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Communication Skills-I

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Communication Skills-I

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Aspects of Communication

Unit 1: COMMUNICATION: AN INTRODUCTION

1

Unit Structure

1.1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit student should be able to understand:

- Recognize the importance of communication.
- Define communication the communication process.
- Identify and describe the eight essential components of communication.
- Explore the different contexts affecting communication.

1.2. INTRODUCTION

Communication is the process of understanding and sharing meaning[1]. It's an activity, skill, and art that incorporates lessons learned across a wide spectrum of human knowledge. You communicate every day without thinking about that process: from the conversation with your family in the morning, reading a news article on your phone, ordering coffee, participating in class, texting your friends — communication is a primary skill you've been practising since birth!

The material in this book will help give you the skills, confidence, and preparation to use communication in furthering your career.

1.3. Meaning of Communication

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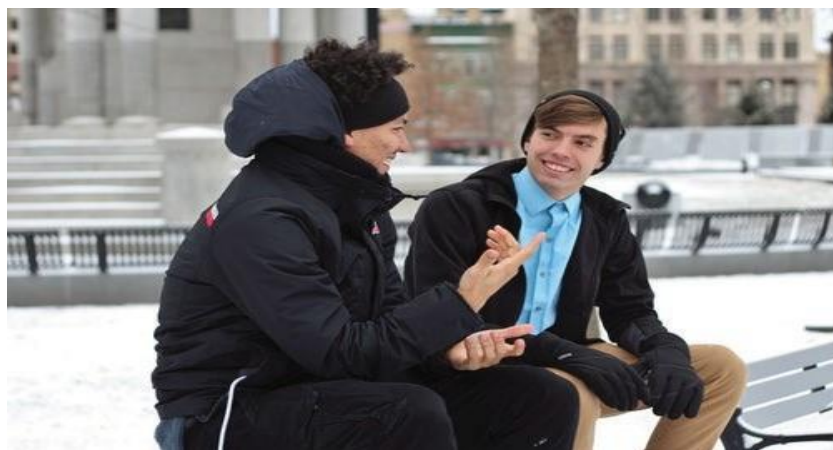
[1] Pearson, J., & Nelson, P. (2000). *An introduction to human communication: Understanding and sharing.* Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

All communication is composed of three parts that make a whole: sharing, understanding, and meaning.

Sharing means doing something together with one or more person(s). In communication, sharing occurs when you convey thoughts, feelings, ideas, or insights to others. You also share with yourself (a process called intrapersonal communication) when you bring ideas to consciousness, ponder how you feel about something, figure out the solution to a problem, or have a classic "Aha!" moment when something becomes clear.

The second key word is **understanding.** "To understand is to perceive, to interpret, and to relate our perception and interpretation to what we already know." (McLean, 2003) Understanding the words and the concepts or objects they refer to is an important part of the communication process.

Finally, **meaning** is what you share through communication. For example, by looking at the context of a word, and by asking questions, you can discover the shared meaning of the word and better understand the message.

- Interpersonal communication is any message exchanged between two or more people.
- Written communication is any message using the written word.
- Verbal, or oral, communication is any message conveyed through speech.
- Non-Verbal communication is any message inferred through observation of another person.

1.4. COMMUNICATION PROCESS : ENCODING AND DECODING

In basic terms, humans communicate through a process of **encoding** and **decoding.** The encoder is the person who develops and sends the message. As represented in Figure 1.1 below, the encoder must determine how the message will be received by the audience, and make adjustments so the message is received the way they want it to be received.

Encoding is the process of turning thoughts into communication. The encoder uses a 'medium' to send the message — a phone call, email, text message, face-to-face

meeting, or other communication tool. The level of conscious thought that goes into encoding messages may vary. The encoder should also take into account any 'noise' that might interfere with their message, such as other messages, distractions, or influences.

The audience then 'decodes', or interprets, the message for themselves. **Decoding** is the process of turning communication into thoughts. For example, you may realize you're hungry and encode the following message to send to your roommate: "I'm hungry. Do you want to get pizza tonight?" As your roommate receives the message, they decode your communication and turn it back into thoughts to make meaning.
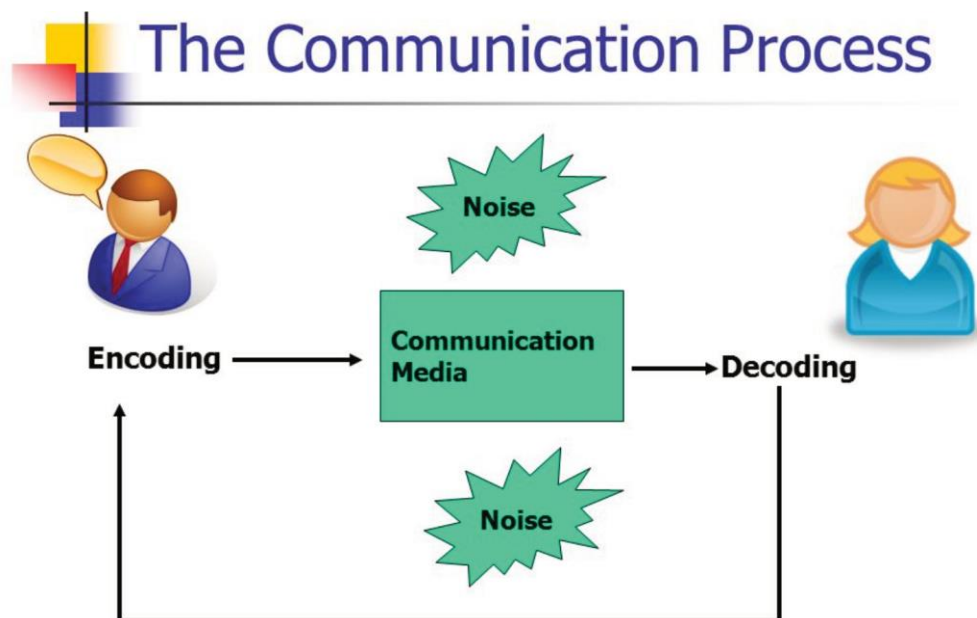
1.5. EIGHT ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF COMMUNICATION

The communication process can be broken down into a series of eight essential components, each of which serves an integral function in the overall process:

- Source
- Message
- Channel
- Receiver
- Feedback

- Environment
- Context
- Interference

1.5.1 Source

The source imagines, creates, and sends the message. The source encodes the message by choosing just the right order or the best words to convey the intended meaning, and presents or sends the information to the audience (receiver). By watching for the audience's reaction, the source perceives how well they received the message and responds with clarification or supporting information.

1.5.2 Message

"The message is the stimulus or meaning produced by the source for the receiver or audience"[2]. The message brings together words to convey meaning, but is also about how it's conveyed — through non-verbal cues, organization, grammar, style, and other elements.

1.5.3 Channel

"The channel is the way in which a message or messages travel between source and receiver." (McLean, 2005). Spoken channels include face-to-face conversations, speeches, phone conversations and voicemail messages, radio, public address systems, and Skype. Written channels include letters, memorandums, pur- chase orders, invoices, newspaper and magazine articles, blogs, e-mail, text messages, tweets, and so forth.

1.5.4 Receiver

"The receiver receives the message from the source, analysing and interpreting the message in ways both intended and unintended by the source" (McLean, 2005).

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[2] McLean, S. (2005). *The basics of interpersonal communication.* Boston, MA: Allyn Bacon.

1.5.5 Feedback

When you respond to the source, intentionally or unintentionally, you are giving feedback. Feedback is com- posed of messages the receiver sends back to the source. Verbal or nonverbal, all these feedback signals allow the source to see how well, how accurately (or how poorly and inaccurately) the message was received[3] .

1.5.6 Environment

"The environment is the atmosphere, physical and psychological, where you send and receive messages" (McLean, 2005). Surroundings, people, animals, technology, can all influence your communication.

1.5.7 Context

"The context of the communication interaction involves the setting, scene, and expectations of the individuals involved" (McLean, 2005). A professional communication context may involve business suits (environ- mental cues) that directly or indirectly influence expectations of language and behaviour among the participants.

1.5.8 Interference

Interference, also called noise, can come from any source. "Interference is anything that blocks or changes the source's intended meaning of the message" (McLean, 2005). This can be external or internal/psychological. Noise interferes with normal encoding and decoding of the message carried by the channel between source and receiver.

1.6. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

People share a fundamental drive to communicate. You share meaning in what you say and how you say it, both in oral and written forms. Your communication skills help you to understand others—not just their words, but also their tone of voice, and their nonverbal gestures. The format of their written documents provides you with

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[3] Leavitt, H. J., & Mueller, R. A. (1951). *Some effects of feedback on communication.* Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/001872675100400406

clues about who they are and what their values and priorities may be. Active listening and reading are also part of being a successful communicator.

Your speaking and writing are reflections of your thoughts, experience, and education. Part of that combination is your level of experience listening to other speakers, reading documents and styles of writing, and studying formats similar to what you aim to produce.

As you study professional business communication, you may receive suggestions for improvement and clarification from speakers and writers more experienced than yourself. Your success in communicating is a skill that applies to every field of work, and it makes a difference in your relationships with others.

You want to be prepared to communicate well when given the opportunity. Each time you do a good job, your success will bring more success.

An individual with excellent communication skills is an asset to every organization. No matter what career you plan to pursue, learning to express yourself professionally in your communications will help you get there.

1.7. COMMUNICATION IN CONTEXT

Context is made up of the parts of communication that influence the meaning of a message. Context has an influence on the communication process. Contexts can overlap, creating an even more dynamic process.

You have been communicating in many contexts across your lifetime, and you'll be able to apply what you've learned from experiences in multiple contexts to business communication.

1.7.1. Intrapersonal Communication

Intrapersonal communication involves one person; it is often called "self-talk"[4]. The book[5] on this topic explains how, as you use language to reflect on your own

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[4] Wood, J. (1997). *Communication in our lives*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

experiences, you talk yourself through situations. Your intrapersonal communication can be positive or negative, and directly influences how you perceive and react to situations and communication with others. For example, before a big presentation, you may give yourself a pep talk to calm feelings of anxiety and give yourself a boost of confidence.

What you perceive in communication with others is also influenced by your culture, native language, and your world view. As the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas said, "Every process of reaching understanding takes place against the background of a culturally ingrained pre-understanding"[6].

1.7.2.   Interpersonal Communication

The second major context within the field of communication is interpersonal communication which normally involves two people, and can range from intimate and very personal to formal and impersonal. A conversation over coffee with a colleague about a project you're working on would be a form of interpersonal communication.

1.7.3. Group Communication

"Group communication is a dynamic process where a small number of people engage in a conversation" (McLean, 2005). Group communication is generally defined as involving three to eight people. The larger the group, the more likely it is to break down into smaller groups.

When engaging with groups, you can observe factors like age, education, sex, and location to learn more about general preferences as well as dislikes. You may find several groups within the larger audience, such as specific areas of education, and use this knowledge to increase your effectiveness as a business communicator.

1.7.4. Public Communication

In public communication, one person speaks to a group of people; the same is true of public written communication, where one person writes a message to be read by a small or large group. The speaker or writer may ask questions, and engage the

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[5] Vocate, D. (Ed.). (1994). *Intrapersonal communication: Different voices, different minds*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

[6] Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

audience in a discussion (in writing, examples are an e-mail discussion or a point-counter-point series of letters to the editor), but the dynamics of the conversation are distinct from group communication, where different rules apply.

1.7.5. Mass Communication

Through mass communication, you send a message to as many people as possible. Mass communication involves sending a single message to a group. It allows you to communicate your message to a large number of people. Something to consider, however, is that you may be limited in your ability to tailor your message to specific audiences, groups, or individuals when using mass communication. As a business communicator, you can use multimedia as a visual aid or reference common programs, films, or other images that your audience finds familiar yet engaging. By choosing messages or references that many audience members will recognize or can identify with, you can develop common ground and increase the appeal of your message.

1.8. YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A COMMUNICATOR

Four Tips for Communication

Whenever you speak or write in a business environment, you have certain responsibilities to your audience, your employer, and your profession. Your audience comes to you with an inherent set of expectations that is your responsibility to fulfil. The specific expectations may change given the context or environment, but two central ideas will remain: be prepared, and be ethical.

1.8.1. Preparation

Being prepared means that you have selected a topic appropriate to your audience, gathered enough information to cover the topic well, put your information into a logical sequence, and considered how best to present it.

1.8.2. Organization

Being organized involves the steps or points that lead your communication to a conclusion. Once you've invested time in researching your topic, you will want to narrow your focus to a few key points and consider how you'll present them. You

also need to consider how to link your main points together for your audience so they can follow your message from point to point.

1.8.3. Clarity

You need to have a clear idea in your mind of what you want to say before you can say it clearly to someone else. It involves considering your audience, as you will want to choose words and phrases they understand and avoid jargon or slang that may be unfamiliar to them. Clarity also involves presentation and appropriate use of technology.

1.8.4. Punctuality

Concise means to be brief and to the point. In most business communications you are expected to 'get down to business' right away. Being prepared includes being able to state your points clearly and support them with trustworthy evidence in a relatively straightforward, linear way.

Be concise in your choice of words, organization, and even visual aids. Being concise also involves being sensitive to time constraints. Be prepared to be punctual and adhere to deadlines or time limits.

Some cultures also have a less strict interpretation of time schedules and punctuality. While it is important to recognize that different cultures have different expectations, the general rule holds true that good business communication does not waste words or time.

1.9. ETHICS IN COMMUNICATION

Communicating ethically involves being egalitarian, respectful, and trustworthy—overall, practising the 'golden rule' of treating your audience the way you would want to be treated.

Communication can move communities, influence cultures, and change history. It can motivate people to take stand, consider an argument, or purchase a product. The degree to which you consider both the common good and fundamental principles you hold to be true when crafting your message directly relates to how your message will affect others.

1.9.1. The Ethical Communicator Is Egalitarian

The word "egalitarian" comes from the root "equal." To be egalitarian is to believe in basic equality: that all people should share equally in the benefits and burdens of a society. It means that everyone is entitled to the same respect, expectations, access to information, and rewards of participation in a group.

To communicate in an egalitarian manner, speak and write in a way that is comprehensible and relevant to all your listeners or readers, not just those who are 'like you' in terms of age, gender, race or ethnicity, or other characteristics. In business, an effective communicator seeks to unify the audience by using ideas and language that are appropriate for all the message's readers or listeners.

1.9.2. The Ethical Communicator Is Respectful

People are influenced by emotions as well as logic. The ethical communicator will be passionate and enthusiastic without being disrespectful. Losing one's temper and being abusive are generally regarded as show- ing a lack of professionalism (and could even involve legal consequences for you or your employer). When you disagree strongly with a co-worker, feel deeply annoyed with a difficult customer, or find serious fault with a competitor's product, it is important to express such sentiments respectfully.

1.9.3. The Ethical Communicator Is Trustworthy

Trust is a key component in communication, and this is especially true in business. Your goal as a communicator is to build a healthy relationship with your audience, and to do that you must show them how they can trust you and why the information you are about to share with them is believable.

Your audience will expect that what you say is the truth as you understand it. This means that you have not intentionally omitted, deleted, or taken information out of context simply to prove your points. They will lis- ten to what you say and how you say it, but also to what you don't say or do. Being worthy of trust is some- thing you earn with an audience. Many wise people have observed that trust is hard to build but easy to lose.

1.9.4. The "Golden Rule"

When in doubt, remember the "golden rule," which is to treat others the way you would like to be treated. In all its many forms, the golden rule incorporates human kindness, cooperation, and reciprocity across cultures, languages, backgrounds, and interests. Regardless of where you travel, with whom you communicate or what your audience is like, remember how you would feel if you were on the receiving end of your communication and act accordingly.

1.10. LET US SUM UP

Communication is an essential component of business. While communication is a natural part of the human experience, it's important to consider how you will communicate in a positive and effective manner that aligns with your responsibilities and reputation as a business professional.

1.11. FURTHER READING

- The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) is a global network of communication professionals committed to improving organizational effectiveness through strategic communication. http://www.iabc.com
- Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL) provides a wealth of resources for writing projects. http://owl.english.purdue.edu

1.12. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Recognize the importance of communication.
2. Define communication the communication process.
3. Identify and describe the eight essential components of communication.
4. Explore the different contexts affecting communication.
5. Discuss the responsibilities of a business communicator.

Unit 2: DELIVERING YOUR MESSAGE

2

Unit Structure

2.1   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit student should be able to understand:

- The importance of delivering message in words.

- Explore how the characteristics of language interact in ways that can both improve and diminish effective business communication.

- Examine how language plays a significant role in how you perceive and interact with the world, and how culture, language, education, gender, race, and ethnicity all influence this dynamic process.

- Ways to avoid miscommunication and focus on constructive ways to get your message delivered to your receiver with the meaning you intended.

2.2   INTRODUCTION

How do you communicate? How do you think? We use language as a system to create and exchange meaning with one another, and the types of words we use influence both our perceptions and others interpretations of our meanings. What kinds of words would you use to describe your thoughts and feelings, your preferences in music, cars, food, or other things that matter to you? In this chapter you will learn more about the importance of delivering your message in words. You will explore how the characteristics of language interact in ways that can both improve and diminish effective business communication. You will examine how language plays a significant role in how you perceive and interact with the world, and how culture, language, education, gender, race, and ethnicity all influence this dynamic process. You will look at ways to avoid miscommunication and focus on constructive ways to get your message delivered to your receiver with the meaning you intended.

2.3   WHAT IS LANGUAGE?

Language is a system of symbols, words, and/or gestures used to communicate meaning.

People are raised in different cultures, with different values, beliefs, customs, and different languages to express those cultural attributes. Even people who speak the same language, like speakers of English in London, New Delhi, or Calgary, speak

and interact using their own words that are community-defined, self- defined, and have room for interpretation. This variation in our use of language is a creative way to form relationships and communities, but can also lead to miscommunication.

Words themselves, then, actually hold no meaning. It takes at least two people to use them, to give them life and purpose. Words change meaning over time. The dictionary entry for the meaning of a word changes because we change, and multiple meanings can lead to miscommunication.

Languages are living exchange systems of meaning and are bound by context. If you are assigned to a team that coordinates with suppliers from Shanghai, China and a sales staff in London, Ontario you may encounter terms from both groups that influence your team.

2.3.1 Triangle of Meaning

Thought
"I want to get a dog"

Meaning

Symbol
D-O-G
(the word or mental image)

Referent
An actual dog
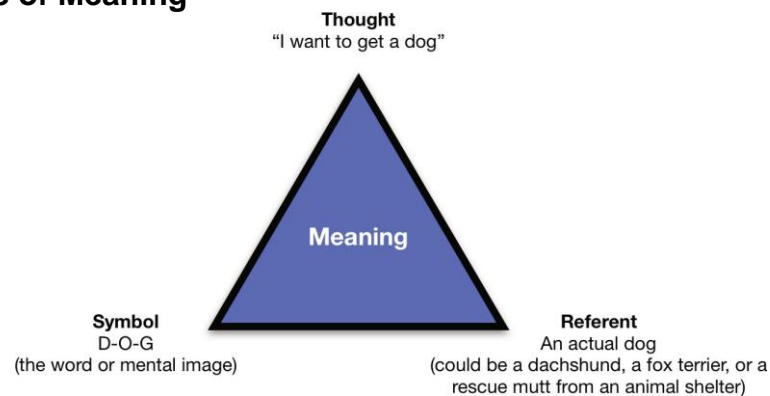(could be a dachshund, a fox terrier, or a rescue mutt from an animal shelter)

Figure 2.1. The triangle of meaning. This figure illustrates a symbol and referent in relation to a thought (Adapted from Ogden & Richards, 1932).

The triangle of meaning is a model of communication that indicates the relationship among a thought, symbol, and referent and highlights the indirect relationship between the symbol and referent[7] (Ogden & Richards, 1932). As represented in Figure 2.1 below, the thought is the concept or idea a person references. The symbol is the word that represents the thought, and the referent is the object or idea to which the symbol refers. This model is useful for you as a communicator because when you are aware of the indirect relationship between symbols and referents, you are aware of how common misunderstandings occur, as the following example illustrates:

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[7] Odgen, C., & Richards, I.（1932）. The meaning of meaning: A study of the influence of language upon thought and of the science of symbolism. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace World.

Example

Jasper and Abby have been thinking about getting a new dog. So each of them is having a similar thought. They are each using the same symbol, the word dog, to communicate about their thought. Their referents, however, are different. Jasper is thinking about a small dog like a dachshund, and Abby is thinking about an Australian shepherd. Since the word dog doesn't refer to one specific object in our reality, it is possible for them to have the same thought, and use the same symbol, but end up in an awkward moment when they get to the shelter and fall in love with their respective referents only to find out the other person didn't have the same thing in mind. Abby could ask questions for clarification, like "Sounds like you're saying that a smaller dog might be better. Is that right?" Getting to a place of shared understanding can be difficult, even when we define our symbols and describe our referents.

2.4 MESSAGES

It will be helpful to stop for a moment and examine some characteristics of the messages you send when you communicate. Messages carry far more than the literal meaning of each word and in this section you are invited to explore that complexity.

Primary Message Is Not the Whole Message

When considering how to effectively use verbal communication, keep in mind there are three distinct types of messages you will be communicating: primary, secondary, and auxiliary (Hasling, 1998).

Primary Message – refers to the intentional content, both verbal and nonverbal.

Secondary Message – refers to the unintentional content, both verbal and nonverbal.

Auxiliary Message – refers to the intentional and unintentional ways a primary message is communicated. It includes: vocal inflection, gestures and posture, or rate of speech that influence the interpretation or perception of your message.

For example, a coworker stops by your desk to ask a question and…

- You say, "Have a seat". (Primary Message)
- A messy workspace makes an impression on your visitor that you are disorganized. (Secondary Message)
- You smile and wave your hand to indicate the empty chair on the other side of your desk to invite the person to sit. (Auxiliary Message)

2.4.1 Parts of a Message

When you create a message, it is often helpful to think of it as having five parts:

- Attention Statement – captures the attention of your audience.
- Introduction – a clear statement about your topic; this is also the time to establish a relationship with your audience.
- Body – present your message in detail, using any of a variety of organizational structures.
- Conclusion – provide the audience with a sense of closure by summarizing your main points and relating them to the overall topics.
- Residual Message – a message or thought that stays with your audience well after the communication is finished. This can be an important part of your message.

When planning communication, ask yourself of the following:

- What do I want my listeners or readers to remember?
- What information do I want to have the audience retain or act upon?
- What do I want the audience to do?

