it a change that the speaker feels is right? And what about the persuasive techniques? Is it right to appeal to a fear that you know is unfounded? Remember that a speaker will often want to pursue what's best for him or her, but they should also think about what is best for an audience.

On a grand scale, these ethical questions can mean the difference in producing a good society or a bad one. Adolph Hitler is the twentieth century's best example of a very powerful speaker who persuaded others to do very unethical things. The word "demagogue" describes a person who obtains or maintains power by passionate appeals to the emotions and prejudices of a group of people.

On a smaller scale, a speaker's ethical stance can deal with the day-to-day right and wrong of buying and selling or self-promotion. For example, if a speaker could use his or her persuasive abilities to convince someone to do something illegal or harmful, that would be unethical.

How can a speaker check his or her own ethics? A textbook can't hope to replace life experience in ethical decision making, but these are the kinds of questions an ethical speaker will ask.

- What are my motives? Why am I trying to persuade the audience? Am I comfortable with my own motivation? Does my audience understand my motives? If they knew my motives, would that help or hurt my persuasive efforts?
- Am I telling the truth?
- If I were a member of this audience, would I find my persuasion ethical?
- Am I proud of what I am saying?
- Am I omitting important information that the audience needs to know to make a good choice? Do I have an obligation to represent the "other side" of the argument? Can I represent that other side accurately?
- Do I have my audience's best interest at heart?
- Am I exploiting prejudice to accomplish my goal?
- Would I approve of someone with an opposite point of view using the persuasive strategies I plan to use?
- Am I willing to accept the consequences of everything I am saying?
- Is there a way to persuade that I feel more comfortable with or more proud of?

Persuasive Appeals Based on Rationality

A rational appeal is a speaker's attempt to change attitudes and behaviors by using clear and logical thinking. A speaker using rational appeals has judged that the audience's motives can be developed or altered by appealing to how the audience members think. If the speaker can change their thinking, they can change their minds. How can you change the way someone thinks? Here are some approaches:

New Information. If your analysis of situation and audience reveals that the audience lacks information, you might choose to provide the new information and explain it in a way that gets the audience to think about the topic differently. For example, let's assume you are trying to convince your audience (managers in a small company) to spend less money advertising their open jobs in the newspaper and more money on Internet advertising. If the managers are distrustful of the Internet's effectiveness because they don't use it much themselves, you might gather new information—new to them—that will show the Internet's effectiveness. For example, if you can show a reliable statistic that says the Internet is the number one source for job-seekers with a college degree, that might change their minds. Better yet, if you can show that the responses to the last job opening were 60% from the Internet posting versus 40% from the newspaper ad, you could do even better. The new information appeals to the way the managers think about the Internet. They have a motive: to fill positions with good people so they can run their departments smoothly and make a better profit.

New Context for Old Information. Perhaps your managers already have this information. How can you get them to think differently? If they already know that the Internet is the number one source for college-educated job seekers, they might not understand the importance of that fact. To persuade them, ask them to view the information in a new context. For example, they might not realize that the people who look for jobs on the Internet can do so conveniently. Seeking out ads in the newspaper is effort. When someone sees a job posted in print, he or she still doesn't know anything about the company. So the job-seeker must research somewhere to get information on the company. However, when a job seeker sees an Internet posting, he or she can simply click on the company's website and immediately access information about the company. And rather than make the effort of a call or letter, filling out a paper application, using the mail, and delaying the process, the Internet job-seeker can get an application on line, fill it out on the computer, and e-mail it back in far less time. Now the managers probably knew all this, but if you place all this convenience in one presentation, you can place the information in a new context. By explaining it differently, you can help them change their minds.

Logic. Logic is the structure of reasoning. Sometimes, you can structure the reasoning of your audience in such a way that they understand or trust new conclusions. This can involve both introducing new information and placing old information in a new context. Think about this rational appeal:

- Job seekers who are already technically trained will save the company time and money.
- Internet job seekers are typically more technically trained and sophisticated than other job seekers.
- Therefore, Internet job seekers will be likely to save the company time and money.

The logic of these three statements is compelling. That is, if you can convince the managers that the first statement is true (and it is almost inarguable), and if you can convince them that the second statement is true (and you can show that from studies or surveys), then the third statement is also true: Internet job seekers will probably save the company time and money. From that belief, it's a short jump to "We should use the Internet more to recruit job applicants, because those applicants will save us time and money."