2.5 PRINCIPLES OF VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Verbal communication is based on several basic principles. In this section, you'll examine each principle and explore how it influences everyday communication. Whether it's a simple conversation with a co-worker or a formal sales presentation to a board of directors, these principles apply to all contexts of communication.

2.5.1 Language Has Rules

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, language is a system of symbols, words, and/or gestures used to communicate meaning.

The words themselves have meaning within their specific context or language community. Words only carry meaning if you know the understood meaning and have a grasp of their context to interpret them correctly.

There are three types of rules that govern or control your use of words.

Syntactic Rules – govern the order of words in a sentence.

Semantic Rules – govern the meaning of words and how to interpret them (Martinich, 1996). Contextual Rules – govern meaning and word choice according to context and social custom.

Consider the example of a traffic light as follows:

Semantics – Green means Go, and Red means Stop

Syntax – Green is on the bottom, yellow in the middle, and red on top.

Even when you follow these linguistic rules, miscommunication is possible. Your cultural context or community may hold different meanings for the words used – different from meanings that the source communicator intended. Words attempt to represent the ideas you want to communicate, but they are sometimes limited by factors beyond your control. Words often require you to negotiate meaning, or to explain what you mean in more than one way, in order to create a common vocabulary. You may need to state a word, define it, and provide an example in order to come to an understanding with your audience about the meaning of your message.

As discussed previously, words, by themselves, do not have any inherent meaning. Humans give meaning to them, and their meanings change across time. The arbitrary symbols, including letters, numbers, and punctuation marks, stand for concepts in your experience. You have to negotiate the meaning of the word "home," and define it, through visual images or dialogue, in order to communicate with your audience.

Words have two types of meanings: denotative and connotative.

Denotative – The common meaning, often found in the dictionary.

Connotative – Meaning that is not found in the dictionary but in the community of users itself. It can involve an emotional association with a word, positive or negative, and can be individual or collective, but is not universal.

With a common vocabulary in both denotative and connotative terms, effective communication becomes a more distinct possibility. But what if you have to transfer meaning from one vocabulary to another? That is essentially what you are doing when you translate a message. For example, HSBC Bank was forced to rebrand its entire global private banking operations after bringing a U.S. campaign overseas. In 2009, the worldwide bank spent millions of dollars to scrap its 5-year-old "Assume Nothing" campaign. Problems arose when the message was brought overseas, where it was translated in many countries as "Do Nothing." In the end, the bank spent $10 million to change its tagline to "The world's private bank," which has a much friendlier translation.

2.5.2 Language is Abstract
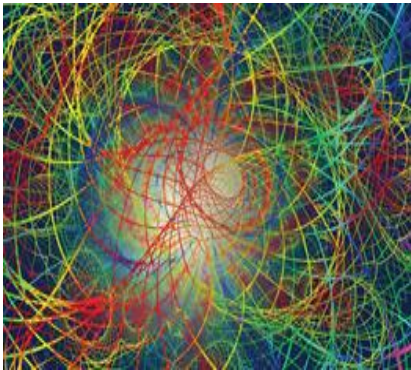
Words represent aspects of our human environment, and can play an important role in that environment. They may describe an important idea or concept, but the very act of labelling and invoking a word simplifies and distorts your concept of the thing itself. This ability to simplify concepts makes it easier to communicate, but it sometimes makes you lose track of the specific meaning you are trying to convey through abstraction.

The ladder of abstraction is a model used to illustrate how language can range from concrete to abstract. If you follow a concept up the ladder of abstraction, more and more of the "essence" of the original object is lost or left out, which leaves more room for interpretation, which can lead to misunderstanding. This process of abstracting, of leaving things out, allows you to communicate more effectively because it serves as a shorthand that keeps you from having a completely unmanageable language filled with millions of words—each referring to one specific

thing[8] (Hayakawa & Hayakawa, 1990). But it requires you to use context and often other words to generate shared meaning.

Some words are more directly related to a concept or idea than others. If you were asked to go and take a picture of a book, it might seem like a simple task. If you were asked to go and take a picture of "work," you'd be puzzled because work is an abstract word that was developed to refer to any number of possibilities from the act of writing a book, to repairing an air conditioner, to fertilizing an organic garden. You could take a picture of any of those things, but you would be challenged to take a picture of "work."

Consider the example of a cow.

If you were in a barn with this cow, you would actually be experiencing stimuli that would be coming in through your senses. You would hear the cow, likely smell the cow, and be able to touch the cow. You would perceive the actual 'thing,' which is the 'cow' in front of you. This would be considered concrete; it would be unmediated, meaning it was actually the moment of experience. As represented in Figure 2.2 below, the ladder of abstraction begins to move away from experience to language and description.

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[8] Hayakawa, S. I., & Hayakawa, A. R. (1990). Language in thought and action. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Ladder of Abstraction

More Abstract

Wealth - symbol that refers to prosperity, fortune, and success in relation to material goods or other life conditions

Asset - symbol that recognizes the monetary value of a possession

Livestock - symbol that recognizes animals kept on farms or ranches

Cow - symbol that recognizes bovine creatures

Bessie - symbol assigned to a "thing" that allows us to communicate about it, even when it is not present

Direct experience with sensory information about a "thing" that we will later call "Bessie"
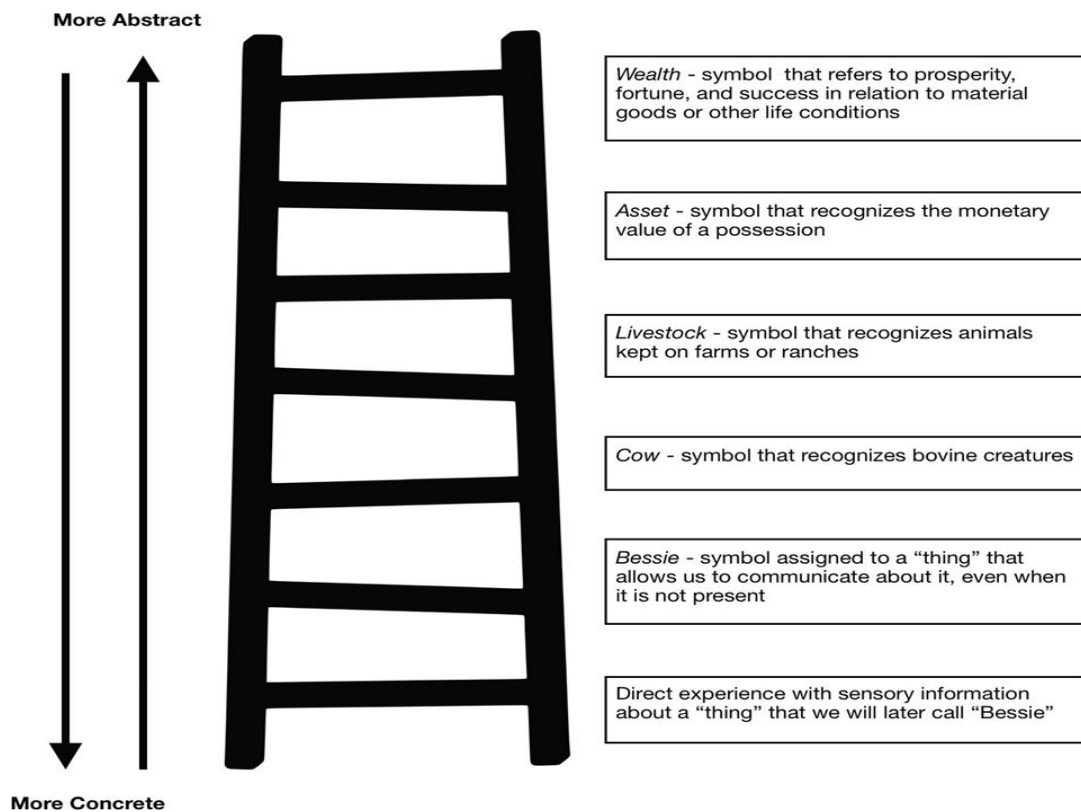
More Concrete

Figure 2.2. The Ladder of Abstraction. A ladder depicting increasing abstraction of observation and language (Hayakawa & Hayakawa, 1990).

As you move up a level on the ladder of abstraction, you might give your experience a name — you are looking at 'Bessie.' So now, instead of the direct experience with the 'thing' in front of you, you have given the thing a name, which takes you one step away from the direct experience toward the use of a more abstract symbol. Now you can talk and think about Bessie even when you aren't directly experiencing her.

At the next level, the word cow now lumps Bessie in with other bovine creatures that share similar characteristics. As you go up the ladder, cow becomes livestock, livestock becomes an asset, and then an asset becomes wealth.

Note that it becomes increasingly difficult to define the meaning of the symbol as you go up the ladder and how with each step you lose more of the characteristics of the original concrete experience.

2.5.3 Language Organizes and Classifies Reality

Humans use language to create and express some sense of order in their world. You often group words that represent concepts by their physical proximity or their similarity to one another. For example, in biology, animals with similar traits are classified together. An ostrich may be said to be related to an emu and a nandu, but you wouldn't group an ostrich with an elephant or a salamander. Your ability to organize is useful, but artificial. The systems of organization you use are not part of the natural world but an expression of your views about the natural world.

What is a doctor? A nurse? A teacher? If a male came to mind in the case of the word 'doctor' and a female came to mind in reference to 'nurse' or 'teacher', then your habits of mind include a gender bias. In many cultures, there was a time where gender stereotypes were more than just a stereotype; they were the gen- eral rule, the social custom, the norm. But now, in many places in the world, this is no longer true. More and more men are training to serve as nurses. In 2017, for example, data from the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) indicated that 41% of practising physicians in Canada were women (Canadian Medical Association, 2017).

You use systems of classification to help you navigate the world. Imagine how confusing life would be if you had no categories such as male/female, young/old, tall/short, doctor/nurse/teacher. While these categories are mentally useful, they can become problematic when you use them to uphold biases and ingrained assumptions that are no longer valid. You may assume, through your biases, that elements are related when they have no relationship at all. As a result, your thinking may become limited and your grasp of reality impaired. It is often easier to spot these biases in others, but it is important as an effective communicator to become aware of them in yourself. Holding biases unconsciously will limit your thinking, your grasp of reality, and your ability to communicate successfully.

2.6 LANGUAGE CAN BE AN OBSTACLE TO COMMUNICATION

In the past when you have used language to make sense of your experiences, and to take part in discussions, you no doubt came to see that language and verbal communication could work for you and sometimes against you. Language allowed you to communicate, but it also allowed you to miscommunicate and misunderstand.

In an article titled "The Miscommunication Gap," Susan Washburn lists several undesirable results of poor communication in business:

- Damaged relationships
- Loss of productivity
- Inefficiency and rework
- Conflict
- Missed opportunities
- Schedule slippage (delays, missed deadlines)
- Scope creep…or leap (gradual or sudden changes in an assignment that make it more complex and difficult than it was originally understood to be)
- Wasted resources
- Unclear or unmet requirements

In the following section you will explore how words can serve either as a bridge, or a barrier, to understanding and communication of meaning. Your goals of effective and efficient business communication mean an inherent value of words and terms that keeps the bridge clear and free of obstacles. Review the six barriers to communication in Figure 2.3 as follows:

Cliché – cultural references that often make no sense in other cultures. For example, "A cliché is something to avoid like the plague, for it is nothing but a tired old war horse, and if the shoe were on the other foot you too would have an axe to grind."

Jargon – An occupation-specific language used by people in a given profession. Jargon does not necessarily imply formal education, but instead focuses on the language people in a profession use to communicate with each other.

Slang – The use of existing or newly invented words to take the place of standard or traditional words with the intent of adding an unconventional, nonstandard, humorous, or rebellious effect. It differs from jargon in that it is used in informal contexts, among friends or members of a certain age group, rather than by professionals in a certain industry.

Euphemism – Involves substituting an acceptable word for an offensive, controversial, or unacceptable one that conveys the same or similar meaning.

Doublespeak – The deliberate use of words to disguise, obscures, or change meaning.

Offensive Language – Some language is offensive and has no place in the workplace. It may even be a violation of company policy.

Each of these six barriers to communication contributes to misunderstanding and miscommunication, intentionally or unintentionally. If you recognize one of them, you can address it right away. You can redirect a question and get to essential meaning, rather than leaving with a misunderstanding that might impact a business relationship. In business communication, your goal of clear and concise communication should remain constant. Never forget that trust is the foundation for effective communication.

Part of your effort must include reinforcing the relationship inherent between source and receiver. One effective step toward that goal is to reduce obstacles to effective communication. The more you can learn about your audience, the better you can tailor your chosen words. If you lack information or want your document to be understood by a variety of readers, it pays to use common words and avoid jargon. This is known as actively bridging communication to help ensure your audience clearly understands your intended message.

2.7 Improving Verbal Communication

In this chapter you have reviewed examples and stories that highlight the importance of verbal and written communication. To end the chapter, consider how language can be used to enlighten or deceive; encourage or discourage; empower or destroy. By defining the terms you use and choosing precise words, you will maximize your audience's understanding of your message. In addition, it is important to consider the audience, control your tone, check for understanding, and focus on results. Recognizing the power of verbal communication is the first step to understanding its role and impact on the communication process.

Define Your Terms	Be aware of any words you are using that may be unfamiliar to your audience. When you identify an unfamiliar word, your first decision is whether to use it or to substitute a more common, easily understood word.
Choose Precise Words	To increase understanding, choose precise words that provide the most accurate picture for your audience.

Consider Your Audience	Contextual clues are important to guide your audience as they read.
Control Tone	What kind of tone is best for your intended audience?
Check for Understanding	In oral communication, feedback is a core component of the communication model as we can often see it, hear it, and it takes less effort to assess it.
Be Results Oriented	It can be a challenge to balance the need for attention to detail with the need to arrive at the end product

Even when you are careful to craft your message clearly and concisely, not everyone will understand every word you say or write. As an effective business communicator, you know it is your responsibility to give your audience every advantage in understanding your meaning. Precise words, clear definitions, and contextual clues are important to guide your audience as they read. If you are speaking to a general audience and choose to use a word in professional jargon that may be understood by many but not all of the people in your audience, follow it by a common reference that clearly relates its essential meaning. With this positive strategy you will be able to forge relationships with audience members from diverse backgrounds.

Getting a handle on how to influence tone and to make your voice match your intentions takes time and skill. Make time for feedback and plan for it. Ask clarifying questions. Share your presentation with more than one person, and choose people that have similar characteristics to your anticipated audience. Lastly, finding balance while engaging in an activity that requires a high level of attention to detail can be challenge for any business communicator, but it is helpful to keep the end in mind.

The following two examples will provide you with ideas for increasing the precision of communication.

Example 1

Original – Bob left work.

Revised – Bob left work to go home at 5 pm.

Example 2

Original – Colleen presented a proposal.

Revised – Colleen, the marketing manager, presented a proposal on the marketing budget for next year.

2.8 LET US SUM UP

To summarize, messages are primary, secondary, and auxiliary. A message can be divided into a five-part structure composed of an attention statement, introduction, body, conclusion, and residual message. In order to improve communication, define your terms, choose precise words, consider your audience, control your tone, check for understanding, and aim for results. In order to defuse common obstacles to communication, avoid clichés, jargon, slang, sexist and racist language, euphemisms, and doublespeak.

2.9 FURTHER READING

- Toastmasters International – Public speaking tips: https://www.toastmasters.org/resources/public-speak- ing-tips
- Harvard psychology professor Steven Pinker is one of today's most innovative authorities on language.
- Explore reviews of books about language Pinker has published. http://stevenpinker.com/taxonomy/term/ 4265
- The "I Have a Dream" speech by Martin Luther King Jr. is one of the most famous speeches of all time. View it on video and read the text. http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihaveadream.htm
- Visit Goodreads and learn about one of the most widely used style manuals, The Chicago Manual of Style. http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/103362.The_Chicago_Manual_of_Style

2.10 ASSIGNMENTS

1. Define language and describe its role in the communication process.
2. Describe how language shapes our experience of reality.
3. Give examples of how language can be a barrier to communication.
4. Give examples of message types and the parts of a message.
5. Explain the differences between clichés, jargon, and slang.
6. Demonstrate professional communication related to gender and race.
7. List six strategies for improving verbal communication.

Unit 3: YOU AND YOUR AUDIENCE

3

Unit Structure

3.1   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit students should be able to understand:

- •   Fundamental of Perception
- •   Role of Self-Understanding to Communication
- •   Getting to Know Your Audience
- •   Listening and Reading for Understanding

3.2   INTRODUCTION

This unit describes about fundamental of perception, what is role of self-understanding for effective communication, how to know your audience and listening and reading strategies for understanding.

3.3   PERCEPTION

Perception is the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting information. This process, which is rep- resented in Figure 3.1 below, includes the perception of select stimuli that pass through your perceptual filters, are organized into your existing structures and patterns, and are then interpreted based on previous experiences. How you perceive the people and objects around you affects your communication. You respond differently to an object or person that you perceive favourably than you do to someone (or some- thing) you find unfavourable. But how do you filter through the mass amounts of incoming information, organize it, and make meaning from what makes it through your perceptual filters and into your social realities?

Figure 3.1. Selection, interpretation, and organization that contribute to perception.

3.3.1 Selecting Information

Most people take in information through their five senses, but your perceptual field (the world around you) includes so many stimuli that it is impossible for your brain to process and make sense of it all. So, as information comes in through your senses, various factors influence what actually continues on through the perception process[9]. Selecting is the first part of the perception process, in which you focus your attention on certain incoming sensory information. Think about how, out of many other possible stimuli to pay attention to, you may hear a familiar voice in the hallway, see a pair of shoes you want to buy from across the mall, or smell something cooking for dinner when you get home from work. You quickly cut through and push to the background all kinds of sights, smells, sounds, and other stimuli, but how do you decide what to select and what to leave out?

You tend to pay attention to information that is salient. Salience is the degree to which something attracts your attention in a particular context. The thing attracting your attention can be abstract, like a concept, or concrete, like an object. A bright flashlight shining in your face while camping at night is sure to be salient. The degree of salience depends on three features: (Fiske & Taylor, 1991) whether the object is visually or aurally stimulating, whether it meets your needs or interests, and whether it meets or challenges your expectations. Consider the image below: The Crashed Nike Ball Guerilla Marketing Example.

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[9] Fiske, S. T., & Taylor, S. E. (1991). Social cognition (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill

Related to salience, this example may be considered visually stimulating (it's quite large), it may be considered interesting, and it challenges most people's expectations in terms of size. The artwork is meant to stimulate one's imagination to question" why is the ball so large? What kind of large person (or monster perhaps) might have kicked it so hard it became embedded in the side of a building? This example represents an impossible scenario created through art that generates salience.

Visual and Aural Stimulation – It is probably not surprising to learn that visually and/or aurally stimulating things become salient in our perceptual field and get our attention.

Needs and Interests – We tend to pay attention to information that we perceive to meet our needs or interests in some way. We also find salient information that interests us.

Expectations – The relationship between salience and expectations is a little more complex. Basically, we can find expected things salient and find things that are unexpected salient.

As a communicator, you can use this knowledge about salience to your benefit by minimizing distractions when you have something important to say. It's probably better to have a serious conversation with a significant other in a quiet place rather than a crowded food court. Aside from minimizing distractions and delivering your messages enthusiastically, the content of your communication also affects salience. Whether a sign helps you find the nearest gas station, the sound of a ringtone helps us find your missing cell phone, or a speaker tells you how avoiding processed foods will improve your health, you select and attend to information that meets your needs.

Likely you have experienced the sensation of being engrossed in a television show, video game, or random project that you paid attention to at the expense of something that actually met your needs – like cleaning or spending time with a significant other. Paying attention to things that interest you but don't meet specific needs seems like the basic formula for procrastination that you might be familiar with.

If you are expecting a package to be delivered, you might pick up on the slightest noise of a truck engine or someone's footsteps approaching your front door. Since you expect something to happen, you may be extra tuned in to clues that it is coming. In terms of the unexpected, if you have a shy and soft-spoken friend who you overhear raising the volume and pitch of his voice while talking to another friend, you may pick up on that and assume that something out of the ordinary is going on. For something unexpected to become salient, it has to reach a certain threshold of difference. If you walked into your regular class and there were one or two more students there than normal, you may not even notice. If you walked into your class and there was someone dressed up as a wizard, you would probably notice. So, if you expect to experience something out of the routine, like a package delivery, you will find stimuli related to that expectation salient. If you experience something that you weren't expecting and that is significantly different from your routine experiences, then you will likely find it salient. You can also apply this concept to your communication.

Good instructors encourage their students to include supporting material in their speeches that defies audience expectations. You can help keep your audience engaged by employing good research skills to find such information.

Organizing Information

Organizing is the second part of the perception process, in which you sort and categorize information that you perceive based on innate and learned cognitive patterns. Three ways you sort things into patterns are by using proximity, similarity, and difference[10] (Coren & Girgus, 1980).

Proximity – In terms of proximity, we tend to think that things that are close together go together.

Similarity – We also group things together based on similarity. We tend to think similar-looking or similar- acting things belong together.

Difference – We also organize information that we take in based on difference. In this case, we assume that the item that looks or acts different from the rest doesn't belong with the group.

Since you often organize perceptual information based on proximity, you may automatically perceive that two people are together, just because they are standing close together in line.

This type of strategy for organizing information is so common that it is built into how you function in your daily life. If you think of the literal act of organizing something, like your desk at home or work, you follow these same strategies. If you have a bunch of papers and mail on the top of your desk, you will likely sort papers into separate piles for separate classes or put bills in a separate place than personal mail. You may have one drawer for pens, pencils, and other supplies and another drawer for files. In this case you are grouping items based on similarities and differences. You may also group things based on proximity, for example, by putting financial items like your check book, a calculator, and your pay stubs in one area so

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[10] Coren, S., & Girgus, J. S. (1980). Principles of perceptual organization and spatial distortion: The gestalt illu- sions. Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance, 6(3), 404-412. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0096-1523.6.3.404

you can update your budget easily. In summary, you simplify information and look for patterns to help conduct tasks and communicate efficiently in all aspects of your life.

Simplification and categorizing based on patterns isn't necessarily a bad thing. In fact, without this capability you would likely not have the ability to speak, read, or engage in other complex cognitive/behavioral functions. There are differences among people, and looking for patterns helps you in many practical ways.

However, the judgments you might place on various patterns and categories are not natural; they are learned and culturally and contextually relative. Your perceptual patterns do become unproductive and even unethical when the judgments you associate with certain patterns are based on stereotypical or prejudicial thinking.

3.3.2 Interpreting Information

Although selecting and organizing incoming stimuli happens very quickly, and sometimes without much conscious thought, interpretation can be a much more deliberate and conscious step in the perception process. Interpretation is the third part of the perception process, in which you assign meaning to your experiences using mental structures known as schemata. Schemata are like databases of stored, related information that you use to interpret new experiences. Schemata are like

lenses that help you make sense of the perceptual cues around you based on previous knowledge and experience.

It's important to be aware of schemata because your interpretations affect your behaviour. For example, if you are doing a group project for class and you perceive a group member to be shy based on your schema of how shy people communicate, you may avoid giving him or her presentation responsibilities because you do not think shy people make good public speakers. Schemata also guide your interactions, providing a script for your behaviours. Many people know how to act and communicate in a waiting room, in a classroom, on a first date, and on a game show. Even a person who has never been on a game show can develop a schema for how to act in that environment by watching The Price Is Right, for example.

A final example, you often include what you do for a living in your self-introduction, which then provides a schema through which others interpret your communication.

3.4 SELF UNDERSTANDING IS FUNDAMENTAL TO COMMUNICATION

You need to know what you want to say before you can say it to an audience. Understanding your perspective can lend insight to your awareness, the ability to be conscious of events and stimuli. Awareness determines what you pay attention to, how you carry out your intentions, and what you remember of your activities and experiences each day. Awareness is a complicated and fascinating area of study. The way we take in information, give it order, and assign it meaning has long interested researchers from disciplines including sociology, anthropology, and psychology.

Your perspective is a major factor in this dynamic process. Whether you are aware of it or not, you bring to the act of reading this sentence a frame of mind formed from experiences and education across your life- time. Learning to recognize how your

perspective influences your thoughts is a key step in understanding yourself and preparing to communicate with others. In the image that follows there are two skydivers that seem to be having a lot of fun. That is their perspective. Perhaps skydiving might not be fun for everyone; it might be quite frightening to some.

3.4.1 Self-Concept

When you communicate, you are full of expectations, doubts, fears, and hopes. Where you place emphasis, what you focus on, and how you view your potential has a direct impact on your communication interactions. You gather a sense of self as you grow, age, and experience others and the world. Much of what you know about yourself you have learned through interaction with others.

The concept of the looking glass self explains that you see yourself reflected in other people's reactions to you and then form your self-concept based on how you believe other people see you[11]. This reflective process of building your self-concept is based on what other people have actually said, such as "You're a good listener," and other people's actions, such as coming to you for advice. These thoughts evoke emotional responses that feed into your self-concept. For example, you may think, "I'm glad that people can count on me to listen to their problems."

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[11] Cooley, C. (1922). Human nature and the social order (Rev. ed.). New York, NY: Scribners.

Carol Dweck, a psychology researcher at Stanford University, states that "something that seems like a small intervention can have cascading effects on things we think of as stable or fixed, including extroversion, openness to new experience, and resilience." (Begley, 2008) [12]Your personality and expressions of it, like oral and written communication, were long thought to have a genetic component. But, says Dweck, "More and more research is suggesting that, far from being simply encoded in the genes, much of personality is a flexible and dynamic thing that changes over the life span and is shaped by experience." (Begley, 2008) If you were told by someone that you were not a good listener, know this: You can change. You can shape your performance through experience, and a business communication course, a mentor at work, or even reading effective business communication authors can result in positive change.

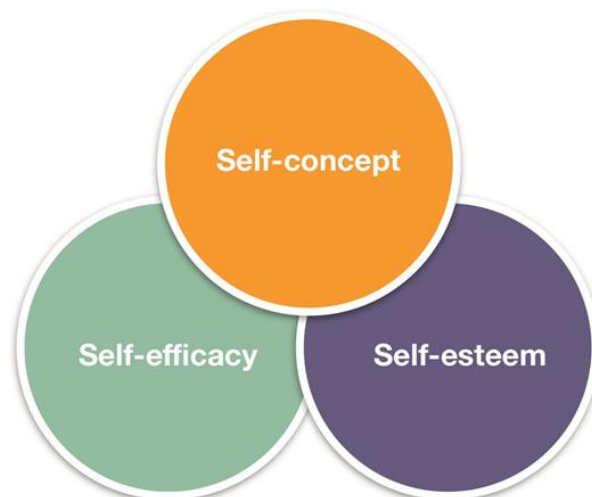In figure 3.2 below, the trio of the looking glass self is represented.

Figure 3.2 Self-concept, self-efficacy, and self-esteem.

3.4.2 Attitudes, Beliefs, and Values

When you consider what makes you , the answers multiply as do the questions. As a baby, you learned to recognize that the face in the mirror was your face. But as an adult, you begin to wonder what and who you are. While you could explore the concept of self endlessly and philosophers have wrestled and will continue to wrestle with it, for your learning purpose, focus on self, which is defined as one's own sense

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[12] Begley, S. (2008, December 1). When DNA is not destiny. *Newsweek*, p. 14.

of individuality, motivations, and personal characteristics[13]. You also must keep in mind that this concept is not fixed or absolute; instead it changes as you grow and change across your lifetime.

One point of discussion useful for your study about yourself as a communicator is to examine your attitudes, beliefs, and values. These are all interrelated, and researchers have varying theories as to which comes first and which springs from another. You learn your values, beliefs, and attitudes through interaction with others.

An **attitude** is your immediate disposition toward a concept or an object. Attitudes can change easily and frequently. You may prefer vanilla while someone else prefers peppermint, but if someone tries to persuade you of how delicious peppermint is, you may be willing to try it and find that you like it better than vanilla.

Beliefs are ideas based on your previous experiences and convictions and may not necessarily be based on logic or fact. You no doubt have beliefs on political, economic, and religious issues. These beliefs may not have been formed through rigorous study, but you nevertheless hold them as important aspects of self.

Beliefs often serve as a frame of reference through which you interpret your world. Although they can be changed, it often takes time or strong evidence to persuade someone to change a belief.

Values are core concepts and ideas of what you consider good or bad, right or wrong, or what is worth the sacrifice. Your values are central to your self-image, what makes you who you are. Like beliefs, your values may not be based on empirical research or rational thinking, but they are even more resistant to change than are beliefs. To undergo a change in values, a person may need to undergo a transformative life experience.

3.4.3 Self-Image and Self-Esteem

Your self-concept is composed of two main elements: self-image and self-esteem. Your self-image is how you see yourself, how you would describe yourself to others. It includes your physical characteristics—your eye color, hair length, height, and so forth. It also includes your knowledge, experience, interests, and relationships. What

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[13] McLean, S. (2003). *The basics of speech communication*. Boston, MA: Allyn Bacon.

is your image of yourself as a communicator? How do you feel about your ability to communicate? While the two responses may be similar, they indicate different things.

Your self-esteem is how you feel about yourself; your feelings of self-worth, self-acceptance, and self- respect. Healthy self-esteem can be particularly important when you experience a setback or a failure. High self-esteem will enable you to persevere and give yourself positive messages like "If I prepare well and try harder, I can do better next time."

Putting your self-image and self-esteem together yields your self-concept: your central identity and set of beliefs about who you are and what you are capable of accomplishing. When it comes to communicating, your self-concept can play an important part. You may find that communicating is a struggle, or the thought of communicating may make you feel talented and successful. Either way, if you view yourself as someone capable of learning new skills and improving as you go, you will have an easier time learning to be an effective communicator. Whether positive or negative, your self-concept influences your performance and the expression of that essential ability: communication.

3.4.4 Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

In a psychology experiment that has become famous through repeated trials, several public school teachers were told that specific students in their classes were expected to do quite well because of their intelligence[14]. These students were identified as having special potential that had not yet "bloomed." What the teachers didn't know was that these "special potential" students were randomly selected. That's right: as a group, they had no more special potential than any other students. Can you anticipate the outcome? As you may guess, the students lived up to their teachers' level of expectation. Even though the teachers were supposed to give appropriate attention and encouragement to all students, in fact they unconsciously communicated special encouragement verbally and nonverbally to the special

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[14] Rosenthal, R., & Jacobson, L. (1968). *Pygmalion in the classroom*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, Winston.

potential students. And these students, who were actually no more gifted than their peers, showed significant improvement by the end of the school year. This phenomenon came to be called the "Pygmalion effect" after the myth of a Greek sculptor named Pygmalion, who carved a marble statue of a woman so lifelike that he fell in love with her—and in response to his love she did in fact come to life and marry him (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Insel & Jacobson, 1975).

In more recent studies, researchers have observed that the opposite effect can also happen: when students are seen as lacking potential, teachers tend to discourage them or, at a minimum, fail to give them adequate encouragement. As a result, the students do poorly[15,16,17]

When people encourage you, it affects the way you see yourself and your potential. Seek encouragement for your writing and speaking. Actively choose positive reinforcement as you develop your communication skills. You will make mistakes, but the important thing is to learn from them. Keep in mind that criticism should be constructive, with specific points you can address, correct, and improve. The concept of a self- fulfilling prophecy, in which someone's behavior comes to match and mirror others' expectations, is not new. Robert Rosenthal, a professor of social psychology at Harvard, observed four principles while studying this interaction between expectations and performance:

1. We form certain expectations of people or events.
2. We communicate those expectations with various cues, verbal and nonverbal.

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[15] Anyon, J. (1980, Fall). Social class and the hidden curriculum of work. *Journal of Education*, *162*(1), 67–92.

[16] Oakes, J. (1985). Keeping track: How schools structure inequality. Birmingham, NY: Vail-Ballou Press.

[17] Schugurensky, D. (Ed.). (2009). Selected moments of the 20th century. In History of education: A work inprogress. Department of Adult Education, Community Development and Counselling Psychology, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). Retrieved from http://fcis.oise.utoronto.ca/~daniel_sc/assignment1/1968rosenjacob.html

3. People tend to respond to these cues by adjusting their behavior to match the expectations.

4. The outcome is that the original expectation becomes true.

3.5 GETTING TO KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Writing to your audience's expectations is key to your success, but how do you get a sense of your readers? Research, time, and effort. At first glance you may think you know your audience, but if you dig a little deeper you will learn more about them and become a better speaker.

Figure 3.4, below is often called the iceberg model. When you see an iceberg on the ocean, the great majority of its size and depth lie below your level of visual awareness. When you write a document or give a presentation, each person in your reading or listening audience is like the tip of an iceberg. You may perceive people of different ages, races, ethnicities, and genders, but those are only surface characteristics. This is your challenge. When you communicate with a diverse audience, you are engaging in intercultural communication. The more you learn about the audience, the better you will be able to navigate the waters, and your communication interactions, safely and effectively.
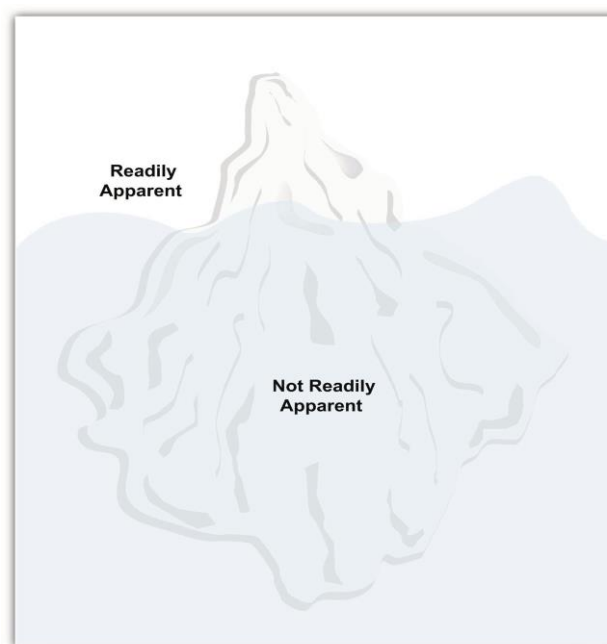
Theodore Roosevelt pointed out that "the most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people." Knowing your audience

well before you speak is essential. Here are a few questions to help guide you in learning more about your audience:

- How big is the audience?
- What are their backgrounds, gender, age, jobs, education, and/or interests?
- Do they already know about your topic? If so, how much?
- Will other materials be presented or available? If so, what are they, what do they cover, and how do they relate to your message?
- How much time is allotted for your presentation, or how much space do you have for your written document? Will your document or presentation stand alone or do you have the option of adding visuals, audio-visual aids, or links?

3.5.1 Demographic Traits

Demographic traits refer to the characteristics that make someone an individual, but that he or she has in common with others. Imagine that you are writing a report on the health risks associated with smoking. To get your message across to an audience of twelve-year-olds, clearly you would use different language and different examples than what you would use for an audience of adults age fifty-five and older.

3.5.2 Tailor your message to your audience

Source: Pixabay.com Public Domain

Writing for readers in the insurance industry, you would likely choose examples of how insurance claims are affected by whether or not a policyholder smokes,

whereas if you were writing for readers who are athletes, you would focus on how the human body reacts to tobacco.

Audiences tend to be interested in messages that relate to their interests, needs, goals, and motivations. Demographic traits can give us insight into our audience and allow for an audience centred approach to your assignment that will make you a more effective communicator[18].

3.5.3 Improving Your Perceptions of Your Audience

The better you can understand your audience, the better you can tailor your communications to reach them. To understand them, a key step is to perceive clearly who they are, what they are interested in, what they need, and what motivates them. This ability to perceive is important with audience members from distinct groups, generations, and even cultures. William Seiler and Melissa Beall offer us six ways to improve our perceptions, and therefore improve our communication, particularly in public speaking; they are listed in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Perceptual Strategies for Success

Perceptual Strategy	Explanation
Become an active perceiver	You need to actively seek out as much information as possible. Placing yourself in the new culture, group, or co-culture can often expand your understanding.
Recognize that people, objects, and situations change	The world is changing and so is each individual. Recognizing that people and cultures, like communication process itself, are dynamic and ever changing can improve your intercultural communication
Become aware of the role perceptions play in communication	Perception is an important aspect of the communication process. By understanding that your perceptions are not the only ones possible can limit

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[18] Beebe, S., & Beebe, S. (1997). *Public speaking: An audience-centered approach* (3rd ed.).

Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

	ethnocentrism and improve intercultural communication.
Keep an open mind	The adage "A mind is like a parachute—it works best when open" holds true. Being open to differences can improve intercultural communication.
Check your perceptions	By learning to observe, and acknowledging your perceptions, you can avoid assumptions, expand your understanding, and improve your ability to communicate across cultures.

3.5.4 Fairness in Communication

Consider that your audience has several expectations of you. No doubt you have sat through a speech or classroom lecture where you asked yourself, "Why should I listen?" You have probably been assigned to read a document or chapter and found yourself wondering, "What does this have to do with me?" These questions are normal and natural for audiences, but people seldom actually state these questions in so many words or say them out loud.

In a report on intercultural communication, V. Lynn Tyler offered insight into these audience expectations, which was summarized as the need to be fair to your audience. One key fairness principle is reciprocity, or a relationship of mutual exchange and interdependence. Reciprocity has four main components: mutuality, non-judgmentalism, honesty, and respect.

Mutuality means that the speaker searches for common ground and understanding with his or her audience, establishing this space and building on it throughout the speech. This involves examining viewpoints other than your own and taking steps to insure the speech integrates an inclusive, accessible format rather than an ethnocentric one.

Non-judgmentalism involves willingness to examine diverse ideas and viewpoints. A non-judgmental communicator is open-minded, and able to accept ideas that may be strongly opposed to his or her own beliefs and values.

Another aspect of fairness in communication is honesty: stating the truth as you perceive it. When you communicate honestly, you provide supporting and clarifying information and give credit to the sources where you obtained the information. In

addition, if there is significant evidence opposing your viewpoint, you acknowledge this and avoid concealing it from your audience.

Finally, fairness involves respect for the audience and individual members recognizing that each person has basic rights and is worthy of courtesy. Consider these expectations of fairness when designing your message and you will more thoroughly engage your audience.

3.6   LISTENING AND READING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Learning to listen to your conversational partner, customer, supplier, or supervisor is an important part of business communication. Often, instead of listening you mentally rehearse what you want to say. Similarly, when you read, you are often trying to multitask and therefore cannot read with full attention. Inattentive listening or reading can cause you to miss much of what the speaker (or writer) is sharing with you.

Communication involves the sharing and understanding of meaning. To fully share and understand, practice active listening and reading so that you are fully attentive, fully present in the moment of interaction. Pay attention to both the actual words and for other clues to meaning, such as tone of voice or writing style.

Look for opportunities for clarification and feedback when the time comes for you to respond, not before.

3.6.1   Active Listening and Reading

You've probably experienced the odd sensation of driving somewhere and, having arrived, realized you don't remember driving. Your mind may have been filled with other issues and you drove on autopilot. It's dangerous when you drive like that, and it is dangerous in communication. Choosing to listen or read attentively takes effort. People communicate with words, expressions, and even in silence, and your attention to them will make you a better communicator. From discussions on improving customer service to retaining customers in challenging economic times, the importance of listening comes up frequently as a success strategy.

Here are some tips to facilitate active listening and reading:

• Maintain eye contact with the speaker; if reading, keep your eyes on the page.
• Don't interrupt; if reading, don't multitask.
• Focus your attention on the message, not your internal monologue.

- Restate the message in your own words and ask if you understood correctly.
- Ask clarifying questions to communicate interest and gain insight.

3.6.2 When the Going Gets Tough

Tips in this chapter will serve you well in daily interactions, but suppose you have an especially difficult subject to discuss, or you receive a written document delivering bad news. In a difficult situation like this, it is worth taking extra effort to create an environment and context that will facilitate positive communication.
Here are some strategies that may be helpful:

- Set aside a special time. To have a difficult conversation or read bad news, set aside a special time when you will not be disturbed. Close the door and turn off the TV, music player, and instant messaging client.
- Don't interrupt. Keep silent while you let the other person "speak his or her piece." If you are reading, make an effort to understand and digest the news without mental interruptions.
- Be non-judgmental. Receive the message without judgment or criticism. Set aside your opinions, attitudes, and beliefs.
- Be accepting. Be open to the message being communicated, realizing that acceptance does not necessarily mean you agree with what is being said.
- Take turns. Wait until it is your turn to respond, and then measure your response in proportion to the message that was delivered to you. Reciprocal turn-taking allows each person have her of his say.
- Acknowledge. Let the other person know that you have listened to the message or read it attentively.
- Understand. Be certain that you understand what your partner is saying. If you don't understand, ask for clarification. Restate the message in your own words.
- Keep your cool. Speak your truth without blaming. A calm tone will help prevent the conflict from escalating. Use "I" statements (e.g., "I felt concerned when I learned that my department is going to have a layoff") rather than "you" statements (e.g., "you want to get rid of some of our best people").
- Finally, recognize that mutual respect and understanding are built one conversation at a time. Trust is difficult to gain and easy to lose. Be patient and keep the channels of communication open, as a solution may develop slowly over

the course of many small interactions. Recognize that it is more valuable to maintain the relationship over the long term than to "win" in an individual transaction.

3.7 LET US SUM UP

To summarize, you can become a more effective communicator by understanding yourself and how others view you: your attitudes, beliefs, and values; your self-concept; and how the self-fulfilling prophecy may influence your decisions. As a presenter or communicator it's very important to understand your audience. You can learn about their demographic traits, such as age, gender, and employment status, as these help determine their interests, needs, and goals. In addition, you can become more aware of your perceptions and theirs, and practice fairness in your communications. The part of being an effective communicator is learning to receive messages from others through active listening and reading.

3.8 FURTHER READING

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3.9 ASSIGNMENTS

1. Define perception and explain ways in which you organize perceptual information.
2. Describe the terms self-concept and self-esteem.
3. Discuss how social norms, family, culture, and media influence self-perception.
4. Give examples of the effect of self-fulfilling prophecies.
5. List three ways to better understand and reach your audience.
6. Explain the importance of being an active listener and active reader.

Unit 4:NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Unit Structure

4.1   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit student should be able to understand

- Principles of non-verbal communication
- Types of non-verbal communication
- Role of movement in speech
- Strategies for non-verbal

4.2   INTRODUCTION

Nonverbal communication has a distinct history and serves separate evolutionary functions from verbal communication. For example, nonverbal communication is primarily biologically based while verbal communication is primarily culturally based. This is evidenced by the fact that some nonverbal communication has the same meaning across cultures while no verbal communication systems share that same universal recognisability (Andersen, 1999). Nonverbal communication also evolved earlier than verbal communication and served an early and important survival function that helped humans later develop verbal communication.

While some of our nonverbal communication abilities, like our sense of smell, lost strength as our verbal capacities increased, other abilities like paralanguage and movement have grown alongside verbal complexity. The fact that nonverbal communication is processed by an older part of our brain makes it more instinctual and involuntary than verbal communication.

4.3   PRINCIPLES OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

4.3.1 Nonverbal Communication Is Fluid

Chances are you have had many experiences where words were misunderstood, or where the meaning of words was unclear. When it comes to nonverbal communication, meaning is even harder to discern. You can sometimes tell what people are communicating through their nonverbal communication, but there is no fool proof "dictionary" of how to interpret nonverbal messages.

Nonverbal communication is the process of conveying a message without the use of words. It can include gestures and facial expressions, tone of voice, timing, posture

and where you stand as you communicate. It can help or hinder the clear understanding of your message, but it doesn't reveal (and can even mask) what you are really thinking. Nonverbal communication is far from simple, and its complexity makes your study and your understanding a worthy but challenging goal.

Nonverbal communication involves the entire body, the space it occupies and dominates, the time it interacts, and not only what is not said, but how it is not said. Confused? Try to focus on just one element of nonverbal communication and it will soon get lost among all the other stimuli. Consider one element, facial expressions. What do they mean without the extra context of chin position, or eyebrows to flag interest or signal a threat? Nonverbal action flows almost seamlessly from one movement to the next, making it a challenge to interpret one element, or even a series of elements. How well can you correctly identify the feelings behind facial expressions?

The following series of images show people with a variety of facial expressions, what does each one represent?

Images source: Pixabay, Public Domain – the answer key is at the end of this section.

You may perceive time as linear, flowing along in a straight line. You do one task, you're doing another task now, and you are planning on doing something else all the time. Sometimes you place more emphasis on the future, or the past, forgetting that you are actually living in the present moment whether you focus on "the now" or not. Nonverbal communication is always in motion, as long as you are, and is never the same twice.

Nonverbal communication is irreversible. In written communication, you can write a clarification, correction, or retraction. While it never makes the original statement go completely away, it does allow for correction. Unlike written communication, oral communication may allow "do-overs" on the spot: you can explain and restate, hoping to clarify your point. In your experience, you've likely said something you would give anything to take back, and you've learned the hard way that you can't. Oral communication, like written communication, allows for some correction, but it still doesn't erase the original message or its impact.