Persuasive Appeals Based on Credibility

In previous chapters, we've discussed the concept of credibility. A credible speaker is one whom the audience will likely trust and believe. A credible source is someone quoted by the speaker whom the audience will likely trust and believe. Speakers can use their credibility to motivate audience members to change attitudes and behaviors. Continuing with our example of Internet advertising for job applicants, these characteristics of a speaker and the sources he or she uses can be factors in persuading the audience.

- In the past, the speaker/source has been right about similar issues.
- In the past, the speaker/source has provided reliable information.
- The speaker/source has the audience's best interest in mind.
- The speaker/source has the type of information that are the bases for a good decision.

Speaker credibility is very important. Think of the logical argument in the previous section. The conclusions seem inescapable, don't they? But would they be so inevitable if you didn't trust the person providing the information or the explanation? If that person had been wrong before, would you not suspect the logic?

Persuasion based on credibility still returns to motive. Even if the speaker is believable, the speaker will still need to provide some motive for people to change their minds. It is a very rare speaker who can persuade people merely on his or her credibility only.

In our study of research, we have noted that speakers can "borrow" credibility by quoting others. For example, you might not be an authority on the Internet, but you can quote others who are. If you can quote someone from a

successful organization or a person known for expertise on the topic, you can use their credibility to help persuade your audience.

Persuasive Appeals Based on Emotion

As we all know, people make decisions from the heart as well as from the head. Emotion plays an important role in attitudes and behavior. If you are going to change someone's mind on an issue, you might find that logic or credibility doesn't get at some of the emotion that your audience has. Sometimes, for example, logic doesn't overcome fear. People who are frightened to fly can hear all the statistics on air travel and still be too frightened to fly. A good persuasive speaker knows that emotions are part of decision making. Here are three common emotional appeals.

Appeal to Pride. Pride is a feeling. Sometimes, a speaker can use the audience's sense of pride to help change their minds and behaviors. For example, if managers are reluctant to use the Internet, perhaps you could appeal to their pride. By showing that other top-of-the-line companies use the Internet, you can show that Internet advertising will make them "top-of-the-line." They will be part of an organization they an be proud of. They can be proud of their own decision making.

Appeal to Fear. Fear is a powerful emotion. Think about fear in terms of Maslow's hierarchy. If an audience believes that they could lose something—self-esteem, safety, social standing—that fear becomes a powerful motive. Perhaps your understanding of the manager's emotions led you to conclude that they fear the use of the Internet. They believe that if the Internet becomes more prominent in job posting, they will lose power because they won't physically control the postings. With that understanding, you can reduce their fear by showing how much easier the Internet will be for them to use. By alleviating the fear, you can help them decide to adopt your idea. On the other hand, if the job situation is critical, you might even show them how threatening it is for them not to use the Internet. If other companies are getting the better candidates, then perhaps they should fear for the future of their company and of their own jobs and salaries.

Can you see how risky this is? Even if you get them to respond from emotion, you still must be sure they respond in the best way. Sometimes fear will cause people to do irrational things. Using fear as a persuasive device can lead to an audience response that you don't expect.



Appeals based on feelings of patriotism are a type of emotional appeal.

Appeal to Compassion. Of course there is a logical justification for kindness, but there is also an emotional one. Compassion—feelings for the conditions of others—can motivate people. Many charities appeal to compassion. Often, a speaker can build compassion with specific stories or descriptions of problems of other people. The managers in our hypothetical example could act out of compassion if you made a case such as this: "Currently, your secretaries have more than enough to do. When they place ads in the newspapers, they must get the ad composed, call the newspaper, decide what section of the paper to place the ad in, place the ad, check it for accuracy, get a bill, pay the bill, and start the process all over again. If the ad has to be changed, the process gets even more complex. Imagine the simplicity of composing the ad and posting it with a simple e-mail to our web site. You know that they can all use a little more simplicity in the office. They'll get a well deserved breather."

Organizing the Persuasive Speech

There are some reliable organizational patterns for persuading an audience. The most logical organizational pattern is the problem-solution. It enables you as a speaker to do two things. First, your presentation of a problem gets the audience to sense the need for a change. Second, your suggestion of a solution focuses that need for a change on the new attitude or behavior that you think is best. In terms of motivation, the presentation of the problem gives your audience a motive to change attitudes and behavior. The presentation of solutions gives them motive to accept your idea of what new attitude or behavior will eliminate the problem.

Communication Management—The Motivated Sequence



The motivated sequence is a specific description of how a problem-solution organization can help you organize a speech for effective persuasion. It was developed by two college speech professors, Alan Monroe and Douglas Ehninger. Compare the logical sequence with the components of Dewey's problem-solving sequence.

Attention Step	This step recognizes that a speaker must first gain the attention of the audience and focus it on the problem or issue addressed in the speech. This step relies on the skills any speaker uses in creating an effective introduction. Those skills are developed in Chapter 21.
Need Step	Once the speaker has the attention of the audience, he or she begins to develop a need for a change. The goal of the need step is to give audience members a good reason to consider adopting new attitudes and behaviors. The development of this section will depend on logical appeals, credibility-based appeals, and emotional appeals. The means of developing the substance of the need step is covered in Chapter 18.
Satisfaction Step	To use an analogy, the need step is like pushing a wagon. Once you get it rolling, you have to steer it in the best direction. The satisfaction step steers the audience in the direction of the attitude or behavior you are supporting. It's called the "satisfaction" step because is must satisfy the need created in step two.
Visualization Step	What will happen when the audience accepts the course of action you presented in the satisfaction step? Will a new attitude change things for the better? Will a new behavior make an important difference? Will a new course of action eliminate the need? This step of the sequence allows the speaker to "paint a picture" of how the satisfaction step will change things. The audience is invited to visualize the results of the change.
Action Step	What's the next step? What should the audience do if they are convinced by the need step, satisfaction step, and visualization step? This step personalizes the sequence. If you are asking the audience members to vote a certain way, the action step is where that personal action becomes clear. If you are asking them to attend a meeting, the action step is where you locate your request. The action step shows the audience how to follow through with the course of action proposed in the satisfaction step.

This speech organizes persuasive efforts using the motivated sequence.

Your Role in Business Partnerships

by JaRon Frost
Speech before the Chamber of Commerce

Thank you, Rene, for your very kind introduction. I really appreciate your invitation to speak to the Chamber and your help in making this morning possible. As a member of this organization, I know the importance of the work you do. I know that our community is a better place for the decisions you've made. Because I know what you all stand for—community, commerce, and caring—I want to speak with you briefly about school-business partnerships.

Attention Step

To begin, I'd like to tell you about Cassie Witherspoon. I first met Cassie two years ago. She and her business teacher, Mrs. Jane Sak, came to my office to talk about a job shadowing program. We had just started our business partnership with Southwest High School. I really didn't know what a business partnership was…but I was about to find out.

Mrs. Sak talked with me about Cassie's studies. She had taken a series of business courses, and she was ready to start some on-the-job training. However, Cassie—like many high school juniors—hadn't really held down a job in a business office. She had worked since she was fifteen, but she hadn't worked in the kind of job she was training for. Cassie was a delightful girl. Quiet, with inquisitive eyes that told me she noticed everything. She took notes throughout our conversation. When Mrs. Sak had finished, she asked Cassie to tell me why she would like to do a job shadowing project in our office. What Cassie said stays with me to this day.

She said, "Mr. Frost, I really want to understand more about business. I really like everything we've been doing in class, but it's all a little artificial, you know? If I am going to learn about business, I need to know what real people really do. I'd like to see the things we are studying are really used. I just want to see what's really going on."

Wow! Immediately, I could hear in Cassie's voice some of the things I had felt when I was in high school. Did you ever wonder if what you were learning in high school had anything to do with the "real world"? Did you doubt that algebra was used outside the math classroom? Did you wonder if folding a letter really made a difference? In a few short sentences, Cassie brought me back to my own high school experience. I knew then and there I wanted to help.

I have since discovered that we as business people can help Cassie and hundreds of teenagers like her in many ways. I have also learned that school-business partnerships can help businesses in many ways. That's why I've come before you to encourage you to establish a partnership with a school in your area.

Need Step

Why should you want to participate in school-business partnerships? Return to the mission of the Chamber—community, commerce, and caring.

There is a great need for these kinds of relationships throughout our community. Mrs. Sak tells me that there are 100 students like Cassie, students who want to know about the real world and who are enrolled in job shadowing classes. But think more broadly. How many junior high school students are out there in our community who would benefit from some of our people—engineers, doctors, pharmacists—judging their science fairs? How many elementary students would light up if they had someone from McDonald's or the bowling alley or the bottling company reading books to them?

The need is out there. Cassie put it correctly when she talked about the real world. Maybe your business doesn't thrive on science fairs or library books, but we all need employees who think and who read. We want people who will come to us with good skills and with a favorable view of our businesses and our community.