Nonverbal communication takes it one step further. You can't separate one nonverbal action from the con- text of all the other verbal and nonverbal communication acts, and you can't take it back.

In a speech, nonverbal communication is continuous in the sense that it is always occurring, and because it is so fluid, it can be hard to determine where one nonverbal message starts and another stops. Words can be easily identified and isolated, but if you try to single out a speaker's gestures, smile, or stance without looking at how they all come together in context, you may miss the point and draw the wrong conclusion. You need to be conscious of this aspect of public speaking because, to quote an old saying, "Actions speak louder than words." This is true in the sense that people often pay more attention to your nonverbal expressions more than your words. As a result, nonverbal communication is a powerful way to contribute to (or detract from) your success in communicating your message to the audience.

Answer Key for Facial Recognition Activity – F: Disgusted; E: Annoyed; D: Angry; C: Sad; B: Confused; A: Joyful

4.3.2 Nonverbal Communication Is Fast

Nonverbal communication gives your thoughts and feelings away before you are even aware of what you are thinking or how you feel. People may see and hear more than you ever anticipated. Your nonverbal communication includes both intentional and unintentional messages, but since it all happens so fast, the unintentional ones can contradict what you know you are supposed to say or how you are supposed to react.

People tend to pay more attention to how you say something rather than what you actually say. You communicate nonverbally more than you engage in verbal communication, and often use nonverbal expressions to add to, or even replace, words you might otherwise say.

You use a nonverbal gesture called an illustrator to communicate your message effectively and reinforce your point. For example, you might use hand gestures to indicate the size or shape of an object to someone. Think about how you gesture

when having a phone conversation, even though the other person can't see you, there's an important unconscious element to nonverbal communication.

Unlike gestures, emblems are gestures that have a specific agreed-on meaning, like when someone raises their thumb to indicate agreement. Many cultures have a variety of different non-verbal emblems.

In addition to illustrators or emblematic nonverbal communication, you also use regulators. "Regulators are nonverbal messages which control, maintain or discourage interaction"[19]. For example, if someone is telling you a message that is confusing or upsetting, you may hold up your hand, a commonly recognized regulator that asks the speaker to stop talking.

Let's say you are in a meeting presenting a speech that introduces your company's latest product. If your audience members nod their heads in agreement on important points and maintain good eye contact, it is a good sign. Nonverbally, they are using regulators encouraging you to continue with your presentation. In contrast, if they look away, tap their feet, and begin drawing in the margins of their notebook, these are regulators suggesting that you better think of a way to regain their interest or else wrap up your presentation quickly.

"Affect displays are nonverbal communication that express emotions or feelings" (McLean, 2003). An affect display that might accompany holding up your hand for silence would be to frown and shake your head from side to side. When you and a colleague are at a restaurant, smiling and waving at co-workers as they arrive lets them know where you are seated and welcomes them.
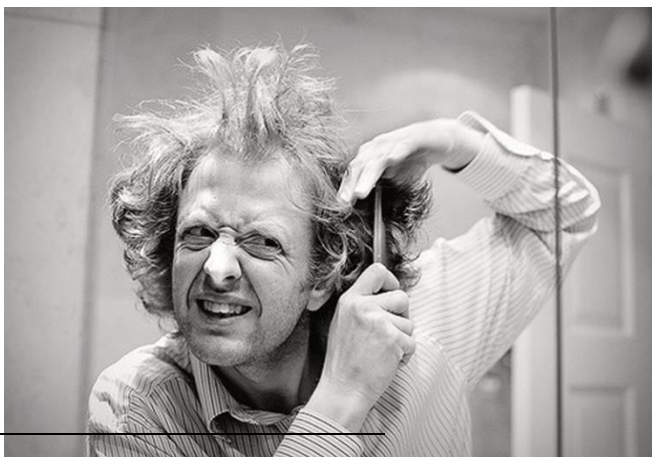
[19] McLean, S. (2003). *The basics of speech communication*. Boston, MA: Allyn Bacon.

"Adaptors are displays of nonverbal communication that help you adapt to your environment and each context, helping you feel comfortable and secure" (McLean, 2003). A self-adaptor involves you meeting your need for security, by playing with your hair for example, by adapting something about yourself in way for which it was not designed or for no apparent purpose. Combing your hair would be an example of a purposeful action, unlike a self-adaptive behavior.

An object-adaptor involves the use of an object in a way for which it was not designed. You may see audience members tapping their pencils, chewing on them, or playing with them, while ignoring you and your presentation. This is an example of an object-adaptor that communicates a lack of engagement or enthusiasm for your speech.

Intentional nonverbal communication can complement, repeat, replace, mask, or contradict what we say. When a friend invites you to join them for a meal, you may say "Yeah" and nod, complementing and repeating the message. You could have simply nodded, effectively replacing the "yes" with a nonverbal response. You could also have decided to say no, but did not want to hurt your friend's feelings. Shaking your head "no" while pointing to your watch, communicating work and time issues, may mask your real thoughts or feelings. Masking involves the substitution of appropriate nonverbal communication for potentially negative nonverbal communication you may want to display (McLean, 2003).

Finally, nonverbal messages that conflict with verbal communication can confuse the listener. Table 4.1 below summarizes these concepts.

Table 4.1 – Some Nonverbal Expressions

Term	Definition
Adaptors	Help us feel comfortable or indicate emotions or moods
Affect Displays	Express emotions or feelings
Complementing	Reinforcing verbal communication
Contradicting	Contradicting verbal communication
Emblems	Nonverbal gestures that carry a specific meaning, and can replace or reinforce words

Illustrators	Reinforce a verbal message
Masking	Substituting more appropriate displays for less appropriate displays
Object-adaptors	Using an object for a purpose other than its intended design
Regulators	Control, encourage or discourage interaction
Repeating	Repeating verbal communication
Replacing	Replacing verbal communication
Self-adaptors	Adapting something about yourself in a way for which it was not designed or for no apparent purpose

4.3.3 Nonverbal Communication Is Universal

Consider the many contexts in which interaction occurs during your day. In the morning, at work, after work, at home, with friends, or with family. Now consider the differences in nonverbal communication across these many contexts. When you are at work, do you jump up and down and say whatever you want? Why or why not? You may not engage in that behavior because of expectations at work, but the fact remains that from the moment you wake until you sleep, you are surrounded by nonverbal communication.

If you had been born in a different country, to different parents, and perhaps as a member of the opposite sex, your whole world would be quite different. Yet nonverbal communication would remain fairly consistent. It may not look exactly the same, or get used in exactly the same way, but it will still be nonverbal with all of its many functions and displays.

4.3.4 Nonverbal Communication Is Confusing and Contextual

Nonverbal communication can be confusing. You need contextual clues to help you understand, or begin to understand, what a movement, gesture (or lack of gestures) means. Then you have to figure it all out based on your prior knowledge (or lack thereof) of the person and hope to get it right. Talk about a challenge!

Nonverbal communication is everywhere, and you and everyone else uses it, but that doesn't make it simple or independent of when, where, why, or how you communicate.

4.3.5 Nonverbal Communication Can Be Intentional or Unintentional

Suppose you are working as a salesclerk in a retail store, and a customer communicates frustration to you. Will the nonverbal aspects of your response be intentional or unintentional? Your job is to be pleasant and courteous at all times, yet your wrinkled eyebrows or wide eyes may have been unintentional. They clearly communicate your negative feelings at that moment. Restating your wish to be helpful and displaying non- verbal gestures may communicate "no big deal," but the stress of the moment is still "written" on your face.

Can you tell when people are intentionally or unintentionally communicating nonverbally? Ask ten people this question and compare their responses. You may be surprised. It is clearly a challenge to understand nonverbal communication in action. You may assign intentional motives to nonverbal communication when in fact their display is unintentional, and often hard to interpret.

4.3.6 Nonverbal Messages Communicate Feelings and Attitudes

Albert Mehrabian asserts that we rarely communicate emotional messages through the spoken word. According to Mehrabian, 93 percent of the time we communicate our emotions nonverbally, with at least 55 percent of these nonverbal cues associated with facial gestures. Vocal cues, body position and movement, and normative space between speaker and receiver can also be clues to feelings and attitudes[20] (Mehrabian, 1972).

Is your first emotional response always an accurate and true representation of your feelings and attitudes, or does your emotional response change across time? You are changing all the time, and sometimes a moment of frustration or a flash of anger can signal to the receiver a feeling or emotion that existed for a moment, but has since passed. Their response to your communication will be based on that perception, even though you might already be over the issue.

4.3.7 Nonverbal Communication Is Key in the Speaker/Audience Relationship

When you first see another person, before either of you says a word, you are already reading nonverbal signals. Within the first few seconds you have made judgments about the other based on what they wear, their physical characteristics, even their

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[20] Mehrabian A.(1972). Nonverbal communication, Chicago, IL; Aldine Atherton

posture. Are these judgments accurate? That is hard to know without context, but it is clear that nonverbal communication affects first impressions, for better or worse.

When a speaker and an audience first meet, nonverbal communication in terms of space, dress, and even personal characteristics can contribute to assumed expectations. The expectations might not be accurate or even fair, but it is important to recognize that they will be present. There is truth in the saying, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression." Since first impressions are quick and fragile, your attention to aspects you can control, both verbal and nonverbal, will help contribute to the first step of forming a relationship with your audience. Your eye contact with audience members, use of space and degree of formality will continue to contribute to that relationship.

As a speaker, your nonverbal communication is part of the message and can contribute to, or detract from, your overall goals. By being aware of that physical communication, and practicing with a live audience, you can learn to be more aware and in control.

4.4   TYPES OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Now that you have learned about the general principles that apply to nonverbal communication, here are eight types of nonverbal communication to further understand this challenging aspect of communication:

- Space
- Time
- Physical characteristics
- Body movements
- Touch
- Paralanguage
- Artifacts
- Environment

4.4.1 Space
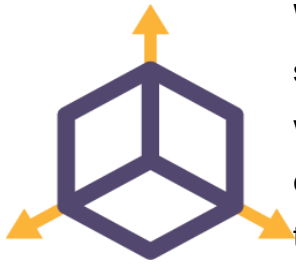
When we discuss space in a nonverbal context, we mean the space between objects and people. Space is often associated with social rank and is an important part of business communication. Who gets the corner office? Why is the head of the table important and who gets to sit there?

People from diverse cultures may have different normative space expectations. If you are from a large urban area, having people stand close to you may be normal. If you are from a rural area or a culture where people expect more space, someone may be standing "too close" for comfort and not know it.

Territory is related to control. As a way of establishing control over your own room, maybe you painted it your favourite color, or put up posters that represent your interests or things you consider unique about yourself. Families or households often mark their space by putting up fences or walls around their houses. This sense of a right to control your space is implicit in territory. Territory means the space you claim as your own, are responsible for, or are willing to defend.

Among most humans there is a basic need for personal space, but the normative expectations for space vary greatly by culture. You may perceive that in your home people sleep one to each bed, but in many cultures people sleep two or more to a bed and it is considered normal. If you were to share that bed, you might feel uncomfortable, while someone raised with group sleeping norms might feel uncomfortable sleeping alone. From where you stand in an aerobics class in relation to others, to where you place your book bag in class, your personal expectations of space are often at variance with others.

4.4.2 Time

Do you know what time it is? How aware you are of time varies by culture and normative expectations of adherence (or ignorance) of time. Some people, and the communities and cultures they represent, are very time-oriented. When you give a presentation, does your audience have to wait for you? Time is a relevant factor of the communication process in your speech. The best way to show your audience respect is to honor the time expectation associated with your speech. Always try to

stop speaking before the audience stops listening; if the audience perceives that you have "gone over time," they will be less willing to listen. This in turn will have a negative impact on your ability to communicate your message.

4.4.3 Physical Characteristics

You didn't choose your genes, your eye color, the natural color of your hair, or your height, but people spend millions every year trying to change their physical characteristics. You can get colored contacts; dye your hair; and if you are shorter than you'd like to be, buy shoes to raise your stature a couple of inches.

However, no matter how much you stoop to appear shorter, you won't change your height until time and age gradually makes itself apparent. If you are tall, you might find the correct shoe size, pant length, or even the length of mattress a challenge, but there are rewards.

Regardless of your eye or hair color, or even how tall you are, being comfortable with yourself is an important part of your presentation. Act naturally and consider aspects of your presentation you can control in order to maximize a positive image for the audience.

4.4.4 Body Movements

The study of body movements, called kinesics, is key to understanding nonverbal communication.

Body movements can complement the verbal message by reinforcing the main idea. For example, you may be providing an orientation presentation to a customer about a software program. As you say, "Click on this tab," you may also initiate that action. Your verbal and nonverbal messages reinforce each other. You can also reinforce the message by repeating it. If you first say, "Click on the tab," and then motion with your hand to the right, indi- cating that the customer should move the cursor arrow with the mouse to the tab, your repetition can help the listener understand the message.

In addition to repeating your message, body movements can also regulate conversations. Nodding your head to indicate that you are listening may encourage

the customer to continue asking questions. Holding your hand up, palm out, may signal them to stop and provide a pause where you can start to answer.

Body movements also substitute or replace verbal messages. For example, if the customer makes a face of frustration while trying to use the software program, they may need assistance. If they push away from the computer and separate themselves physically from interacting with it, they may be extremely frustrated.

Learning to gauge feelings and their intensity as expressed by customers takes time and patience, and your attention to them will improve your ability to facilitate positive interactions.

4.4.5 Touch

Before giving your presentation, you may interact with people by shaking hands and making casual conversation. This interaction can help establish trust before you take the stage. Once on stage, most people do not touch audience members physically, but you can interact with audience members through visual aids, note cards, and other objects.

4.4.6 Paralanguage

Paralanguage is the exception to the definition of nonverbal communication. You may recall that nonverbal communication was defined as "not involving words" but paralanguage is a unique form of nonverbal communication that exists when we are speaking, using words. Paralanguage involves tone and nonverbal aspects of speech that influence meaning, including how loudly or softly you are speaking, intensity, pausing, and even silence.

Perhaps you've also heard of a pregnant pause, a silence between verbal messages that is full of meaning. The meaning itself may be hard to understand or decipher, but it is there nonetheless. For example, your co-worker Jan comes back from a sales meeting speechless. You may ask if the meeting went all right. "Well, ahh…" may be the only response you get. The pause speaks volumes. Something happened, though you may not know what.

Silence or vocal pauses can communicate hesitation, indicate the need to gather thought, or serve as a sign of respect. Sometimes we learn just as much, or even more, from what a person does not say as what they do say.

4.4.7 Artifacts

Do you cover your tattoos when you are at work? Do you know someone who does? Or perhaps you know someone who has a tattoo and does not need to cover it up on their job? Expectations vary a great deal, and body art or tattoos may still be controversial in the workplace. In your line of work, a tattoo might be an important visual aid, or it might detract from your effectiveness as a business communicator. Body piercings may express individuality, but you need to consider how they will be interpreted by employers and customers.

Artifacts are forms of decorative ornamentation that are chosen to represent self-concept. They can include rings and tattoos, but may also include brand names and logos. From clothes to cars, watches, briefcases, purses, and even eyeglasses, what we choose to surround ourselves with communicates something about our sense of self. Artifacts may project gender, role or position, class or status, personality, and group membership or affiliation. Paying attention to a customer's artifacts can give you a sense of the self they want to communicate, and may allow you to more accurately adapt your message to meet their needs.

4.4.8 Environment

Environment involves the physical and psychological aspects of the communication context. More than the tables and chairs in an office, environment is an important part of the dynamic communication process. The perception of one's environment influences one's reaction to it. For example, Google is famous for its work environment, with spaces created for physical activity and even in-house food service around the clock. The expense is no doubt considerable, but Google's actions speak volumes. In Google's view, the results produced in the environment, designed to facilitate creativity, interaction, and collaboration, are worth the effort.

4.5 MOVEMENT IN SPEECH

At some point in your business career you will be called upon to give a speech. It may be to an audience of one on a sales floor, or to a large audience at a national meeting. You already know you need to make a positive first impression, but do you know how to use movement in your presentation? In this section we'll examine several strategies for movement and their relative advantages and disadvantages.

Customers and audiences respond well to speakers who are comfortable with themselves. Comfortable doesn't mean overconfident or cocky, and it doesn't mean shy or timid. It means that an audience is far more likely to for- give the occasional "umm" or "ahh," or the nonverbal equivalent of a misstep, if the speaker is comfortable with themselves and their message.

 Let's start with behaviors to avoid. Who would you rather listen to: a speaker who moves confidently across the stage or one who hides behind the podium; one who expresses herself nonverbally with purpose and meaning or one who crosses his arms or clings to the lectern?

Audiences are most likely to respond positively to open, dynamic speakers who convey the feeling of being at ease with their bodies. The setting, combined with audience expectations, will give a range of movement. If you are speaking at a formal event, or if you are being covered by a stationary camera, you may be expected to stay in one spot. If the stage allows you to explore, closing the distance between yourself and your audience may prove effective. Rather than focus on a list of behaviors and their relationship to environment and context, give emphasis to what your audience expects and what you yourself would find more engaging instead.

The questions are, again, what does your audience consider appropriate and what do you feel comfortable doing during your presentation? Since the emphasis is always on meeting the needs of the customer, whether it is an audience of one on a sales floor or a large national gathering, you may need to stretch out- side your comfort zone. On that same note, don't stretch too far and move yourself into the

uncomfortable range. Finding balance is a challenge, but no one ever said giving a speech was easy.

Movement is an important aspect of your speech and requires planning, the same as the words you choose and the visual aids you design. Be natural, but do not naturally shuffle your feet, pace back and forth, or rock on your heels through your entire speech. These behaviors distract your audience from your message and can communicate nervousness, undermining your credibility.

4.5.1 Gestures

Gestures involve using your arms and hands while communicating. Gestures provide a way to channel your nervous energy into a positive activity that benefits your speech and gives you something to do with your hands. For example, watch people in normal, everyday conversations. They frequently use their hands to express themselves. Do you think they think about how they use their hands? Most people do not. Their arm and hand gestures come naturally as part of their expression, often reflecting what they have learned within their community.

For professional speakers this is also true, but deliberate movement can reinforce, repeat, and even regulate an audience's response to their verbal and nonverbal messages. You want to come across as comfortable and natural, and your use of your arms and hands contributes to your presentation. We can easily recognize that a well-chosen gesture can help make a point memorable or lead the audience to the next point.

As professional speakers lead up to a main point, they raise their hand slightly, perhaps waist high, often called an anticipation step. The gesture clearly shows the audience your anticipation of an upcoming point, serving as a nonverbal form of foreshadowing.

The implementation step, which comes next, involves using your arms and hands above your waist. By holding one hand at waist level pointing outward, and raising it up with your palm forward, as in the "stop" gesture, you signal the point. The nonverbal gesture complements the spoken word, and as students of speech have noted across time, audiences respond to this nonverbal reinforcement. You then

slowly lower your hand down past your waistline and away from your body, letting go of the gesture, and signalling your transition.

The relaxation step, where the letting go motion complements your residual message, concludes the motion.

4.5.2 Facial Gestures

As you progress as a speaker from gestures and movement, you will need to turn your attention to facial gestures and expressions. Facial gestures involve using your face to display feelings and attitudes nonverbally. They may reinforce, or contradict, the spoken word, and their impact cannot be underestimated. As in other body movements, your facial gestures should come naturally, but giving them due thought and consideration can keep you aware of how you are communicating the nonverbal message.

Facial gestures should reflect the tone and emotion of your verbal communication. If you are using humor in your speech, you will likely smile to complement the amusement expressed in your words. Smiling will be much less appropriate if your presentation involves a serious subject such as cancer or car accidents. Con- sider how you want your audience to feel in response to your message, and identify the facial gestures you can use to promote those feelings. Then practice in front of a mirror so that the gestures come naturally.

Eye contact refers to the speaker's gaze that engages the audience members. It can vary in degree and length, and in many cases, is culturally influenced. Both in the speaker's expectations and the audience member's notion of what is appropriate will influence normative expectations for eye contact. In some cultures, there are understood behavioral expectations for male gaze directed toward females, and vice versa. In a similar way, children may have expectations of when to look their elders in the eye, and when to gaze down. Depending on the culture, both may be nonverbal signals of listening. Understanding your audience is critical when it comes to nonverbal expectations.

When giving a presentation, avoid looking over people's heads, staring at a point on the wall, or letting your eyes dart all over the place. The audience will find these mannerisms unnerving. They will not feel as con- nected, or receptive, to your

message and you will reduce your effectiveness. Move your eyes gradually and naturally across the audience, both close to you and toward the back of the room. Try to look for faces that look interested and engaged in your message. Do not to focus on only one or two audience members, as audiences may respond negatively to perceived favouritism. Instead, try to give as much eye contact as possible across the audience. Keep it natural, but give it deliberate thought.

4.6 Nonverbal Strategies

Nonverbal communication is an important aspect of business communication, from the context of an interpersonal interaction to a public presentation. It is a dynamic, complex, and challenging aspect of communication. You are never done learning and adapting to your environment and context, and improving your understanding of nonverbal communication comes with the territory.

When your audience first sees you, they begin to make judgments and predictions about you and your potential, just as an employer might do when you arrive for a job interview. If you are well dressed and every crease is ironed, your audience may notice your attention to detail. Wearing jeans with holes, a torn T-shirt, and a cap would send a different message. Neither style of dress is "good" or "bad, but simply appropriate or inappropriate depending on the environment and context. Your skills as an effective business communicator will be called upon when you contemplate your appearance. As a speaker, your goal is to create common ground and reduce the distance between the audience and yourself. You want your appearance to help establish and reinforce your credibility.

In order to be a successful business communicator, you will need to continually learn about nonverbal communication and its impact on your interactions. Below are three ways to examine nonverbal communication.

4.6.1 Watch Reactions

Market research is fundamental to success in business and industry. So, too, you will need to do a bit of field research to observe how, when, and why people communicate the way they do. If you want to be able to communicate effectively with customers, you will need to anticipate not only their needs, but also how they communicate. They are far more likely to communicate with someone whom they perceive as being like them, than with a perceived stranger. From dress to

mannerisms and speech patterns, you can learn from your audience how to be a more effective business communicator.

4.6.2 Enroll an Observer

Most communication in business and industry involves groups and teams, even if the interpersonal context is a common element. Enroll a co-worker or colleague in your effort to learn more about your audience, or even yourself. They can observe your presentation and note areas you may not have noticed that could benefit from revision. Perhaps the gestures you make while speaking tend to distract rather than enhance your presentations. You can also record a video of your performance and play it for them, and yourself, to get a sense of how your nonverbal communication complements or detracts from the delivery of your message.