You all know about our needs. School-business partnerships are one way for all of us to meet our citizenship obligations.

But there is also an advantage for commerce. Each of us has a product or service that we market. Most of us rely on members of our community as customers. A school-business partnership gives the business a higher, more positive profile in the community. Outside of my office is a plaque from Southwest High. It thanks us for our ongoing relationship and our contribution to the community's youth. I'm proud of that plaque, and I'm pleased when people come to our offices and see our commitment to Southwest. Because we sponsor the Southwest intramural program, we also have our name in front of students and their parents. They know who we are, and when they come to choose a firm to work with, our name does come to mind.

And I think caring explains itself. School-business partnerships show we care about each other. Notice, I said "we care about each other." A partnership is not a one-way street. Now, I know some of you have been approached with similar ideas before that were labeled "partnerships," but the caring was one-way. You were expected to care, but the "partner" had no obligation to care

about you. And the caring has usually been money. Basically, you were a partner who donated money.

That is not the relationship we have with Southwest. In fact, we don't really give money. Instead…

- we give time. Our employees help with the Junior Achievement program.
- we give opportunity. Since Cassie came to us, we've had 15 job shadowers.
- we give advice. Our public relations people helped Southwest raise their parent club membership by 15% last year.

And the giving isn't one way. For example, we receive many advantages from the school:

- Our employees can use the Southwest pool and weight room two nights per week.
- Southwest vocal and band groups have performed at several of our company functions.
- Three of our job shadowers have become summer employees for us… employees we didn't really have to train and whose reliability had been demonstrated in job shadowing.

Satisfaction Step

It's not difficult to meet the needs of many of our students throughout the community and meet our own needs at the same time. For my company, it was simply a matter of responding to the invitation from the school district. Two years ago, at the mayor's breakfast, we heard the school superintendent talk about this program. We called his office, and he put us in touch with Southwest.

Based on our very positive experience, this is what makes a successful partnership.

- First, discuss the idea of the partnership. Get buy-in from the highest level. Be sure that you want to begin the relationship and are committed to the long-term.
- Second, devote resources. When we decided to develop the partnership with Southwest, I was told that I would probably be spending 10-12 hours per month on the project. We also shifted some responsibilities from my secretary, who has been an indispensable part of this project.
- Third, develop relationships. We all know that a personal relationship endures. I spend one lunch per month with Dr. Susan Swift, principal at Southwest. We are both committed to the project, and we trust each other. This step is crucial to the success of the project.

- Fourth, focus on an initial project. Job shadowing came first for us, because it met students' needs. It would be just as simple to start with a grounds improvement project for a middle school or a reading reward program for an elementary school. They key is to start the project and be sure it succeeds.
- Fifth, publicize. You will get a better response to the program—as well as better publicity for your company—when you commit some efforts to publicity. And don't forget, publicize to your employees as well as your public. Once your employees find out what you are doing, they'll come up with some great ideas for projects.

Visualization Step

After an initial project, you'll see some real benefits coming for the community. If we could get just one business partner for each school in our community, we could easily see the following:

- Better school-community relationships. Our teachers and our parents will see the importance of the businesses in our community.
- Better information. How many of you actually know what's going on in our schools? When Cassie began working for us, I had no idea that our schools were teaching Japanese. I didn't know that we had three programs for early graduation. I didn't know that 43 of Southwest's seniors were also taking hours at the community college.
- Better visibility. The plaques and the recognition are only the start. Everyone at Southwest hears about my firm once a month in the school newsletter, which updates all of our projects. In addition, students' artwork and achievements are getting visibility. We have a small "gallery" where students present their work to our employees and customers.

As you can see, a commitment to a partnership can change the way we function in this community. Just imagine a year from today, coming to a Chamber of Commerce breakfast with a teacher and a student. Imagine sharing your projects and accomplishments. Imagine students who know what a typical day is like in your office. Imagine a business course, an economics course, a reading class, a library—all benefiting from your knowledge and experience. If you can imagine these things, you can see why we should support business partnerships.

Action Step

The next step is easy. If you want to explore a business partnership for your company or business, you just have to do one thing. Call 555-4300. Ask for

Marsha. Marsha Corrigan is the school official who heads up the school-business partnership program. She will come to your office or meet you somewhere to begin a discussion. She has a list of schools that are looking for business partners. One call to her, and you can be on your way. Within 60 days of your call, you can be part of one of the most satisfying community programs that I've ever encountered.