4.6.3 Focus on a Specific Type of Nonverbal Communication

What is the norm for eye contact where you work? Does this change or differ based on gender, age, ethnicity, cultural background, context, and environment? Observation will help you learn more about how people communicate; looking for trends across a specific type of nonverbal communication can be an effective strategy. Focus on one behaviour you exhibit on your videotape, like pacing, body movements across the stage, hand gestures as you are making a point, or eye contact with the audience.

Use nonverbal communication to enhance your message, watch reactions and consider enrolling an observer to help you become aware of your nonverbal habits and how your audience receives nonverbal messages.

4.7 LET US SUM UP

Finally we can summarize that nonverbal communication is the process of conveying a message without the use of words; it relates to the dynamic process of communication, the perception process and listening, and verbal communication. Nonverbal communication is fluid and fast, universal, confusing, and contextual. It can add to or replace verbal communication and can be intentional or unintentional. Nonverbal communication communicates feelings and attitudes, and people tend to believe nonverbal messages more than verbal ones. Nonverbal communication can be categorized into eight types: space, time, physical characteristics, body

movements, touch, paralanguage, artifacts, and environment. Also use movement strategically in your presentation, keep it natural and consider using facial gestures, and natural eye contact.

4.8 FURTHER READING

- Visit this site for a library of University of California videotapes on nonverbal communication produced by Dane Archer of the University of California at Santa Cruz. http://nonverbal.ucsc.edu

- Read "Six Ways to Improve Your Nonverbal Communications" by Vicki Ritts, St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley and James R. Stein, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville. http://www.comprofes-sor.com/2011/02/six-ways-to-improve-your-nonverbal.html

- Is "how you say it" really more important than what you say? Read an article by communications expert Dana Bristol-Smith that debunks a popular myth. http://www.sideroad.com/Public_Speaking/how-you- say-not-more-important-what-you-say.html

4.9 ASSIGNMENTS

1. Give examples of nonverbal communication and describe its role in the communication process.
2. Explain the principles of nonverbal communication.
3. Describe the similarities and differences among eight general types of nonverbal communication.
4. Demonstrate how to use movement to increase the effectiveness of your message.
5. Demonstrate three ways to improve nonverbal communication.

4.10 ACTIVITIES

1. Watch a television program without the sound. Can you understand the program? Write a description of the program and include what you found easy to understand, and what presented a challenge, and pre- sent it to the class.
2. Interview someone from a different culture than your own (explaining your purpose clearly) and ask them to share a specific cultural difference in nonverbal communication—for example, a nonverbal ges- ture that is not used in polite company.

Block-2

Presentation Skills

Unit 1:PRESENTATION ORGANIZATION

1

Unit Structure

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this chapter students will be able to understand:

- Definition of Rhetorical Situation

- What are strategies for success

- Main 9 Cognates strategies

- Purpose and central idea statements

- Research

- Organizational models for presentation

- Transition

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will help you consider how to organize the information to prepare for a presentation. While knowledge on your topic is key to an effective presentation, do not underestimate the importance of organization.

Organization in any presentation is helpful both to you and to your audience. They will appreciate receiving the information presented in an organized way, and being well organized will make the presentation much less stressful for you.

A successful presentation involves flexibility and organization. You know your material. You are prepared and follow an outline. You do not read a script or PowerPoint presentation, you do not memorize every single word in order (though some parts may be memorized), but you also do not make it up as you go along. Your presentation is scripted in the sense that it is completely planned from start to finish, yet every word is not explicitly planned, allowing for some spontaneity and adaptation to the audience's needs in the moment.

Your organization plan will serve you and your audience as a guide, and help you present a more effective speech. Just as there is no substitute for practice and preparation, there is no substitute for organization and an outline when you need it the most: on stage.

1.3 RHETORICAL SITUATION

In the classical tradition, the art of public speaking is called rhetoric; the circumstances in which you give your speech or presentation are the rhetorical situation. The audience gives you the space and time as a speaker to fulfil your role and, hopefully, their expectations. Just as a group makes a leader, an audience makes a speaker. By looking to your audience, you shift your attention from an internal focus (you) to an external (them/others) emphasis. Several of the first questions any audience member asks himself or herself are, "Why should I listen to you?" "What does what you are saying have to do with me?" and "How does this help me?" Generating interest in your speech is the first step as you guide perception through selection, organization, and interpretation of content and ways to communicate your point.

The rhetorical situation involves three elements: the set of expectations inherent in the context, audience, and the purpose of your presentation[21] . This means you need to consider, in essence, the "who, what, where, when, why, and how" of your speech from the audience's perspective. Figure 5.1 below demonstrates the three-part set of expectations in the rhetorical situation.

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[21] Kostelnick, C., & Roberts, D. (1998). Designing visual language: Strategies for professional communicators. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn Bacon.

Fig. 5.1 Context, Audience, and Purpose. Your presentation depends on your knowledge of these three elements of rhetoric.

1.3.1 Context

Your presentation is given in a space that has connection to the rest of the world. The space you're presenting in, the time of day, and even the events going on in the world around you and your audience will affect the decisions you make in preparing for your presentation.

1.3.2 Audience

The receiver (i.e., listener or audience) is one of the basic components of communication. Your audience comes to you with expectations, prior knowledge, and experience. They have a wide range of characteristics like social class, gender, age, race and ethnicity, cultural background, and language that make them unique and diverse. What kind of audience will you be speaking to? What do you know about their expectations, prior knowledge or backgrounds, and how they plan to use your information? Giving attention to this aspect of the rhetorical situation will allow you to gain insight into how to craft your message before you present it.

1.3.3 Purpose

A presentation may be designed to inform, demonstrate, persuade, motivate, or even entertain. The purpose of your speech is central to its formation. You should be able to state your purpose in one sentence or less, much like an effective thesis statement in an essay.

1.4   STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Given the diverse nature of audiences, the complexity of the communication process, and the countless options and choices to make when preparing your presentation, you may feel overwhelmed. One effective way to address this is to focus on ways to reach, interact, or stimulate your audience. Charles Kostelnick and David Roberts outline several cognate strategies, or ways of framing, expressing, and representing a message to an audience, in Designing Visual Language: Strategies for Professional Communicators (Kostelnick & Roberts, 1998). The word "cognate" refers to knowledge, and these strategies are techniques to impart knowledge to your audience. They help answer questions like "Does the audience understand how I'm arranging my information?" "Am I emphasizing my key points effectively?" and "How does my expression and representation of information contribute to a relationship with the audience?" They can serve you to better anticipate and meet your audience's basic needs.

Table 5.1 summarizes the nine cognate strategies in relation to Aristotle's forms of rhetorical proof; it also provides areas on which to focus your attention as you design your message.

Aristotle's Forms of Rhetorical Proof	Cognate Strategies	Focus
Pathos	• Tone • Emphasis • Engagement	• Expression • Relevance • Relationship
Logos	• Clarity • Conciseness • Arrangement	• Clear understanding • Key points • Order, hierarchy, placement
Ethos	• Credibility • Expectation • Reference •	• Character, trust • Norms and anticipated outcomes • Sources and frames of reference

Aristotle outlined three main forms of rhetorical proof: ethos, logos, and pathos. Ethos involves the speaker's character and expertise. Logos is the logic of the speaker's presentation—something that will be greatly enhanced by a good organizational plan. Aristotle discussed pathos as the use of emotion as a persuasive element in the speech [22], or "the arousing of emotions in the audience." If you use pathos in a strategic way, you are following Aristotle's notion of rhetorical proof as the available means of persuasion. If logic and expertise don't move the audience, a tragic picture may do so.

The cognate strategies are in many ways expressions of these three elements, but by focusing on individual characteristics, can work towards being more effective in their preparation and presentation. Many of these strategies build on basic ideas of communication, such as verbal and nonverbal delivery. By keeping that in mind, you'll be more likely to see the connections and help yourself organize your presentation effectively.

You'll want to consider the cognate strategies and how to address each area to make your speech as effective as possible, given your understanding of the rhetorical situation.

1.5   THE 9 COGNATE STRATEGIES

1. Tone

Your choice of words, your clothing, your voice, body language, the rhythm and cadence of your speech, the use of space – these all contribute to the tone of the presentation. Tone, or the general manner of expression of the message, will contribute to the context of the presentation.

2. Emphasis

As the speaker, you need to consider how you place emphasis— stress, importance, or prominence—on some aspects of your speech, and how you lessen the impact of others. Emphasis as a

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[22] Wisse, J. (1989). Ethos and pathos: From Aristotle to Cicero. Amsterdam, Netherlands: Adolph M. Hakkert.

cognate strategy asks you to consider relevance, and the degree to which your focal point of attention contributes to or detracts from your speech. You will need to consider how you link ideas through transitions, how you repeat and rephrase, and how you place your points in hierarchical order to address the strategy of emphasis in your presentation.

3. Engagement

Engagement is the relationship the speaker forms with the an audience. Engagement strategies can include eye contact, movement within your space, audience participation, use of images and even the words you choose. To develop the relationship with the audience, you will need to consider how your words, visuals, and other relevant elements of your speech help this relationship grow.

4. Clarity

"Clarity strategies help the receiver (audience) to decode the message, to understand it quickly and completely, and when necessary, to react without ambivalence" (Kostelnick, C. and Roberts, D., 1998). Your word choices and visual elements should be chosen carefully, and used together appropriately, to ensure you're conveying the right meaning. In figure 5.2 below the image demonstrates how difficult it can be to see dense graphics in a large presentation setting.
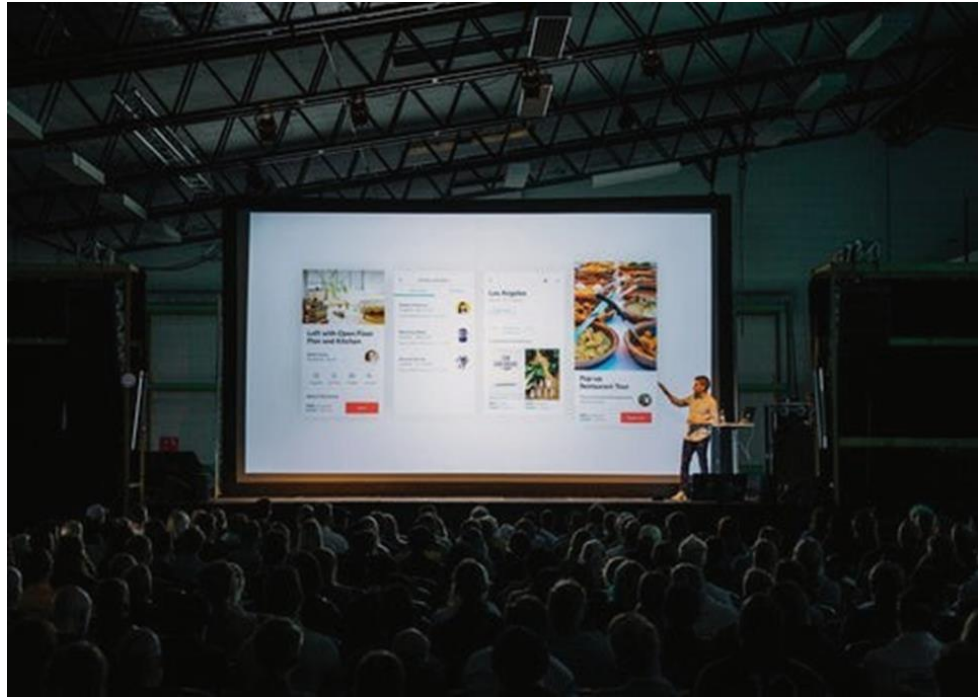
5. Being Concise

Being concise is part of being clear – it refers to being brief and direct in the visual and verbal delivery of your message, and avoiding unnecessary intricacy. It involves using as many words as necessary to get your message across, and no more. If you only have five to seven minutes, how will you budget your time? Being economical with your time is a pragmatic approach to ensuring that your attention, and the attention of your audience, is focused on the point at hand.

6. Arrangement

As the speaker, you will gather and present information in some form. How that form follows the function of communicating your message involves strategically grouping information. "Arrangement means order, the organization of visual (and verbal) elements" (Kostelnick & Roberts, 1998) in ways that allow the audience to correctly interpret the structure, hierarchy, and relationships among points of focus in your presentation.

7. Credibility

You will naturally develop a relationship with your audience, and the need to make trust an element is key to that development. The word "credibility" comes from the word "credence," or belief. Credibility involves your qualities, capabilities, or power to elicit from the audience belief in your character. Consider persuasive strategies that will appeal to your audience, build trust, and convey your understanding of the rhetorical situation.

8. Expectation

Your audience, as we've addressed previously, will have inherent expectations of themselves and of you depending on the rhetorical situation. Expectations involve the often unstated, eager anticipation of the norms, roles and outcomes of the speaker and the speech.

9. Reference

No one person knows everything all the time at any given moment, and no two people have experienced life in the same way. For this reason, use references carefully. Reference involves attention to the source and way you present your information. The audience won't expect you to personally gather statistics and publish a study, but they will expect you to state where you got your information.

1.6   PURPOSE AND CENTRAL IDEA STATEMENTS

Speeches have traditionally been seen to have one of three broad purposes: to inform, to persuade, and — well, to be honest, different words are used for the third kind of speech purpose: to inspire, to amuse, to please, or to entertain. These broad goals are commonly known as a speech's general purpose, since, in gen- eral, you are trying to inform, persuade, or entertain your audience without regard to specifically what the topic will be. Perhaps you could think of them as appealing to the understanding of the audience (informa- tive), the will or action (persuasive), and the emotion or pleasure.

Now that you know your general purpose (to inform, to persuade, or to entertain), you can start to move in the direction of the specific purpose. A specific purpose statement builds on your general purpose (to inform) and makes it more specific (as the name suggests). So if your first speech is an informative speech, your general purpose will be to inform your audience about a very specific realm of knowledge.

In writing your specific purpose statement, you will take three contributing elements (shown in figure 5.3) that will come together to help you determine your specific purpose:

- You (your interests, your background, past jobs, experience, education, major),
- Your audience
- The context or setting.
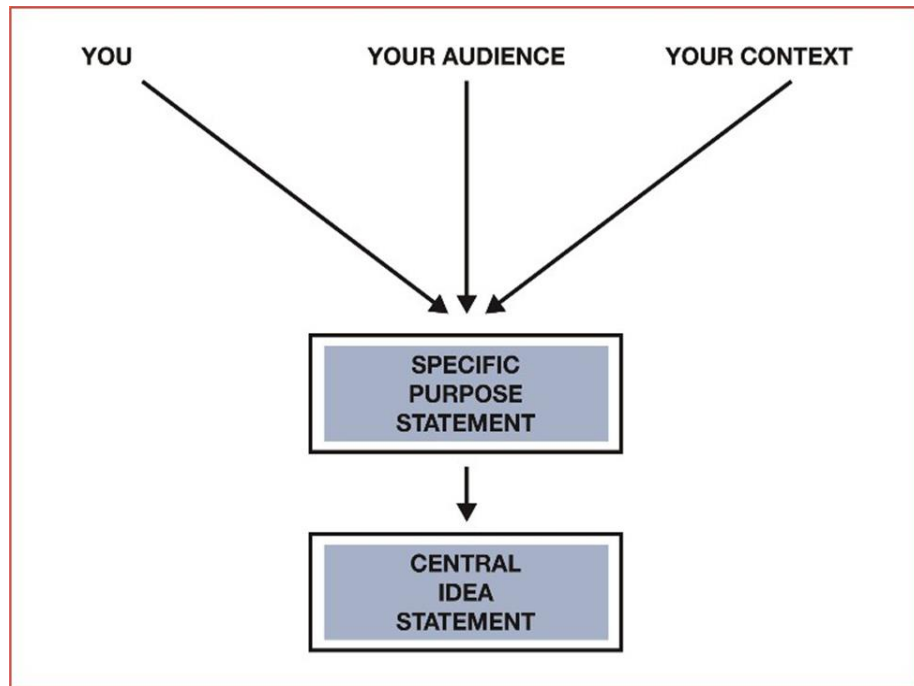
Figure 5.3. You, your audience, and your context (Tucker & Barton, 2016)

1.6.1 Putting It Together

Keeping these three inputs in mind, you can begin to write a specific purpose statement, which will be the foundation for everything you say in the speech and a guide for what you do not say. This formula will help you in putting together your specific purpose statement:

To [Specific Communication Word (inform, explain, demonstrate, describe, define, persuade, convince, prove, argue)] my [Target Audience (my classmates, the members of the Social Work Club, my coworkers]. [The Content (how to bake brownies, that Macs are better than PCs].

Example: The purpose of my presentation is to demonstrate for my co-workers the value of informed inter-cultural communication.

1.6.2 Formulating a Central Idea Statement

While you will not actually say your specific purpose statement during your speech, you will need to clearly state what your focus and main points are going to be. The statement that reveals your main points is commonly known as the central idea statement (or just the central idea). Just as you would create a thesis state- ment for an essay or research paper, the central idea statement helps focus your presentation by defining your topic, purpose, direction, angle and/or point of view. Here are two examples:

Specific Purpose – To explain to my classmates the effects of losing a pet on the elderly.

Central Idea – When elderly persons lose their animal companions, they can experience serious psychological, emotional, and physical effects.

Specific Purpose – To demonstrate to my audience the correct method for cleaning a computer keyboard.

Central Idea – Your computer keyboard needs regular cleaning to function well, and you can achieve that in four easy steps.

1.7 Research

The foundational way to offer support for the points you make in your speech is by providing evidence from other sources, which you will find by doing research.

You have access to many sources of information: books in print or electronic format, internet webpages, journal articles in databases, and information from direct, primary sources through surveys and interviews. With so many sources, information literacy is a vital skill for business professionals.

The term **"research"** is a broad one, for which the Merriam-Webster dictionary offers two basic definitions: studious inquiry or examination; especially: investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws. The more applicable meaning for this chapter is the collecting of information about a particular subject. The first definition given refers, appropriately, to primary research, which depends on primary sources. The term "primary source" means that the material is first-hand, or straight from the source, so to speak.

Primary sources: information that is first-hand or straight from the source; information that is unfiltered by interpretation or editing.

Secondary sources: information that is not directly from the source; information that has been compiled, filtered, edited, or interpreted in some way.

Journalists, historians, biologists, chemists, psychologists, sociologists, and others conduct primary research, which is part of achieving a doctorate in one's field and adding to what is called "the knowledge base."

For your presentations, you might use primary sources as well. Let's say you want to do a persuasive presentation to convince the public to wear their seatbelts. Some of the basic information you might need to do this is: how many people in the class don't wear seatbelts regularly, and why they choose not to.

You could conduct primary research and conduct a survey to determine if people in your town or city wear their seatbelts and, if not, why not. This way, you are getting information directly from a primary source. It is possible that you will access published primary sources in your research for your presentation (and you will definitely do so as you progress in your discipline). Additionally, and more commonly, you will use secondary sources, which are articles, books, and websites that are compilations or interpretations of the primary sources.

As you prepare your presentations, your employer or audience may have specific requirements for your sources. He or she might require a mix of sources in different formats. It is important that you note where you found your information in your presentation – a process called citation, or referencing.

Whenever possible, seek out original sources for the information you will use — for example, if you are using statistics about the amount of steel produced in Canada per year, you would collect that information from Statistics Canada. The next-best option is to find sources that are considered trustworthy: academic jour- nals, books, well-known newspapers and magazines, and certain organizations.

1.8 ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS FOR PRESENTATIONS

Once you've completed your research, you'll begin to collect your material into a series of main points by using an organizational model. Different models are used for different types of presentations – you'll need to refer back to your Audience-Context-Purpose, as well as your purpose statement, to determine which will best suit your presentation.

1.8.1 Chronological Pattern

Chronological always refers to time order. Since the specific purpose is about stages, it is necessary to put the four stages in the right order. It would make no sense to put the fourth stage second and the third stage first. However, chronological time can be long or short. If you are giving a presentation about the history of your company, that may cover years of decades. If your presentation is about a product development cycle, it may only a few weeks or months. The commonality is the order of the information. Chronological speeches that refer to processes are usually given to promote understanding of a process, or to promote action and instruction.

1.8.2 Spatial Pattern

Another common thought process is movement in space or direction, which is called the spatial pattern. With this pattern, the information is organized based on a place or space that the audience can imagine (or "decode") easily. A spatial-pattern presentation might cover the regional sales results for an automotive manufacturer, from the east coast to the west coast of Canada.

1.8.3 Topical Pattern/Parts-of-the-Whole Pattern

The topical organizational pattern is probably the most all-purpose pattern, used most often in informational and persuasive presentations. Many subjects will have main points that naturally divide into: "types of," "kinds of," "sorts of," or "categories of." Other subjects naturally divide into "parts of the whole." However, you will want to keep your categories simple, clear, distinct, and at five or fewer.

Another principle of organization to think about when using topical organization is "climax" organization. That means putting your strongest argument or most important point last when applicable. This model is used most often in sales presentations and proposals.

1.8.4 Cause/Effect Pattern

If the specific purpose mentions words such as "causes," "origins," "roots of," "foundations," "basis," "grounds," or "source," it is a causal order; if it mentions words such as "effects," "results," "outcomes," "consequences," or "products," it is effect order. If it mentions both, it would of course be cause/effect order.

1.8.5 Problem-Solution Pattern

The problem-solution pattern is most often used in persuasive presentations. The principle behind problem-solution pattern is that if you explain to an audience a problem, you should not leave them hanging without solutions. Problems are discussed for understanding and to do something about them. Additionally, when you want to persuade someone to act, the first reason is usually that something is wrong!

A variation of the problem-solution pattern, and one that sometimes requires more in-depth exploration of an issue, is the "problem-cause-solution" pattern. In many cases, you can't really solve a problem without first identifying what caused the problem. This is similar to the organizational pattern called Monroe's Moti- vated Sequence (German, Gronbeck, Ehninger & Monroe, 2012).

1.9   OUTLINING YOUR PRESENTATION
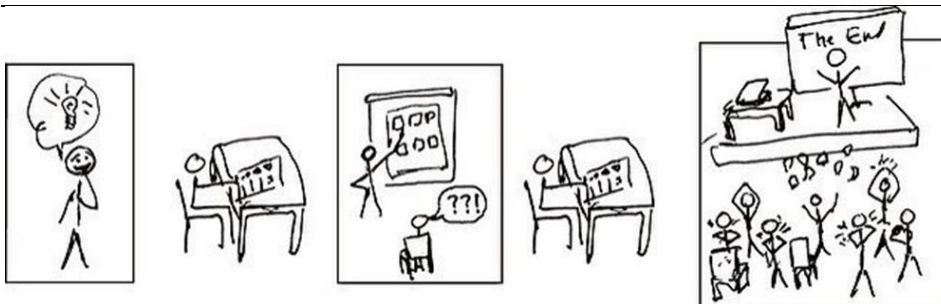
You're now ready to prepare an outline for your presentation. To be successful in your presentation, you'll need two outlines: a preparation outline, and a speaking outline.