I don't mind telling you that meeting Cassie and Mrs. Sak changed the way I think about business. I moved to this community four years ago. I joined the Chamber three years ago. But it wasn't until two years ago—when Cassie first came to my office—that I felt a part of the community. I feel a part because I know I'm giving something to the community. I know my business is part of the lives of the most important members of our community, the children.

I will conclude my remarks by introducing to you two guests, whom I'm very proud of. Ladies and gentlemen, Mrs. Jane Sak, business teacher at Southwest High, and Cassie Witherspoon, recent graduate of Southwest. We would like to answer any questions you have about a program that all three of us passionately believe in.



Citizens often give persuasive speeches before school boards to influence policy decisions.



Chapter 25 Summary

You already know what makes up a good speech, but persuasive speeches are special. When you attempt to persuade someone, you are telling them they should adopt new attitudes or behaviors. Effective persuaders know about motivation. They use their understanding of motivation to build appeals around rationality, emotion, and speaker credibility. While the problem-solution organization is the best general approach to most persuasive speeches, the motivated sequence refines the problem-solution into five steps: attention, need, satisfaction, visualization, and action. These steps help a speaker move an audience to new attitudes and behaviors.

Reasoning

1. Define motivation. Explain why understanding motivation is important to persuading others.
2. List the three categories of persuasive appeals.
3. List ten questions to help a speaker determine if a persuasive speech is likely to be ethical.
4. Identify and define the five steps of the motivated sequence.

Reflecting

1. Review the speech at the end of the chapter. The stages are clearly identified. Write five paragraphs—one for each stage of the motivated sequence—in which you describe what the speaker is attempting to do with each step.
2. Select an advertising campaign. Analyze the campaign's appeal to the motives of the audience. Prepare a presentation for your class in which you show what kinds of motivation the advertiser is relying on to change attitudes or behaviors.

Reaching

1. Using business management books and/or psychology books, look up the term "motivation." Specifically, research how the books treat motivation. Select a motivation theory to explain to the class. Try to determine the primary motivations for people in a business organization.
2. Get help from a teacher or media specialist in looking up "demagogue." Find a demagogue to research. Present a short speech to the class in which you summarize the demagogue's appeal to his or her audience.
3. In small groups compose your own thirty-second or sixty-second radio advertisements. Base one on a logical appeal, one on credibility, and one on emotional. Present all three to your audience. After your presentation, discuss which was more effective.

Real Life

1. Present a 5-7 minute speech in which you attempt to persuade your audience. After you've researched the situation and audience, write a purpose statement, expressing your purpose with a specific audience in mind. Prepare your speech as if you were speaking before the audience you have in mind. Use two of the three types of appeals identified in this chapter. Use the motivated sequence as your organizational pattern.

Glossary

Agenda: A schedule of group activities for a meeting.

Analogy: An explanation to an audience comparing something they do not understand to something they do understand.

Articulation: The physical act or process of speaking. Good articulation is vital to good vocal delivery because it improves understanding.

Attitude: A state of mind about something or someone—the beliefs or feelings we have about ourselves, other people, ideas, and events.

Attributing: Citing the source of material used in a speech.

Audience: The person (or the people) to whom you are directing your message.

Authoritarian leader: A leadership style in which the leader dominates, imposes his/her will on the group.

Blind carbon copy (bcc): A copy of an e-mail message sent to sources who are unknown to the message's primary recipient(s).

Brainstorming: The process of developing large numbers of ideas in a short amount of time that can later be evaluated and applied to a task. Brainstorming promotes creativity and participation.

Broadcast e-mail: An e-mail that goes to a large number of individuals who are part of a list such as all members of a faculty or all students.

Call number: Numbers that identify the subject and location of a book or other library materials.

Cause-effect order: An organizational pattern that establishes a cause (or causes) and follows with an effect (or effects).

Channel: The channel is the means used to transmit the message from sender to receiver.

Chart: A form of support that presents information visually in graphs or tables.

Chronological order: An organizational pattern that places ideas in order according to time: what happened first, second, third, etc.

Claim: The conclusions or ideas you want your audience to accept.

Clarity: Clearness of language; one of the elements of style.

Classification order: An organizational pattern that places individual items into groups. The speaker then must still order the groups according to importance, chronology, or some further pattern.

Climactic order: An organizational pattern in which the speaker determines the most important points in the body and places them last. The body builds to a climax, leading the audience from less important to more important points.

Closed question: A question that is very directed and usually requires a simple "yes" or "no" or a specific type of information such as title of last position held.

Communication: The negotiation of a shared meaning.

Communication apprehension: The feeling of anxiety or dread that can overcome someone who is facing a speech or interpersonal interaction. It can also be called "stage fright."

Communication imperative: The principle that a person "cannot not communicate." In other words, the concept that people will attach meaning to any behaviors, including the decision to remain silent or inactive.

Comparison: A form of development that identifies and explains similarities between two things.

Compromise: A technique for reducing conflict in which each side makes some concessions in order that the members can settle their differences.

Conference call: A multi-party telephone call that is usually scheduled through a special operator. It enables individuals in several locations to have a group conversation.

Connotation: The meaning of a word that is implied or suggested; contrast with "denotation."

Consensus: "General agreement." Another way of looking at consensus is "a decision that everyone can live with."

Context: The time or place in which the communication occurs.

Contrast: A form of development which identifies and explains differences between to things.

Controlling purpose: The primary purpose of a speech.

Convention: A behavior—like a tradition or a custom—that is widely used to shape the interactions we have. Conventions are expectations we have for each other in specific situations.

Conversation: A spontaneous, informal spoken exchange of messages.

Creative tension: The development of positive group decisions from disagreements among group members.

Credibility: Worthiness of belief. Credibility is a quality of a communicator perceived by an audience that encourages the audience to trust the communicator.

Critical listening: An active level of listening, critical listening is analyzing and evaluating information.

Defensive climate: A communication context in which trust and open communication are unlikely because of negative expectations.

Definition: A form of development that explains the meaning of a word or phrase.

Demagogue: A person who obtains or maintains power by passionate appeals to the emotions and prejudices of a group of people.

Democratic leader: A leadership style in which the leader performs a helping role that seeks input from others and allows the group to make its own choices.

Demographics: Statistical descriptions of the characteristics of a particular group of people. In communication, demographics are used to understand the possible characteristics of members of an audience.

Demonstration process: An informative speech that shows an audience how to do something.

Denotation: A word's explicit meaning. The meaning that all people commonly share; contrast to "connotation."

Description: A form of development which supplies specific physical detail.

Descriptive gestures: Gestures that allow a speaker to describe something; gestures that help a listener visualize what the speaker is talking about.

Development: The amplification and clarification of the proof in your speech.

Dewey decimal system: A system of organizing library materials.

Emoticons: Symbols used in e-mail messages to indicate emotion or nonverbal communication.

Empathy: The ability to put yourself in someone else's place and understand their feelings.

Emphatic gestures: Gestures that allow a speaker to provide emphasis for the spoken word. Such gestures include shrugging, nodding, enumerating, pointing, etc.

Enforced membership: Group membership required of someone who otherwise might not choose to be part of the group.

Evidence: Proof; used to support claims.

Example: A form of development which supplies a specific, typical instance.

Extemporaneous delivery: A delivery format in which a speech is given from key words and phrases in the outline. It is not read to an audience.

Eye contact: At least two people looking at each other simultaneously, acknowledging each other.

Facilitator: A formally identified leader who oversees group processes to the benefit of all group members.

Feedback: Feedback is the response the sender gets from the receiver.

Fluent: Describing speech that is smooth and free from unnecessary, distracting interruptions.

Font: A typeface of a particular size.

Forecast: A "map" of the speech given to the audience in the introduction. A forecast maps or outlines the major ideas of the speech.

Formal group: A group characterized by the presence of hard and fast rules or norms, often rules that are written down.

Formal leader: A leader whose position and authority is derived from being designated as a leader as the result of a group norm.

Framing: Using pauses on either side of a word or phrase to set off that word or phrase for special emphasis.

Gender: Identification of male or female traits; sex.

Gestures: Movement of the limbs, body, or head.

Grammar: A description of the way these many parts of a language work together. Grammar describes how language works.

Graph: A form of support which presents numerical information visually.

Group: A number of people who participate in face-to-face interaction with each other, who have group norms and values that determine individuals' behaviors, who share common interests or goals, and who see themselves as a group.

Group dynamics: A term that includes how group members work together, how a group solves problems, how personal interactions develop, and so forth.

Group interview: An interview in which more than one person asks questions of the person being interviewed.

Group maintenance roles: A set of communication behaviors that help establish and maintain positive, cooperative relationships, and a group-centered orientation.