Preparation outlines are comprehensive outlines that include all of the information in your presentation. Our presentation outline will consist of the content of what the audience will see and hear. Eventually, you will move away from this outline as you develop your materials and practice your presentation.

Your speaking outline will contain notes to guide you, and is usually not shared with your audience. It will summarize the full preparation outline down to more usable notes. You should create a set of abbreviated notes for the actual delivery.

Your organizational model will help determine how you will structure your preparation outline. However, most, if not all, of the organization models will align with this structure:

1. Attention Statement: an engaging or interesting statement that will cause your audience to sit up and take notice.

2. Introduction: setting out your general idea statement (LINK) and giving the audience an idea of what to expect.

3. Body: This section contains your research, main points and other relevant information. It will follow your organizational pattern.

4. Conclusion: reiterating your idea statement, and/or includes a call-to-action — what you want the audience to do or think about following your presentation.

5. Residual Message: this is an optional section, but a powerful one. It is the final message you want the audience to remember.

You can use your presentation outline as a starting point to developing your speaking outline. It's a good idea to make speaking notes to align with your main points and visuals in each section.

1.9.1 Using Examples and Scenarios

Presenters will often use examples and scenarios to help illustrate their message. The main difference between examples and scenarios is that while both help "show" the audience what you mean, an example is the "thing" itself, while a scenario would include more detail about the sequence or development of events. Scenarios also tend to be longer and more nuanced.

An 'example' of a sales target might be: to sell 500 units in 30 days. A 'scenario' might be described as: Company A is selling vacuums to the Atlantic Canada region. They are trying to increase their sales, and so have set a target of 500 units in the region in 30 days, using a sales incentive program for employees and promoting a sale at local stores.

1.9.2 A Word About Storytelling

Storytelling can be an effective way to convey your message to your audience. Stories are a fundamental part of the human experience, and, if well-told, can resonate with listeners. Some of the most inspiring TEDTalks speakers use storytelling effectively in their presentations. You can find out more about how to incorporate storytelling techniques into presentations from the TEDTAlk speakers directly.

1.10 TRANSITION

By now you have identified your main points, chosen your organizational pattern, have written your outline, and are ready to begin putting your presentation together. But how will you connect your main points together in a relevant manner, so that your presentation appears fluid?

Transitions are words, phrases, or visual devices that help the audience follow the speaker's ideas, connect the main points to each other, and see the relationships you've created in the information you are present- ing. Transitions are used by the speaker to guide the audience in the progression from one significant idea, concept or point to the next issue. They can also show the relationship between the main point and the sup- port the speaker uses to illustrate, provide examples for, or reference outside sources. Depending your purpose, transitions can serve different roles as you help create the glue that will connect your points together in a way the audience can easily follow.

Internal summaries: a type of connective transition that emphasizes what has come before and remind the audience of what has been covered. Examples include; as I have said, as we have seen, as mentioned earlier, in any event, in other words, in short, on the whole, therefore, to summarize, as a result, as I've noted previously, in conclusion.

Internal previews: a type of connective that emphasizes what is coming up next in the speech and what to expect with regard to the content. "If we look ahead to, next we'll examine, now we can focus our attention on, first we'll look at, then we'll examine…" etc.

Signposts: a type of connective transition that emphasizes physical movement through the speech content and lets the audience know exactly where they are: stop

and consider, we can now address, next I'd like to explain, turning from/to, another, this reminds me of, I would like to emphasize.

Time: focuses on the chronological aspects of your speech order. Particularly useful in a speech utilizing a story, this transition can illustrate for the audience progression of time. Before, earlier, immediately, in the meantime, in the past, lately, later, meanwhile, now, presently, shortly, simultaneously, since, so far, soon as long as, as soon as, at last, at length, at that time, then, until, afterward.

Compare/Contrast: draws a parallel or distinction between two ideas, concepts, or examples. It can indicate a common or divergent area between points for the audience. In the same way, by the same token, equally, similarly, just as we have seen, in the same vein.

Cause and Effect or Result: illustrates a relationship between two ideas, concepts, or examples and may focus on the outcome or result. It can illustrate a relationship between points for the audience. As a result, because, consequently, for this purpose, accordingly, so, then, therefore, thereupon, thus, to this end, for this reason, as a result, because, therefore, consequently, as a consequence, and the outcome was…

Examples: illustrates a connection between a point and an example or examples. You may find visual aids work well with this type of transition. In fact, as we can see, after all, even, for example, for instance, of course, specifically, such as, in the following example, to illustrate my point.

Place: refers to a location, often in a spatially organized speech, of one point of emphasis to another. Again, visual aids work well when discussing physical location with an audience. Opposite to, there, to the left, to the right, above, below, adjacent to, elsewhere, far, farther on, beyond, closer to, here, near, nearby, next to…

Clarification: A clarification transition restates or further develops a main idea or point. It can also serve as a signal to a key point. To clarify, that is, I mean, in other words, to put it another way, that is to say, to rephrase it, in order to explain, this means…

Concession: indicates knowledge of contrary information. It can address a perception the audience may hold and allow for clarification. We can see that while, although it is true that, granted that, while it may appear that, naturally, of course, I can see that, I admit that even though…

1.11 LET US SUM UP

1.12 FURTHER READING

- The commercial site from Inc. magazine presents an article on organizing your speech by Patricia Fripp, for- mer president of the National Speakers Association. http://www.inc.com/articles/2000/10/20844.html
- Read a straightforward tutorial on speech organization by Robert Gwynne on this University of Central Florida site. http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~rbrokaw/organizing.html
- View an eHow video on how to organize a speech. How does the advice in this video differ from organizing advice given in this chapter? http://www.ehow.com/video_4401082_organizing-speech-parts.html
- Read more about how to outline a speech on this site from John Jay College of Criminal Justice. http://www.lib.jjay.cuny.edu/research/outlining.html
- Learn more about how to outline a speech from the Six Minutes public speaking and presentation skills blog. http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/2008/02/29/speech-preparation-3-outline-examples

1.13 ASSIGNMENTS

1. Label and discuss the three main components of the rhetorical situation.
2. Identify and provide examples of at least five of the nine basic cognate strategies in communication.
3. Demonstrate how to build a sample presentation by expanding on the main points you wish to convey.
4. Demonstrate how to use structural parts of any presentation.
5. Identify how to use different organizing principles for a presentation.

Unit 2: DEVELOPING PRESENTATION

2

Unit Structure

2.1   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit student should be able to understand

- The Importance of Delivery
- Methods of Speech Delivery
- Preparing For Your Delivery
- Practicing Your Delivery
- What to do When Delivering Your Speech

2.2   INTRODUCTION

Many surveys have shown that public speaking is at the top of the list of fears for most people — sometimes, more high on the list than death. No one is afraid of writing their speech or conducting the research: people generally only fear the delivery aspect of the speech, which, compared to the amount of time you will put into writing the speech (days, hopefully), will be the shortest part of the speech giving process (5-8 minutes, generally, for classroom speeches). The irony, of course, is that delivery, being the thing people fear the most, is simultaneously the aspect of public speaking that will require the least amount of time.

2.3   METHODS OF PRESENTATION DELIVERY

2.3.1   The Importance of Delivery

Delivery is what you are probably most concerned about when it comes to giving presentations. This chapter is designed to help you give the best delivery possible and eliminate some of the nervousness you might be feeling. To do that, you should first dismiss the myth that public speaking is just reading and talking at the same time. Speaking in public has more formality than talking. During a speech, you should present yourself professionally. This doesn't necessarily mean you must wear a suit or "dress up", but it does mean making yourself presentable by being well groomed and wearing clean, appropriate clothes. It also means being prepared to use language correctly and appropriately for the audience and the topic, to make eye contact with your audience, and to look like you know your topic very well.

While speaking has more formality than talking, it has less formality than reading. Speaking allows for flexibility, meaningful pauses, eye contact, small changes in word order, and vocal emphasis. Reading is a more or less exact replication of words on paper without the use of any non-verbal interpretation. Speaking, as you will realize if you think about excellent speakers you have seen and heard, provides a more animated message.

2.3.2 Methods of Presentation Delivery

There are four methods of delivery that can help you balance between too much and too little formality when giving a presentation.

1. Impromptu Speaking

Impromptu speaking is the presentation of a short message without advance preparation. You have probably done impromptu speaking many times in informal, conversational settings. Self-introductions in group set- tings are examples of impromptu speaking: "Hi, my name is Steve, and I'm an account manager." Another example of impromptu presenting occurs when you answer a question such as, "What did you think of the report?" Your response has not been pre-planned, and you are constructing your arguments and points as you speak. Even worse, you might find yourself going into a meeting and your boss says, "I want you to talk about the last stage of the project. . . "and you had no warning.

The advantage of this kind of speaking is that it's spontaneous and responsive in an animated group context. The disadvantage is that the speaker is given little or no time to contemplate the central theme of his or her message. As a result, the message may be disorganized and difficult for listeners to follow.

Here is a step-by-step guide that may be useful if you are called upon to give an impromptu presentation in public:

- Take a moment to collect your thoughts and plan the main point you want to make.
- Thank the person for inviting you to speak. Avoid making comments about being unprepared, called upon at the last moment, on the spot, or feeling uneasy.

- Deliver your message, making your main point as briefly as you can while still covering it adequately and at a pace your listeners can follow.
- If you can use a structure, using numbers if possible: "Two main reasons . . ." or "Three parts of our plan..." or "Two side effects of this drug. . ." Timeline structures are also effective, such as "past, present, and future or East Coast, Midwest, and West Coast".
- Thank the person again for the opportunity to speak.
- Stop talking (it is easy to "ramble on" when you don't have something prepared). If in front of an audience, don't keep talking as you move back to your seat.

Impromptu presentations: the presentation of a short message without advance preparation. Impromptu presentations are generally most successful when they are brief and focus on a single point.

2. Manuscript Presentations

Manuscript presentations are the word-for-word iteration of a written message. In a manuscript presentation, the speaker maintains their attention on the printed page except when using visual aids. The advantage of reading from a manuscript is the exact repetition of original words. In some circumstances this can be extremely important. For example, reading a statement about your organization's legal responsibilities to customers may require that the original words be exact.

A manuscript presentation may be appropriate at a more formal affair (like a report to shareholders), when your presentation must be said exactly as written in order to convey the proper emotion or decorum the situation deserves.

However, there are costs involved in manuscript presentations. First, it's typically an uninteresting way to present. Unless the presenter has rehearsed the reading as a complete performance animated with vocal expression and gestures, the presentation tends to be dull. Keeping one's eyes glued to the script prevents eye contact with the audience. For this kind of "straight" manuscript presentation to hold audience attention, the audience must be already interested in the message and presenter before the delivery begins.

3. Extemporaneous Presentations

Extemporaneous presentations are carefully planned and rehearsed presentations, delivered in a conversational manner using brief notes. By using notes rather than a full manuscript, the extemporaneous presenter can establish and maintain eye contact with the audience and assess how well they are understanding the

presentation as it progresses. Without all the words on the page to read, you have little choice but to look up and make eye contact with your audience.

Presenting extemporaneously has some advantages. It promotes the likelihood that you, the speaker, will be perceived as knowledgeable and credible since you know the speech well enough that you don't need to read it. In addition, your audience is likely to pay better attention to the message because it is engaging both verbally and nonverbally. It also allows flexibility; you are working from the strong foundation of an outline, but if you need to delete, add, or rephrase something at the last minute or to adapt to your audience, you can do so.

The disadvantage of extemporaneous presentations is that it in some cases it does not allow for the verbal and the nonverbal preparation that are almost always required for a good speech.

Adequate preparation cannot be achieved the day before you're scheduled to present, so be aware that if you want to present a credibly delivered speech, you will need to practice many times. Because extemporaneous presenting is the style used in the great majority of business presentation situations, most of the information in the subsequent sections of this chapter is targeted toward this kind of speaking.

4. Memorized Speaking

Memorized speaking is the recitation of a written message that the speaker has committed to memory. Actors, of course, recite from memory whenever they perform from a script in a stage play, television pro- gram, or movie scene. When it comes to speeches, memorization can be useful when the message needs to be exact and the speaker doesn't want to be confined by notes.

The advantage to memorization is that it enables the speaker to maintain eye contact with the audience throughout the speech. Being free of notes means that you can move freely around the stage and use your hands to make gestures. If your speech uses visual aids, this freedom is even more of an advantage. How- ever, there are some real and potential costs.

First, unless you also plan and memorize every vocal cue (the subtle but meaningful variations in speech delivery, which can include the use of pitch, tone, volume, and pace), gesture, and facial expression, your presentation will be flat and uninteresting, and even the most fascinating topic will suffer. Second, if you lose your place and start trying to ad lib, the contrast in your style of delivery will alert your audience that something is wrong. More frighteningly, if you go completely blank during the

presentation, it will be extremely difficult to find your place and keep going. Obviously, memorizing a typical seven-minute presentation takes a great deal of time and effort, and if you aren't used to memorizing, it is very difficult to pull off. Realistically, you probably will not have the time necessary to give a completely memorized speech.

However, if you practice adequately, your approach will still feel like you are being extemporaneous.

2.4   PREPARING FOR YOUR DELIVERY

Your audiences, circumstances, and physical contexts for presenting will vary, but will arise regularly in any business environment. Being prepared to deal with different presenting situations will help reduce anxiety you may have about giving a speech, so let's look at some common factors you need to keep in mind as you prepare for a typical business presentation.

Using Lecterns: Lecterns add formality to the presentation situation, but it can be tempting to hide behind it. Use it to hold your notes only. This will enhance your eye contact as well as free up your hands for gesturing, and give the appearance of confidence.

Large spaces: auditoriums or other large spaces can be intimidating. Preparation and practice will prevent poor performance; a rehearsal, if available, can also ease nerves. Slowing your speech to allow for echo, and adjust visual aids so they can be seen by those in the back of the hall.

Small spaces: these are usually easier to manage for presenters, but use note cards and visual aids carefully, as your audience will be able to see everything. Ideally, arrive early to set up your presentation material to prevent fumbling and delays.

Outdoors: Noise (cars, wind), insects, weather, sunshine and other environmental factors may be hard to control. Do your best to project your voice without yelling, and choose locations that are quiet and sheltered, if possible.

Using a Microphone: you can avoid difficulties with microphones by doing a rehearsal or test ahead of time. Ensure you enunciate clearly and give a few inches between your face and the microphone.

Small Audience Size: A small audience will allow for greater contact, but may invite interruptions. Deal with any questions politely and say you'll try to answer that

question at the end of the presentation. Or, set the agenda at the beginning so that the audience knows there will be a question-and-answer period at the end.

2.5 PRACTISING YOUR DELIVERY

There is no fool-proof recipe for good delivery. You are a unique person, and you embody different experiences and interests from others. This means you have an approach, or a style, that is effective for you. It also means that your concern about what others think of you can cause anxiety, even during the most carefully researched and interesting presentation. But there are some techniques you can use to minimize that anxious feeling and put yourself in the best possible position to succeed on presentation day. You need to pre- pare for your presentation in as realistic a simulation as possible. What follows are some general tips you should keep in mind, but they all essentially derive from one very straight-forward premise: Practice your presentation beforehand, at home or elsewhere, the way you will give it in person.

2.5.1 Practice Your Presentation Out Loud

Practice allows you to learn what to say, when and how to say it, but it also lets you know where potential problems lie. Since you will be speaking with a normal volume for your presentation, you need to practice that way, even at home. This help you learn the presentation, but it will help identify any places where you tend to mispronounce words. Also, sentences on paper do not always translate well to the spoken medium. Practicing out loud allows you to actually hear where you have trouble and fix it before getting up in front of the audience.

2.5.2 Practice Your Presentation Standing Up

Since you will be standing for your presentation (in all likelihood), you need to practice that way. As we men- tion in more detail below, the default position for delivering a presentation is with your feet shoulder-width apart and your knees slightly bent. Practising this way will help develop muscle memory and will make it feel more natural when you are doing it for real.

2.5.3 Practice Your Presentation with an Audience

The best way to prepare for the feeling of having someone watch you while giving a presentation is to have someone watch you while you practice. Ask your colleagues, friends, family, or significant other to listen to you while running through what you will

say. Not only will you get practice in front of an audience, but they may be able to tell you about any parts that were unclear or problems you might encounter when delivering it on the day. During practice, it may help to pick out some strategically placed objects around the room to occasionally glance at just to get into the habit of looking around more often and making eye contact with multiple people in your audience.

2.5.4 Practice Your Presentation for Time

You'll likely have a time limit for presentation. As a rule of thumb, plan to have a 60-second "buffer" at the end of your presentation, in case something goes wrong. For example, if your presentation is set for 10 minutes, plan for nine minutes. Should you rush through or end early, make sure you can add more detail to the end of your presentation if needed. With all of this in mind, practising at least three times at home will ensure your presentation is properly timed.

2.5.5 Practice Your Presentation by Filming Yourself

There is nothing that gets you to change what you're doing or correct a problem quicker than seeing your- self doing something you don't like on video. By watching yourself, you will notice all the small things you do that might prove to be distracting during the actual presentation.

It is important enough that it deserves reiterating: Practice your speech beforehand, at home or elsewhere, the way you will give it on the scheduled day.

2.6 WHAT TO DO WHEN DELIVERING YOUR SPEECH

The interplay between the verbal and nonverbal components of your speech can either bring the message vividly to life or confuse or bore the audience. Therefore, it is best that you neither over-dramatize your speech delivery behaviors nor downplay them. This is a balance achieved through rehearsal, trial and error, and experience. One way to think of this is in terms of the Goldilocks paradigm: you don't want to overdo the delivery because you might distract your audience by looking hyper or overly animated. Conversely, someone whose delivery is too understated (meaning they don't move their hands or feet at all) looks unnatural and uncomfortable, which can also distract. Just like Goldilocks, you want a delivery that is "just right". This middle ground between too much and too little is a much more natural approach to

public speaking delivery, which will be covered in more detail in the following sections where we discuss aspects of your delivery and what you need to think about while actually giving your speech.

Hands: Use your hands as naturally as you would in normal conversation. Try to pay attention to what you do with your hands in regular conversations and incorporate that into your delivery. If you're not comfortable with that, rest them on the lectern or fold them in front of your body.

Feet: stand shoulder-width apart, keeping your knees slightly bent. If you are comfortable, try walking around a bit if space allows and it appears natural in practice. Avoid shifting from foot-to-foot, or bouncing nervously.

Objects: bring only what you need to give your presentation. Anything else will be a distraction. Turn off any personal devices (cell phones, tablets) so there are no interruptions.

Clothing: dress professionally, based on the culture of your organization. Avoid jewellery that could make noise, uncomfortable shoes or any item that hangs from you. Tie back long hair so you are not tempted to touch or move it.

Eye Contact: Eye contact is an extremely important element of your delivery. The general rule of thumb is to aim for 80% of your total speech time be spent making eye contact with your audience (Lucas, 2015, p. 250).

Volume: The volume you use should fit the size of the audience and the room.

Rate: How quickly or slowly you say the words of your speech are the rate. You especially will want to maintain a good, deliberate rate at the beginning of your speech because your audience will be getting used to your voice.

Vocalized Pauses: Everyone uses vocalized pauses to some degree, but not everyone's are problematic. This obviously becomes an issue when the vocalized pauses become distracting due to their overuse. Identify your own common vocalized pauses and try to catch yourself to begin the process of reducing your dependence on them.

The items listed above represent the major delivery issues you will want to be aware of when giving a speech, but it is by no means an exhaustive list.

There is however, one final piece of delivery advice. No matter how hard you practice and how diligent you are in preparing for your presentation, you are most likely going to mess up some aspect at some point.

That's normal. Everyone does it. The key is to not make a big deal about it or let the audience know you messed up. Odds are that they will never even realize your mistake if you don't tell them there was a mistake.

2.7   LET US SUM UP

Good delivery is meant to augment your presentation and help convey your information to the audience. Anything that potentially distracts your audience means that fewer people will be informed, persuaded, or entertained by what you have said. Practicing your presentation in an environment that closely resembles the actual situation that you will be speaking in will better prepare you for what to do and how to deliver your speech when it really counts.

2.8   FURTHER READING

- Duarte, N. (2011). The secret structure of great talks [Video]. Retrieved from https://www.ted.com/ talks/nancy_duarte_the_secret_structure_of_great_talks[i]

2.9   ASSIGNMENTS

1. Identify the different methods of speech delivery.
2. Identify key elements in preparing to deliver a speech.
3. Understand the benefits of delivery-related behaviors.
4. Utilize specific techniques to enhance speech delivery.

Unit 3: PRESENTATION TO INFORM

3

Unit Structure

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit student will be able to understand:

•   Functions of the Presentation to Inform

•   Types of Presentations to Inform

•   Adapting Your Presentation to Teach

•   Preparing to Perform

•   Creating an Informative Presentation

3.2 INTRODUCTION

At some point in your business career you will be called upon to teach someone something. It may be a customer, co-worker, or supervisor, and in each case you are performing an informative speech. It is distinct from a sales speech, or persuasive speech, in that your goal is to communicate the information so that your listener understands. The informative speech is one performance you'll give many times across your career, whether your audience is one person, a small group, or a large auditorium full of listeners. Once you master the art of the informative speech, you may mix and match it with other styles and techniques.

3.3 FUNCTIONS OF THE PRESENTATION TO INFORM

Informative presentations focus on helping the audience to understand a topic, issue, or technique more clearly. There are distinct functions inherent in a speech to inform, and you may choose to use one or more of these functions in your speech. Let's take a look at the functions and see how they relate to the central objective of facilitating audience understanding.

Share

The basic definition of communication highlights the process of understanding and sharing meaning. An informative speech follows this definition when a speaker shares content and information with an audience. As part of a speech, you wouldn't typically be asking the audience to respond or solve a problem. Instead you'd be offering to share with the audience some of the information you have gathered related to a topic.

Increase Understanding

How well does your audience grasp the information? This should be a guiding question to you on two levels. The first involves what they already know—or don't know—about your topic, and what key terms or ideas might be necessary for someone completely unfamiliar with your topic to grasp the ideas you are presenting. The second involves your presentation and the illustration of ideas. The audience will respond to your attention statement and hopefully maintain interest, but how will you take your speech beyond superficial coverage of content and effectively communicate key relationships that increase understanding? These questions should serve as a challenge for your informative speech, and by looking at your speech from an audience-oriented perspective, you will increase your ability to increase the audience's understanding.

Change Perceptions

How you perceive something has everything to do with a range of factors that are unique to you. We all want to make sense of our world, share our experiences, and learn that many people face the same challenges we do. For instance, many people perceive the process of speaking in public as a significant challenge, and in this text, we have broken down the process into several manageable steps. In so doing, we have to some degree changed your perception of public speaking.

When you present your speech to inform, you may want to change the audience member's perceptions of your topic. You may present an informative speech on air pollution and want to change common perceptions such as the idea that most of North America's air pollution comes from private cars. You won't be asking people to go out and vote, or change their choice of automobiles, but you will help your audience change their perceptions of your topic.

Gain Skills

Just as you want to increase the audience's understanding, you may want to help the audience members gain skills. If you are presenting a speech on how to make a meal from fresh ingredients, your audience may thank you for not only the knowledge of the key ingredients and their preparation but also the product available

at the conclusion. If your audience members have never made their own meal, they may gain a new skill from your speech.

Exposition versus Interpretation

When you share information informally, you often provide your own perspective and attitude for your own reasons. The speech to inform the audience on a topic, idea, or area of content is not intended to be a dis- play of attitude and opinion.

The speech to inform is like the classroom setting in that the goal is to inform, not to persuade, entertain, display attitude, or create comedy. If you have analyzed your audience, you'll be better prepared to develop appropriate ways to gain their attention and inform them on your topic. You want to communicate thoughts, ideas, and relationships and allow each listener specifically, and the audience generally, to draw their own conclusions. The speech to inform is all about sharing information to meet the audience's needs, not your own.

Exposition

This relationship between informing as opposed to persuading your audience is often expressed in terms of exposition versus interpretation.

Exposition means a public exhibition or display, often expressing a complex topic in a way that makes the relationships and content clear. The goal is to communicate the topic and content to your audience in ways that illustrate, explain, and reinforce the overall content to make your topic more accessible to the audience. The audience wants to learn about your topic and may have some knowledge on it as you do. It is your responsibility to consider ways to display the information effectively.

Interpretation and Bias

Interpretation involves adapting the information to communicate a message, perspective, or agenda. Your insights and attitudes will guide your selection of material, what you focus on, and what you delete (choosing what not to present to the audience). Your interpretation will involve personal bias.

Bias is an unreasoned or not-well-thought-out judgment. Bias involves beliefs or ideas held on the basis of conviction rather than current evidence. Beliefs are often called "habits of the mind" because we come to rely on them to make decisions. Which is the better, cheapest, most expensive, or the middle-priced prod- uct? People often choose the middle-priced product and use the belief "if it costs more it

must be better" (and the opposite: "if it is cheap it must not be very good"). The middle-priced item, regardless of actual price, is often perceived as "good enough." All these perceptions are based on beliefs, and they may not apply to the given decision or even be based on any evidence or rational thinking.

We take mental shortcuts all day long, but in our speech to inform, we have to be careful not to reinforce bias.

Point of View

Clearly no one can be completely objective and remove themselves from their own perceptual process. People express themselves and naturally relate what is happening now to what has happened to them in the past. You are your own artist, but you also control your creations.

Objectivity involves expressions and perceptions of facts that are free from distortion by your prejudices, bias, feelings or interpretations. For example, is the post office box blue? An objective response would be yes or no, but a subjective response might sound like "Well, it's not really blue as much as it is navy, even a bit of purple." Subjectivity involves expressions or perceptions that are modified, altered, or impacted by your personal bias, experiences, and background. In an informative speech, your audience will expect you to present the information in a relatively objective form. The speech should meet the audience's need as they learn about the content, not your feelings, attitudes, or commentary on the content.

Here are five suggestions to help you present a neutral speech:

Keep your language neutral.

Keep your sources credible and not from biased organizations.

Keep your presentation balanced. If you use a source that supports one clear side of an issue, include an alternative source and view. Give each equal time and respectful consideration.

Keep your audience in mind. Not everyone will agree with every point or source of evidence, but diversity in your speech will have more to offer everyone.

Keep who you represent in mind: Your business and yourself.

3.4 Types of Presentations to Inform

Speaking to inform may fall into one of several categories. The presentation to inform may be

- an explanation,
- a report,
- a description,
- a demonstration of how to do something.

In the sections below each of these types of informative speech will be described.

Explanation

Have you ever listened to a lecture or speech where you just didn't get it? It wasn't that you weren't interested, at least not at first. Perhaps the presenter used language you didn't understand or gave a confusing example. Soon you probably lost interest and sat there, attending the speech in body but certainly not in mind. An effective speech to inform will take a complex topic or issue and explain it to the audience in ways that increase audience understanding.

No one likes to feel left out. As the speaker, it's your responsibility to ensure that this doesn't happen. Also know that to teach someone something new—perhaps a skill that they did not posses or a perspective that allows them to see new connections—is a real gift, both to you and the audience members. You will feel rewarded because you made a difference and they will perceive the gain in their own understanding.

Report

As a business communicator, you may be called upon to give an informative report where you communicate status, trends, or relationships that pertain to a specific topic. The informative report is a speech where you organize your information around key events, discoveries, or technical data and provide context and illustration for your audience. They may naturally wonder, "Why sales are up (or down)?" or "What is the product leader in your line up?" and you need to anticipate their perspective and present the key information that relates to your topic.

Description

Have you ever listened to a friend tell you about their recent trip somewhere and found the details fascinating, making you want to travel there or visit a similar place? Describing information requires emphasis on language that is vivid, captures attention, and excites the imagination. Your audience will be drawn to your effective use of color, descriptive language, and visual aids. An informative speech that focuses description will be visual in many ways. Use your imagination to place yourself in their perspective: how would you like to have someone describe the topic to you?

Demonstration

You want to teach the audience how to program the applications on a new smartphone. A demonstrative speech focuses on clearly showing a process and telling the audience important details about each step so that they can imitate, repeat, or do the action themselves. Consider the visual aids or supplies you will need.

By considering each step and focusing on how to simplify it, you can understand how the audience might grasp the new information and how you can best help them. Also, consider the desired outcome; for exam- ple, will your listeners be able to actually do the task themselves? Regardless of the sequence or pattern you will illustrate or demonstrate, consider how people from your anticipated audience will respond, and budget additional time for repetition and clarification.

Informative presentations come in all sizes, shapes, and forms. The main goal in an informative presentation

is to inform, not to persuade, and that requires an emphasis on credibility, for the speaker and the data or information presented.

Here are additional, more specific types of informative presentations:

- Biographical information
- Case study results
- Comparative advantage results
- Cost-benefit analysis results
- Feasibility studies
- Field study results
- Financial trends analysis
- Health, safety, and accident rates
- Instruction guidelines
- Laboratory results
- Product or service orientations
- Progress reports
- Research results
- Technical specifications

Depending on the situation, the audience, and the specific information to be presented, any of these types of presentation may be given as an explanation, a report, a description, or a demonstration.

3.5 Adapting Your Presentation to Teach

Successfully delivering an informative speech requires adopting an audience centered perspective. Imagine that you are in the audience. What would it take for the speaker to capture and maintain your attention?

What would encourage you to listen? In this section we present several techniques for achieving this, including motivating your audience to listen, framing your information in meaningful ways, and designing your presentation to appeal to diverse learning styles.

Motivating the Listener

In an ideal world, every audience member would be interested in your topic. Unfortunately, however, not everyone will be equally interested in your informative speech. So what is a speaker to do in order to motivate the listener?

The perception process involves selection or choice, and you want your audience to choose to listen to you. Begin with your attention statement at the beginning of your speech and make sure it is dynamic and arresting. Remember what active listening involves, and look for opportunities throughout your speech to encourage active listening.

Review and consider using the seven strategies below by posing questions that audience members may think, but not actually say out loud, when deciding whether to listen to your speech. By considering each question, you will take a more audience-centered approach to developing your speech, increasing your effectiveness.

"appX Cambridge 2012 Participants" by bobfamiliar shared under a CC BY license

1.   How Is Your Topic Relevant to Me?

A natural question audience members will ask themselves is, what does the topic have to do with me? Why should I care about it? Relevance means that the information applies, relates, or has significance to the lis- tener. Find areas of common ground and build on them in your presentation.

2.   What Will I Learn from You?

This question involves several issues. How much does the audience already know about your subject? What areas do you think they might not know? By building on

the information the audience knows, briefly review- ing it and then extending it, illustrating it, and demonstrating the impact, you inform them of things they didn't already know.

3. Why Are You Interested in This Topic?

Your interest in your topic is an excellent way to encourage your audience to listen. You probably selected your topic with your audience in mind, but also considered your interest in the topic. Why did you choose it over other topics? What about your topic aroused your attention? Did it stimulate your curiosity? Did it make you excited about researching and preparing a speech on it? These questions will help you clarify your interest, and by sharing the answers with your listeners, you will stimulate excitement on their part.

4. How Can I Use the Knowledge or Skills You Present to Me?

In an informative speech you are not asking your listeners to go out and vote, or to quit smoking tomorrow, as you would in a persuasive speech. Nevertheless, you need to consider how they will apply their new understanding. Application involves the individual's capacity for practical use of the information, skill, or knowledge. As a result of your speech, will your listeners be able to do something new or understand a topic better?

5. What Is New about What You Propose to Present?

People are naturally attracted to something new, unusual or unfamiliar–but we also like predictability. As a speaker, how do you meet the two contrasting needs for familiarity and something new?

Address both. You may want to start by forming a clear foundation on what you have in common with the audience. Present the known elements of your topic and then extend into areas where less is known, increasing the new information as you progress. People will feel comfortable with the familiar, and be intrigued by the unfamiliar.

6. Are You Going to Bore Me?

You have probably sat through your fair share of boring lectures where the speaker, teacher, or professor talks at length in a relatively monotone voice, fails to alternate his or her pace, incorporates few visual aids or just reads from a PowerPoint show for an hour in a dimly lighted room. Recall how you felt. Trapped? Tired? Did you wonder why you had to be there? Then you know what you need to avoid.

Being bored means the speaker failed to stimulate you as the listener, probably increased your resistance to listening or participating, and became tiresome. To avoid boring your audience, speak with enthusiasm, and consider ways to gain, and keep gaining, their attention. You don't have to be a stand-up comedian, however, to avoid being a boring speaker.

Consider the question, "What's in it for me?" from the audience's perspective and plan to answer it specifically with vivid examples. If your presentation meets their expectations and meets their needs, listeners are more likely to give you their attention.

You may also give some thought and consideration to the organizational principle and choose a strategy that promises success. By organizing the information in interesting ways within the time frame, you can increase your effectiveness.

7. Is This Topic Really as Important as You Say It Is?

No one wants to feel like his or her time is being wasted. What is important to you and what is important to your audience may be two different things. Take time and plan to reinforce in your speech how the topic is important to your audience. Importance involves perceptions of worth, value, and usefulness.

Framing

The presentation of information shapes attitudes and behavior. This is done through framing and content. Framing involves placing an imaginary set of boundaries, much like a frame around a picture or a window, around a story, of what is included and omitted, influencing the story itself. What lies within the frame that we can see? What lies outside the frame that we cannot see?

Setting the agenda, just like the agenda of a meeting, means selecting what the audience will see and hear and in what order. In giving a speech, you select the information and set the agenda. You may choose to inform the audience on a topic that gets little press coverage, or use a popular story widely covered in a new way, with a case example and local statistics.

Another aspect of framing your message is culture. Themes of independence, overcoming challenging circumstances, and hard-fought victories may represent aspects of certain cultures in the world. If appropriate for your topic, consider

localizing your presentation to incorporate cultural values in the region or nation of your audience.

Additional Tips for Success

Andrews, Andrews, and Williams (1999) offer eight ways to help listeners learn. These are adapted and augmented here.

1. **Limit the Number of Details**

While it may be tempting to include many of the facts you've found in your research, choose only those that clearly inform your audience. You don't want the audience focusing on a long list of facts and details only to miss your main points.

2. **Focus on Clear Main Points**

Your audience should be able to discern your main points clearly the first time. You'll outline them in your introduction and they will listen for them as you proceed. Connect supporting information to your clear main points to reinforce them, and provide verbal cues of points covered and points to come.

3. **Pace Yourself**

Talking too fast is a common expression of speech anxiety. One way to reduce your anxiety level is to practice and know your information well. When you deliver your speech, knowing you have time, are well prepared, and are familiar with your speech patterns will help you to pace yourself more effectively.

4. **Speak with Concern for Clarity**

Not everyone speaks English as their first language, and even among English speakers, there is a wide discrepancy in speaking style and language use. When you choose your language, consider challenging terms define them accordingly. As your rate of speech picks up, you may tend to slur words together and drop or de-emphasize consonants, especially at the ends of words. Doing this will make your speech harder to understand and will discourage listening.

5. **Use Restatement and Repetition**

There is nothing wrong with restating main points or repeating key phrases.

6. **Provide Visual Reinforcement**

As a speaker giving a prepared presentation, you have the luxury of preparing your visual aids with your audience in mind. Take advantage of the known time frame before your speech to prepare effective visual aids and your speech will be more effective.

7. Include Time for Questions

You can't possibly cover all the information about a topic that every audience member would want to know in the normal five to seven minutes of a speech. In some situations, the speaker will accept and answer questions during the body of the presentations, but it is more typical to ask listeners to hold their questions until the end.

8. Look for Ways to Involve Listeners Actively

Instead of letting your audience sit passively, motivate them to get involved in your presentation. You might ask for a show of hands as you raise a question like, "How many of you have wondered about…?" You might point out the window, encouraging your audience to notice a weather pattern or an example of air pollution. Even stepping away from the podium for a moment can provide variety and increase active listening.

To present a successful informative speech, motivate your audience by making your material relevant and useful, finding interesting ways to frame your topic, and emphasizing new aspects if the topic is a familiar one.

Preparing Your Speech to Inform

Now that you've reviewed issues central to the success of your informative speech, there's no doubt you want to get down to work. Here are five final suggestions to help you succeed.

1. Start with What You Know

Regardless of where you draw the inspiration, it's a good strategy to start with what you know and work from there. You'll be more enthusiastic, helping your audience to listen intently, and you'll save yourself time.

2. Consider Your Audience's Prior Knowledge

The audience will want to learn something from you, not hear everything they have heard before. Think about age, gender, and socioeconomic status, as well as your listeners' culture or language.

In the same way, when you prepare a speech in a business situation, do your homework. Access the com- pany website, visit the location and get to know people, and even call members of the company to discuss your topic. The more information you can gather about your audience, the better you will be able to adapt and present an effective speech.

3.   Adapting Language and Technical Terms

Define and describe the key terms for your audience as part of your speech and substitute common terms where appropriate. Your audience will enjoy learning more about the topic and appreciate your consideration as you present your speech.

4.   Using Outside Information

Even if you think you know everything there is to know about your topic, using outside sources will con- tribute depth to your speech, provide support for your main points, and even enhance your credibility as a speaker. There is nothing wrong with using outside information as long as you clearly cite your sources and do not present someone else's information as your own.

5.   Presenting Information Ethically

Figure 7.1. Presenting information ethically.

A central but often unspoken expectation of the speaker is that we will be ethical. This means, fundamentally, that we perceive one another as human beings with common interests and needs, and that we attend to the needs of others as well as our own. An ethical informative speaker expresses respect for listeners by avoiding prejudiced comments against any group, and by being honest about the information presented, including information that may contradict the speaker's personal biases. The ethical speaker also admits it when they do not know something. The best salesperson recognizes that ethical communication is the key to success, as it builds a healthy relationship where the customer's needs are met, thereby meeting the salesperson's own needs. When presenting information ethically, you must consider the following:

Reciprocity

Reciprocity, or a relationship of mutual exchange and interdependence, is an important characteristic of a relationship, particularly between a speaker and the audience. You as the speaker will have certain expectations and roles, but dominating your audience will not encourage them to fulfill their roles in terms of participation and active listening. Communication involves give and take, and in a public speaking setting, where the communication may be perceived as "all to one," don't forget that the audience is also communicating in terms of feedback with you. You have a responsibility to attend to that feedback, and develop reciprocity with your audience. Without them, you don't have a speech.

Mutuality

Mutuality means that you search for common ground and understanding with the audience, establishing this space and building on it throughout the speech. This involves examining viewpoints other than your own, and taking steps to insure the speech integrates an inclusive, accessible format, rather than an ethno- centric one.

Nonjudgmentalism

Non-judgmentalism underlines the need to be open-minded, an expression of one's willingness to examine diverse perspectives. Your audience expects you to state the truth as you perceive it, with supporting and clarifying information to support your position, and to speak honestly. They also expect you to be open to their point of view and be able to negotiate meaning and understanding in a constructive way. Nonjudgmentalism may include taking the perspective that being different is not inherently bad and that there is common ground to be found with each other.

Honesty

Honesty, or truthfulness, directly relates to trust, a cornerstone in the foundation of a relationship with your audience. Without it, the building (the relationship) would fall down. Without trust, a relationship will not open and develop the possibility of mutual understanding. You want to share information and the audience hopefully wants to learn from you. If you only choose the best information to support only your point and ignore contrary or related issues, you may turn your informative speech into a persuasive one with bias as a central feature.

Respect

Respect should be present throughout a speech, demonstrating the speaker's high esteem for the audience. Respect can be defined as an act of giving and displaying particular attention to the value you associate with someone or a group. Displays of respect include making time for conversation, not interrupting, and even giving appropriate eye contact during conversations.

Trust

Communication involves sharing and that requires trust. Trust means the ability to rely on the character or truth of someone, that what you say you mean and your audience knows it. Acknowledging trust and its importance in your relationship with the audience is the first step in focusing on this key characteristic.

Avoid Exploitation

Finally, when we speak ethically, we do not intentionally exploit one another. Exploitation means taking advantage, using someone else for one's own purposes. Perceiving a relationship with an audience as a means to an end and only focusing on what you get out of it, will lead you to treat people as objects. The temptation to exploit others can be great in business situations, where a promotion, a bonus, or even one's livelihood are at stake.

Suppose you are a bank loan officer. Whenever a customer contacts the bank to inquire about applying for a loan, your job is to provide an informative presentation about the types of loans available, their rates and terms. If you are paid a commission based on the number of loans you make and their amounts and rates, wouldn't you be tempted to encourage them to borrow the maximum amount they can qualify for? Or perhaps to take a loan with confusing terms that will end up costing much more in fees and interest than the customer realizes? After all, these practices are within the law; aren't they just part of the way business is done? If you are an ethical loan officer, you realize you would be exploiting customers if you treated them this way. You know it is more valuable to uphold your long-term relationships with customers than to exploit them so that you can earn a bigger commission.

Consider these ethical principles when preparing and presenting your speech, and you will help address many of these natural expectations of others and develop healthier, more effective speeches.

Sample Informative Presentation

Here is a generic sample speech in outline form with notes and suggestions.
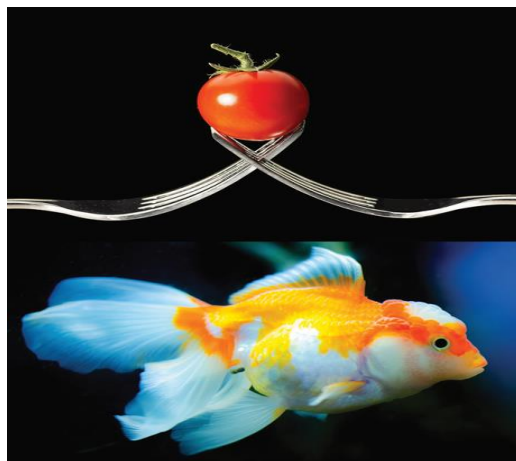
Introduction

1.	Briefly introduce genetically modified foods.

2.	State your topic and specific purpose: "My speech today will inform you on genetically modified foods that are increasingly part of our food supply."

3.	Introduce your credibility and the topic: "My research on this topic has shown me that our food supply has changed but many people are unaware of the changes."

4.	State your main points: "Today I will define genes, DNA, genome engineering and genetic manipulation, discuss how the technology applies to foods, and provide common examples."

Body

1.	Information. Provide a simple explanation of the genes, DNA and genetic modification in case there are people who do not know about it. Provide clear definitions of key terms.

2.	Genes and DNA. Provide arguments by generalization and authority.

3.	Genome engineering and genetic manipulation. Provide arguments by analogy, cause, and principle.

4.	Case study. In one early experiment, GM (genetically modified) tomatoes were developed with fish genes to make them resistant to cold weather, although this type of tomato was never marketed.

5.	Highlight other examples.

3.6   Creating an Informative Presentation

An informational presentation is common request in business and industry. It's the verbal and visual equivalent of a written report. Informative presentations serve to present specific information for specific audiences for specific goals or functions. Table 7.1 below describes five main parts of a presentation to inform.

Table 7.1. Presentation Components and Their Functions. Lists the five main parts or components of any presentation (McLean, S., 2003).

Component	Function
Attention Statement	Raise interest and motivate the listener
Introduction	Communicate a point and common ground
Body	Address key points
Conclusion	Summarize key points
Residual Message	Communicate central theme, moral of story, or main point

Sample Speech Guidelines

Imagine that you have been assigned to give an informative presentation lasting five to seven minutes. Follow the guidelines in Table 7.2 below and apply them to your presentation.

Table 7.2. Sample speech guidelines. Seven key items.

Topic	Choose a product or service that interests you (if you have the option of choice) and report findings in your speech. Even if you are assigned a topic, find an aspect or angle that is of interest to research.
Purpose	Your general purpose, of course, is to inform. But you need to formulate a more specific purpose statement that expresses a point you have to make about your topic— what you hope to accomplish in your speech.
Audience	Think about what your audience might already know about your topic and what they may not know, and perhaps any attitudes toward or concerns about it. Consider how this may affect the way that you will present your information.
Supporting Materials	Using the information gathered in your search for information, determine what is most worthwhile, interesting, and important to include in your speech. Time limits will require that you be selective about what you use. Use visual aids!
Organization	• Write a central idea statement that expresses the message, or point, that you hope to get across to your listeners in the speech. • Determine the two to three main points that will be needed to support your central idea.

	• • Finally, prepare a complete sentence outline of the body of the speech.
Introduction	Develop an opening that will • get the attention and interest of your listeners, • express your central idea or message, • lead into the body of your speech.
Conclusion	The conclusion should review and/or summarize the important ideas in your speech and bring it to a smooth close.
Delivery	The speech should be delivered extemporaneously (not reading but speaking), using speaking notes and not reading from the manuscript. Work on maximum eye contact with your listeners. Use any visual aids or handouts that may be helpful.