Group member roles: Patterns of behavior that tend to emerge in all groups.

Group norms: A standard, model, or pattern of behavior that is considered normal for a specific group.

Group task roles: A set of communication behaviors that help the group solve a problem, address an issue, or generally perform its task.

Hearing: A sense that allows you to perceive sound. Hearing is a physical act, which requires only the reception of sound waves. Hearing is passive.

Historical process: An informative speech that covers a past incident and how it developed.

Idiom: An idiom is an expression that is characteristic of a language. It isn't explainable by rule or reason, it just "is."

Illustration: A form of development that supplies a long, elaborate example.

Impromptu delivery: A delivery format in which the speech is given with little or no preparation.

Incident: An example in the form of a story; also called narrative or anecdote.

Inflection: Using change of vocal pitch to create meaning.

Informal group: A group characterized by a lack of hard-and-fast rules or norms.

Informal leader: A leader whose position and authority emerge from the functioning of the group.

Information overload: Having too much information to process effectively and efficiently.

Interest-based bargaining: A means of conflict resolution which focuses on interests as opposed to positions.

Interference: Interference is anything that blocks or hinders the reception of the message or the feedback.

Interpersonal communication: Interpersonal communication occurs in contexts where two or more people actively participate in exchanging messages.

Interview: An interpersonal or group interaction designed to gather from an individual information to be used in an important decision.

Intrapersonal communication: The meaning we create within ourselves.

Jargon: Specialized, technical vocabulary of a certain occupation, hobby, or other activity.

Laissez-faire leader: A leader who allows group to establish its own processes without interference.

Leading question: A question that "leads" the person being questioned to the answer the questioner prefers. A question that suggests the answer.

Level of usage: Customs or rules governing language use for particular situations and audiences. See "usage."

Library of Congress system: A system of organizing library materials.

Listening: A mental process that requires concentrating on sound, deriving meaning from it, and reacting to it.

Logical order: See "topical order."

Mannerisms: A distinctive behavior. If a person repeats the same nonverbal behavior many times, listeners come to identify that repeated distinctive behavior (mannerism) with the person.

Manuscript delivery: A delivery format in which the speaker reads a speech word-for-word from a prepared manuscript.

Mass media: The use of technology to communicate the same message to very large groups of people.

Memorized delivery: A delivery format in which a prepared manuscript is delivered from memory.

Message: The message is whatever the sender communicates to the receiver.

Metacommunication: Communication about communication. Communication of any kind, the topic of which is communication.

Method: In this text, "method" refers to the methods chosen by communicators to accomplish a purpose in a situation with a particular audience.

Mnemonic: A strategy or device—such as a rhyme, some initials, a story—that help a person remember. A mnemonic can be used as an organizational pattern.

Motivated sequence: A specific description of how a problem-solution organization can help you organize a speech for effective persuasion.

Motivation: Also "motive." A reason for doing something.

Movement: Moving the entire body from one spot to another.

Multi-channeled: Describing communication that is conducted through both verbal and nonverbal means.

Norm: A standard, model, or pattern of behavior.

On-line catalog: A database of materials contained in a library. Also called "OLC."

Open question: A question that allows the interviewee to take the answer any number of directions.

Ownership: The commitment by individuals to support a decision because they have been part of making the decision. Ownership is also called "buy-in."

Panel discussion: A task group that holds its meetings in public. Panel discussion members are usually selected because of their knowledge or opinions on a specific topic. They also could be representative of others. Panelists usually meet in a scheduled, advertised, public forum and hold a discussion for the benefit of observers.

Paralinguistic cues: The vocal clues such as volume, rate, or inflection that tell a receiver how to interpret spoken words. Paralinguistic cues help a listener get meaning from how something is said as well as what is said.

Parallelism: The arrangement of sentences so that words and phrases are similar in length and structure.

Paraphrase: Putting someone else's words (usually an authority) into your own words or words better understood by the audience.

Parliamentary procedure: A complete, formal set of rules for conducting a business meeting.

Peer: A person equal in rank or authority to another.

Person-to-group communication: Also called public speaking. In this level of communication, one person is typically labeled the "speaker" and the other people are called the "audience." The members of the audience are typically not addressed as individuals. Instead, the speaker tends to address the audience as one "receiver." Examples include lectures, reports, legislative speeches, etc.

Persuasion: Communication intended to change attitudes or behaviors.

Pitch: The relative highness or low a voice.

Plagiarism: Knowingly using another person's words or ideas without giving that person credit.