Informative presentations illustrate, explain, describe, and instruct the audience on topics and processes.

3.7   LET US SUM UP

We can summarize that the purpose of an informative speech is to share ideas with the audience, increase their understanding, change their perceptions, or help them gain new skills. An informative speech incorporates the speaker's point of view but not attitude or interpretation. In preparing an informative speech, use your knowledge and consider the audience's knowledge, avoid unnecessary jargon, give credit to your sources, and present the information ethically. After reading this chapter, and returning to the challenge related to the development of an informational presentation on the environment, how might you ensure that he communicates his message to best inform his colleagues? How can he help ensure that his presentation is accurate and balanced? How might he avoid injecting his bias or personal opinions into the presentation?

3.8   FURTHER READING

- Great Canadian Speeches https://greatcanadianspeeches.ca
- For information on adapting your speech for an audience or audience members with special needs, explore this index of resources compiled by Ithaca College. http://www.ithaca.edu/wise/disabilities/

- Visit this site for list informative topics for a business speech. http://smallbusiness.chron.com/ideas-informative-speech-topics-business-81465.html

3.9   ASSIGNMENTS

1. Describe the functions of the speech to inform.
2. Provide examples of four main types of speech to inform.
3. Articulate and demonstrate an audience-centered perspective.
4. Provide and demonstrate examples of ways to facilitate active listening.
5. Discuss and provide examples of ways to incorporate ethics in a speech.

Unit 4: PRESENTATIONS TO PERSUADE   4

Unit Structure

4.1   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit student should be able to understand:

• What is Persuasion?
• Principles of Persuasion
• Persuasive Presentations
• Making an Argument
• Speaking Ethically and Avoiding Fallacies

4.2   INTRODUCTION

No doubt there has been a time when you wanted to achieve a goal or convince your manager about a work need and you thought about how you were going to present your request. Consider how often people—including people you have never met and never will meet—want something from you? When you watch television, advertisements reach out for your attention, whether you watch them or not. When you use the Internet, pop-up advertisements often appear. Most people are surrounded, even inundated by persuasive messages. Mass and social media in the 21st century have had a significant effect on persuasive communication that you will certainly recognize. This chapter is about how to communicate with persuasion and how to convince others to consider your point of view.

4.3   PRINCIPLES OF PERSUASION

Persuasion is an act or process of presenting arguments to move, motivate, or change your audience. Persuasion can be implicit or explicit and can have both positive and negative effects. In this chapter the importance of ethics will continued to be reviewed, especially related to presenting motivational arguments to your audience so that they will consider your points, adopt your view, or change their behavior.

Motivation is different from persuasion in that it involves the force, stimulus, or influence to bring about change. Persuasion is the process, and motivation is the compelling stimulus that encourages your audience to change their beliefs or behaviour, to adopt your position, or to consider your arguments.

4.3.1 Principles of Persuasion

What is the best way to succeed in persuading your listeners? There is no one "correct" answer, but many experts have studied persuasion and observed what works and what doesn't. Social psychologist Robert Cialdini (2006) offers us six principles of persuasion that are powerful and effective:

1. Reciprocity

2. Scarcity

3. Authority

4. Commitment and consistency

5. Consensus

6. Liking

4.3.2 Reciprocity

Reciprocity is the mutual expectation for exchange of value or service. In all cultures, when one person gives something, the receiver is expected to reciprocate. If you are in customer service and go out of your way to meet the customer's need, you are appealing to the principle of reciprocity with the knowledge that all humans perceive the need to reciprocate—in this case, by increasing the likelihood of making a purchase from you because you were especially helpful. Reciprocity builds trust and the relationship develops, reinforcing everything from personal to brand loyalty. By taking the lead and giving, you build in a moment where people will feel compelled from social norms and customs to give back.

4.3.3 Scarcity

You want what you can't have, and it's universal. People are naturally attracted to the exclusive, the rare, the unusual, and the unique. If they are convinced that they need to act now or it will disappear, they are motivated to action. Scarcity is the perception of inadequate supply or a limited resource. For a sales representative, scarcity may be a key selling point—the particular car, or theatre tickets or pair of shoes you are considering may be sold to someone else if you delay making a decision. By reminding customers not only of what they stand to gain but also of what they stand to lose, the representative increases the chances that the customer will make the shift from contemplation to action and decide to close the sale.

4.3.4 Authority

Trust is central to the purchase decision. Whom does a customer turn to? A salesperson may be part of the process, but an endorsement by an authority holds credibility that no one with a vested interest can ever attain. Knowledge of a product, field, trends in the field, and even research can make a salesperson more effective by the appeal to the principle of authority. It may seem like extra work to educate your customers, but you need to reveal your expertise to gain credibility. Reading the manual of a product is not sufficient to gain expertise—you have to do extra homework. The principle of authority involves referencing experts and expertise.

4.3.5 Commitment and Consistency

People like to have consistency in what is said to them or in writing. Therefore, it is important that all commitments made are honored at all times.

4.3.6 Consensus

Testimonials, or first person reports on experience with a product or service, can be highly persuasive. People often look to each other when making a purchase decision and the herd mentality is a powerful force across humanity.

Leverage testimonials from clients to attract more clients by making them part of your team. The principle of consensus involves the tendency of the individual to follow the lead of the group or peers.

4.3.7 Liking

We tend to be attracted to people who communicate to us that they like us, and who make us feel good about ourselves. Given a choice, these are the people with whom we are likely to associate. The principle of liking involves the perception of safety and belonging in communication.

4.4 PRESENTATION THAT PERSUADE

Persuasive presentations have the following features, they:

4.4.1 Stimulate

When you focus on stimulation as the goal of your speech, you want to reinforce existing beliefs, intensify them, and bring them to the forefront. By presenting facts, you will reinforce existing beliefs, intensify them, and bring the issue to the surface. You might consider the foundation of common ground and commonly held beliefs, and then introduce information that a mainstream audience may not be aware of that supports that common ground as a strategy to stimulate.

4.4.2 Convince

In a persuasive speech, the goal is to change the attitudes, beliefs, values, or judgments of your audience. If we look back at the idea of motive, in this speech the prosecuting attorney would try to convince the jury members that the defendant is guilty beyond reasonable doubt. He or she may discuss motive, present facts, all with the goal to convince the jury to believe or find that his or her position is true.

Audience members will also hold beliefs and are likely to involve their own personal bias. Your goal is to get them to agree with your position, so you will need to plan a range of points and examples to get audience members to consider your topic.

4.4.3 Include a Call to Action

Figure 8.1 below shows the "Reduce, reuse, recycle, repeat" slogan. The recycle movement is one of the most successful and persuasive call to action campaigns of the past twenty or more years in Canada (Babooram & Wang, 2007).

Figure 8.1. Reduce, reuse, recycle, repeat slogan.

"Reduce-reuse-recycle-repeat" by Phil Gibbs is shared with a CC BY 2.0 Generic license

When you call an audience to action with a speech, you are indicating that your purpose is not to stimulate interest, reinforce and accentuate beliefs, or convince them of a viewpoint. Instead, you want your listeners to do something, to change their behaviour in some way.

If you were a showroom salesperson at Toyota for example, you might include the concept that the purchase of a Prius hybrid model is a call to action against issues of global warming related to fossil fuel consumption. The economics, even at current gas prices, might not completely justify the difference in price between a hybrid and a non-hybrid car. However, if you as a salesperson can make a convincing argument that choosing a hybrid car is the right and responsible decision, you may be more likely to get the customer to act. The persuasive speech that focuses on action often

generates curiosity, clarifies a problem, and as we have seen, proposes a range of solutions. They key difference here is there is a clear link to action associated with the solutions.

Solutions lead us to considering the goals of action. These goals address the question, "What do I want the audience to do as a result of being engaged by my speech?" The goals of action include adoption, discontinuance, deterrence, and continuance.

Adoption means the speaker wants to persuade the audience to take on a new way of thinking, or adopt a new idea. Examples could include buying a new product, or deciding to donate blood. The key is that the audience member adopts, or takes on,

Discontinuance involves the speaker persuading the audience to stop doing something what they have been doing. Rather than take on a new habit or action, the speaker is asking the audience member to stop an existing behaviour or idea.

Deterrence is a call to action that focuses on persuading the audience not to start something if they haven't already started. The goal of action would be to deter, or encourage the audience members to refrain from starting or initiating the behavior.

Finally, with **continuance**, the speaker aims to persuade the audience to continue doing what they have been doing, such as keep buying a product, or staying in school to get an education.

A speaker may choose to address more than one of these goals of action, depending on the audience analysis. If the audience is largely agreeable and supportive, you may find continuance to be one goal, while adoption is secondary. Goals in call to action speeches serve to guide you in the development of solution steps. Solution steps involve suggestions or ways the audience can take action after your speech. Audience members appreciate a clear discussion of the problem in a persuasive speech, but they also appreciate solutions.

4.4.4 Increase Consideration

In a speech designed to increase consideration, you want to entice your audience to consider alternate viewpoints on the topic you have chosen. Audience members may hold views that are hostile in relation to yours, or perhaps they are neutral and simply curious about your topic. Returning to the Toyota salesperson example, you might

be able to compare and contrast competing cars and show that the costs over ten years are quite similar. But the Prius has additional features that are the equivalent of a bonus, including high gas mileage. You might describe tax incentives for ownership, maintenance schedules and costs, and resale value. Your arguments and their support aim at increasing the audience's consideration of your position. You won't be asking for action in this presentation, but a corresponding increase of consideration may lead the customer to that point at a later date.

4.4.5 Develop Tolerance of Alternate Perspectives

Finally, you may want to help your audience develop tolerance of alternate perspectives and viewpoints. Perhaps your audience, as in the previous example, is interested in purchasing a car and you are the lead salesperson on that model. As you listen, and do your informal audience analysis, you may learn that horse- power and speed are important values to this customer. You might raise the issue of torque versus horse- power and indicate that the "uumph" you feel as you start a car off the line is torque. Many hybrid and even electric vehicles have great torque, as their systems involve fewer parts and less friction than a corresponding internal combustion-transaxle system. Your goal is to help your audience develop tolerance, but not necessarily acceptance, of alternate perspectives. By starting from common ground, and introducing a related idea, you are persuading your audience to consider an alternate perspective.

A persuasive speech may stimulate thought, convince, call to action, increase consideration, or develop tolerance of alternate perspectives.

4.5 MAKING AN ARGUMENT

When people argue, they are engaged in conflict and it's usually not pretty. It sometimes appears that way because people resort to fallacious arguments or false statements, or they simply do not treat each other with respect. They get defensive, try to prove their own points, and fail to listen to each other.

But this should not be what happens in persuasive argument. Instead, when you make an argument in a persuasive speech, you will want to present your position with logical points, supporting each point with appropriate sources. You will want to

give your audience every reason to perceive you as an ethical and trustworthy speaker. Your audience will expect you to treat them with respect, and to present your argument in way that does not make them defensive. Contribute to your credibility by building sound arguments and using strategic arguments with skill and planning.

Stephen Toulmin's (1958) rhetorical strategy focuses on three main elements, shown in Table 8.1 as claim, data, and warrant.

Table 8.1 Rhetorical strategy.

Element	Description	Example
Claim	Your statement of belief or truth	It is important to spay or neuter your pet.
Data	Your supporting reasons for the claim	Millions of unwanted pets are euthanized annually.
Warrant	You create the connection between the claim and the supporting reasons	Pets that are spayed or neutered do not reproduce, pre-venting the production of unwanted animals.

This three-part rhetorical strategy is useful in that it makes the claim explicit, clearly illustrating the relationship between the claim and the data, and allows the listener to follow the speaker's reasoning. You may have a good idea or point, but your audience will be curious and want to know how you arrived at that claim or viewpoint. The warrant often addresses the inherent and often unspoken question, "Why is this data so important to your topic?" and helps you illustrate relationships between information for your audience. This model can help you clearly articulate it for your audience.

4.5.1 Appealing to Emotions

Emotions are a psychological and physical reaction, such as fear or anger, to stimuli that we experience as a feeling. Our feelings or emotions directly impact our own point of view and readiness to communicate, but also influence how, why, and when we say things. Emotions influence not only how you say what you say,

but also how you hear and what you hear. At times, emotions can be challenging to control. Emotions will move your audience, and possibly even move you, to change or act in certain ways.

Be wary of overusing emotional appeals, or misusing emotional manipulation in presentations and communication. You may encounter emotional resistance from your audience. Emotional resistance involves get- ting tired, often to the point of rejection, of hearing messages that attempt to elicit an emotional response. Emotional appeals can wear out the audience's capacity to receive the message.

The use of an emotional appeal may also impair your ability to write persuasively or effectively. Never use a personal story, or even a story of someone you do not know, if the inclusion of that story causes you to lose control. While it's important to discuss relevant and sometimes emotionally difficult topics, you need to assess your own relationship to the message. Your documents should not be an exercise in therapy and you will sacrifice ethos and credibility, even your effectiveness, if you become angry or distraught because you are really not ready to discuss an issue you've selected.

Now that you've considered emotions and their role in a speech in general and a speech to persuade specifically, it's important to recognize the principles about emotions in communication that serve you well when speaking in public. DeVito (2003) offers five key principles to acknowledge the role emotions play in communication and offer guidelines for their expression.

Emotions Are Universal

Emotions are a part of every conversation or interaction that you have. Whether or not you consciously experience them while communicating with yourself or others, they influence how you communicate. By recognizing that emotions are a component in all communication interactions, you can place emphasis on understanding both

the content of the message and the emotions that influence how, why, and when the content is communicated.

Expression of emotions is important, but requires the three T's: tact, timing, and trust. If you find you are upset and at risk of being less than diplomatic, or the timing is not right, or you are unsure about the level of trust, and then consider whether you can effectively communicate your emotions. By considering these three Ts, you can help yourself express your emotions more effectively.

Emotions Are Communicated Verbally and Nonverbally

You communicate emotions not only through your choice of words but also through the manner in which you say those words. The words themselves communicate part of your message, but the nonverbal cues, including inflection, timing, space, and paralanguage can modify or contradict your spoken message. Be aware that emotions are expressed in both ways and pay attention to how verbal and nonverbal messages reinforce and complement each other.

Emotional Expression Can Be Good and Bad

Expressing emotions can be a healthy activity for a relationship and build trust. It can also break down trust if expression is not combined with judgment. We're all different, and we all experience emotions, but how we express our emotions to ourselves and others can have a significant impact on our relationships.

Expressing frustrations may help the audience realize your point of view and see things as they have never seen them before. However, expressing frustrations combined with blaming can generate defensiveness and decrease effective listening. When you're expressing yourself, consider the audience's point of view, be specific about your concerns, and emphasize that your relationship with your listeners is important to you.

Emotions Are Often Contagious

It is important to recognize that we influence each other with our emotions, positively and negatively. Your emotions as the speaker can be contagious, so use your enthusiasm to raise the level of interest in your topic. Conversely, you may be subject to "catching" emotions from your audience.

4.6 ELEVATOR SPEECH

An elevator speech is to oral communication what a Twitter message (limited to 140 characters) is to written communication. An elevator speech is a presentation that persuades the listener in less than thirty seconds, or around a hundred words.

Creating an Elevator Speech

An elevator speech does not have to be a formal event, though it can be. An elevator speech is not a full sales pitch and should not get bloated with too much information. The idea is not to rattle off as much information as possible in a short time, nor to present a memorized thirty-second advertising message, but rather to give a relaxed and genuine "nutshell" summary of one main idea. The emphasis is on brevity, but a good elevator speech will address several key questions:

1.   What is the topic, product or service?
2.   Who are you?
3.   Who is the target market? (if applicable)
4.   What is the revenue model? (if applicable)
5.   What or who is the competition and what are your advantages?

The following are the five key parts of your message:

•   Attention Statement – Hook + information about you
•   Introduction – What you offer
•   Body – Benefits; what's in it for the listener
•   Conclusion – Example that sums it up
•   Residual Message – Call for action

Example:

Person you've just met: How are you doing?

You: I'm great, how are you? [ensure that your conversation partner feels the conversation is a two-way street and that they might be interested in hearing your elevator speech]

Person you've just met: Very well thanks, what brings you to this conference?

You: Glad you asked. I'm with (X Company) and we just received this new (product x)—it is amazing. It beats the competition hands down for a third of the price. Smaller, faster, and less expensive make it a winner. It's already a sales leader. Hey, if you know anyone who might be interested, call me! (Hands business card to the listener as visual aid). So what brings you to this conference? [be a good listener]

You often don't know when opportunity to inform or persuade will present itself, but with an elevator speech, you are prepared!

4.7   SPEAKING ETHICALLY AND AVOIDING FALLACIES

What comes to mind when you think of speaking to persuade? Perhaps the idea of persuasion may bring to mind propaganda and issues of manipulation, deception, intentional bias, bribery, and even coercion. Each element relates to persuasion, but in distinct ways. We can recognize that each of these elements in some ways has a negative connotation associated with it. Why do you think that deceiving your audience, bribing a judge, or coercing people to do something against their wishes is wrong? These tactics violate our sense of fairness, freedom, and ethics.

Manipulation involves the management of facts, ideas or points of view to play upon inherent insecurities or emotional appeals to one's own advantage. Your audience expects you to treat them with respect, and deliberately manipulating them by means of fear, guilt, duty, or a relationship is unethical.

In the same way, **deception** involves the use of lies, partial truths, or the omission of relevant information to deceive your audience. No one likes to be lied to, or made to believe something that is not true. Deception can involve intentional bias, or the selection of information to support your position while framing negatively any information that might challenge your belief.

Bribery involves the giving of something in return for an expected favour, consideration, or privilege. It circumvents the normal protocol for personal gain, and again is a strategy that misleads your audience.

Coercion is the use of power to compel action. You make someone do something they would not choose to do freely. While you may raise the issue that the ends justify the means, and you are "doing it for the audience's own good," recognize the unethical nature of coercion.

4.7.1 Eleven Points for Speaking Ethically

In his book Ethics in Human Communication Johannesen (1996) offers eleven points to consider when speaking to persuade. His main points reiterate many of the points across this chapter and should be kept in mind as you prepare, and present, your persuasive message.

Do not:

- use false, fabricated, misrepresented, distorted or irrelevant evidence to support arguments or claims
- intentionally use unsupported, misleading, or illogical reasoning
- represent yourself as informed or an "expert" on a subject when you are not
- use irrelevant appeals to divert attention from the issue at hand
- ask your audience to link your idea or proposal to emotion-laden values, motives, or goals to which it is actually not related

- deceive your audience by concealing your real purpose, by concealing self-interest, by concealing the group you represent, or by concealing your position as an advocate of a viewpoint
- distort, hide, or misrepresent the number, scope, intensity, or undesirable features of consequences or effects
- use "emotional appeals" that lack a supporting basis of evidence or reasoning.
- oversimplify complex, gradation-laden situations into simplistic, two-valued, either-or, polar views or choices
- pretend certainty where tentativeness and degrees of probability would be more accurate
- advocate something which you yourself do not believe in

In your speech to persuade, consider honesty and integrity as you assemble your arguments. Your audience will appreciate your thoughtful consideration of more than one view, your understanding of the complexity, and you will build your ethos, or credibility, as you present your document. Be careful not to stretch the facts, or assemble them only to prove yourself, and instead prove the argument on its own merits. Deception, coercion, intentional bias, manipulation and bribery should have no place in your speech to persuade.

Avoiding Fallacies

Fallacies are another way of saying false logic. These tricks deceive your audience with their style, drama, or pattern, but add little to your speech in terms of substance and can actually detract from your effectiveness.

In Table 8.2 below, eight classical fallacies are described. Learn to recognize these fallacies so they can't be used against you, and so that you can avoid using them with your audience.

Table 8.2 Eight fallacies

Fallacy	Definition	Example
1. Red Herring	Any diversion intended to distract attention from the main issue, particularly by relating the issue to a common fear.	It's not just about the death penalty; it's about the victims and their rights. You wouldn't want to be a victim, but if you were, you'd want justice.
2. Straw Man	A weak argument set up to be easily refuted, distracting attention from stronger arguments	What if we released criminals who commit murder after just a few years of rehabilitation? Think of how unsafe our streets would be then!
Begging the Question Circular Argument	Claiming the truth of the very matter in question, as if it were already an obvious conclusion. The proposition is used to prove itself. Assumes the very thing it aims to prove. Related to begging the question.	We know that they will be released and unleashed on society to repeat their crimes again and again. Once a killer, always a killer.
Ad Populum	Appeals to a common belief of some people, often prejudicial, and states everyone holds this belief. Also called the Bandwagon Fallacy, as people "jump on the bandwagon" of a perceived popular view.	Most people would prefer to get rid of a few "bad apples" and keep our streets safe.
Ad Hominem	"Argument against the man" instead of against his message. Stating that someone's argument is wrong solely because of something about the person rather than about the argument itself.	Our representative is a drunk and philanderer. How can we trust him on the issues of safety and family?
7. Non Sequitur	"It does not follow." The conclusion does not follow from the premises. They are not related	Since the liberal anti-war demonstrations of the 1960s, we've seen an increase in con- victs who got let off death row.
8. Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc	"After this, therefore because of this," also called a coincidental correlation. It tries to establish a cause-and-effect relationship where only a correlation exists.	Violent death rates went down once they started publicizing executions.

4.8 LET SUM UP

A persuasive message can succeed through the principles of reciprocity, scarcity, authority, commitment and consistency, consensus, and liking. In summary, everyone experiences emotions, and as a persuasive speaker, you can choose how to express emotion and appeal to the audience's emotions.

4.9 FURTHER READING

- Justthink.org promotes critical thinking skills and awareness of the impact of images in the media among young people.
  http://www.change.org/organizations/just_think_foundation
- Visit this site for a video and other resources about Maslow's hierarchy of needs.
  http://www.abraham- maslow.com/m_motivation/Hierarchy_of_Needs.asp
- Read an informative article on negotiating face-to-face across cultures by Stella Ting-Toomey,
  https://www.sfu.ca/davidlamcentre/forum/past_PRF/PRF_1999/intercultural-conflict-competence- eastern-and-western-lenses.html
- Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL) provides a guide to persuasive speaking strategies. http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/04
- Visit the CBC Podcasts page and assess the persuasive message of various programs. http://www.cbc.ca/ radio/podcasts/

4.10 ASSIGNMENTS

1. Identify and demonstrate how to use six principles of persuasion.
2. Describe similarities and differences between persuasion and motivation.
3. Identify and demonstrate the effective use of five functions of speaking to persuade.
4. Label and discuss three components of an argument.
5. Identify and provide examples of emotional appeals.
6. Demonstrate the importance of ethics as part of the persuasion process.