Posture: The position or stance of the body.

Precision listening: Listening with attention to details that give you clues to the speaker's emotion or state of mind.

Presentation software: Computer programs that allow speakers to develop visual aids to support public speeches.

Problem-solution order: An organizational pattern in which the first part of the body of the speech develops the problem and the second part of the body develops solutions.

Problem-solving sequence: A systematic approach to solving a problem that allows individual creativity while providing focus and order.

Proof: Evidence used in support of a claim.

Protocol: Specific forms of conduct followed in common situations.

Proxemics: The study of the use of distance and space in human activity.

Purpose: The goal the communicator wants to accomplish.

Purpose statement: A statement of the purpose of a speech made in terms of the audience and basic speech purposes; used to help speakers make communication decisions.

Rate: The pace or speed at which a person speaks.

Reading the audience: Anticipatory metacommunication regarding characteristics of audience. To read the audience requires the ability to put yourself in someone else's place and understand their feelings.

Receiver: The receiver is the target of the communication.

Representative group: A group composed of representatives from other groups.

Résumé: A formal document that contains professional and personal information supplied by a job applicant to a prospective employer.

Retention: The ability to remember and recall information.

S.O.S.: An acronym for "substance, organization, style."

Scientific process: An informative speech that describes a sequence of events that occurs according to natural laws or scientific principles.

Screening interview: An interview designed to reduce a large number of applications down to the most likely candidates.

Selective listening: Blocking out anything we don't want to hear and paying attention only to information that coincides with our own beliefs.

Self-centered roles: A set of communication behaviors that meet the needs of individuals while harming the task or maintenance dimension of the group.

Sender: The sender is the initiator of the communication.

Signpost: Transitions that help the audience make the move from introduction to body, from body to conclusion, and from one major point to another.

Situation: The context in which the communication takes place.

Social group: A group that forms around the needs of the individual members for belonging, attention, entertainment, or other social needs.

Spamming: Sending an e-mail message to an excessively large number of individuals.

Spatial order: Especially useful in description, an organizational pattern that places ideas in order according to physical space—for example top to bottom, left to right, west to east, inside to outside, etc.

Speaker phone: A special function on a telephone or a separate unit attached to a phone line that enables a person to talk into a microphone on the phone and hear through a built-in speaker without having to hold a telephone receiver.

Stage fright: See "communication apprehension."

Statistics: Information that is presented numerically. Statistics often represent large quantities of information in numerical form.

Subordinate: A person below someone else in rank or authority.

Subordination: An outlining principle which shows the relationship of sub-topics to topics.

Substance: Subject matter; content; decisions about substance involving decisions about what a speaker will say.

Superordinate goals: Goals which are the overriding goals that the entire group is interested in.

Support material: Information that helps a speaker make a point.

Supportive climate: A communication context in which people will trust each other and communicate openly.

Surfacing an elephant: A metaphor for bringing up a conflict that everyone is aware of, but no one will talk about.

Syntax: Syntax is the way words are put together to form phrases and sentences.

Tact: The ability to understand the difficulty of a situation and then do or say the kindest or most fitting thing.

Task group: A group formed around a job to be done or a problem to be solved.

Team: A group that works closely together, develops relationships, and strives for a common goal.

Team building: An exercise or activity designed specifically to promote identity, cooperation, teamwork, and trust within a group.

Teleconference: A system that involves telephones, video cameras, and televisions monitors that enables individuals located in two places to both hear and see one another.

Testimony: The opinions of others, usually of experts, quoted as supportive material in support of a claim.

Thesis statement: The public speaker's point of view about a particular topic reduced to a single sentence.

Thought process: An informative speech which describes how to think about something in a productive manner.

Tone: Tone is the author's attitude toward his or her subject or topic. "Tone" should be distinguished from "tone of voice."

Topical order: An organizational pattern that presents the body in a way that one seems to flow naturally to another.

Transformational leadership: Leadership that relies on appeals to motives such as self-esteem and self-actualization. Transformational leaders make positive assumptions about people and create an environment in which others enjoy working and contributing.

Transition: A word, phrase, or sentence that move the audience from one idea to another.

Unity: A quality of a good presentation in which all communication decisions support each other, creating an effective message.

Usage: The relationship of language to the specific situation, purpose, and audience. Usage prescribes the rules that are appropriate in given situations.

Visual aid: Support materials that an audience can see.

Volume: The relative loudness of the speaker's voice.

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