



Communication for Today's Student

An Introduction

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- ☐ Define communication.
- ☐ Explain the communication process as it relates to a situations in your life.
- ☐ Discuss the different models of communication.
- ☐ Describe the function of each element in the communication process.
- ☐ Explain the importance of ethical communication.

Key Terms

Channel
Communication
Computer-Mediated
Communication
(CMC)
Context
Culture
Decoding
Encoding
Ethical
External noise

Interactive
Communication
Intercultural
Communication
Intrapersonal
Communication
Internal Noise
Linear Communication
Message
Noise
Nonverbal feedback

Public Communication
Public Speaking Anxiety
Psychological noise
Semantic noise
Sender-receivers
Small-group
Communication
Symbol
Transactional
Communication
Verbal feedback

Keynote
Speaker



1 Scenario

Nathalie bit her lip as she looked up at the touch screen in the cafe and watched the numerous food selections roam across. She usually had no problem shifting through, but today, all of the selections overwhelmed her.

“Come on,” she huffed, rubbing the sore spot on her fingertip. “All I want is a cheeseburger.”

The plethora of options displayed on the screen was determined by the prick of blood the machine took from her finger when she first entered. Utilizing the blood sample, the machine could determine the kind of nutrients she needed and provide options for her.

“Based on the levels in your blood, I see that your iron is low,” the virtual lunch lady said. “Might I suggest tofu and broccoli stir-fry?”

“Oh my God!” Nathalie exclaimed as she punched the machine. “All I want is a greasy, heart-clogging cheeseburger.”

“Wow, for heaven’s sakes, give the young lady her cheeseburger,” a voice boomed.

Nathalie looked up as Chris’s tall frame leaned over her. He ordered her the burger.

“Hi, Chris,” Nathalie said softly. She glanced around and saw that she had created quite a stir with her little fit. As people resumed eating, she looked back at Chris. “Didn’t know you were behind me,” she said.

“I know,” Chris chuckled. “You were a little occupied with the machine here, but it’s all good. I got you.”

Nathalie moved through the line, picking up a tray. A human lunch lady placed the burger on her tray, after giving Nathalie a disapproving look. Nathalie murmured “thank you” and scanned the cafe for a place to sit.

“Sit with me,” Chris said, walking past her to a nearby table. She walked over slowly and sat down across from him. She was surprised Chris was even in the cafeteria. He usually skipped it, opting for the Raider Grille rather than the cafeteria. When he did decide to take a gamble with the café, he was usually surrounded by his entourage, but today, he was alone.

“How are you, Miss Lady?” he asked, as he wiped his mouth.

To say that her stomach was doing somersaults was an understatement. Nathalie had always had a thing for Chris since she met him in the summer at precollege. They were both enrolled in Introduction to University Life, a class introducing the freshmen class to the history and culture of the university. Their friendship began with a simple question: “Do you have a pencil?” This sounds very cliché, but Nathalie liked it. It resembled the love stories she would see in books and movies.

“I’m fine, just overwhelmed with studying for midterms,” Nathalie confessed as she took a bite of her burger. “I’ve been in my room for the past two days!”

Chris nodded. “Me, too. Been in there so long my boys left me and went to dinner without me.”

“Same here,” said Nathalie.

“You know what? We should take a break,” Chris said.

Nathalie chuckled, “I am. Right now.”

“Nah, I mean a real break. We should go to a party. My boy is having a party in the Docks at 13C,” Chris told her.

“Boy, I’ve got a GPA and a scholarship to maintain,” Nathalie said, as she began to open her dessert.

“Me too, Nat. But look, we’re not gonna do well if we don’t relax,” Chris reasoned. “Look, we’ll go over there, take a few Jell-O shots and chill.”

“Jell-O shots?”

“Yea. We’ll take some shots, drink some of my man’s good tea, and chill.”

Nathalie shifted in her seat. She prided herself on not indulging in underage drinking her first semester in college. She was usually the one who looked out for her girls when they went out. She saw what happened when people didn’t drink responsibly.

Chris sighed, “I see you’re not down. Forget it. I’ll check you later.”

Chris gathered his tray. Nathalie bit her lip. Her mind began to race.

“Come on Nathalie. He’s never asked you to chill with him before. This could be your way in there with him. And besides, you are a little drained from studying and a little drink may relax you . . .”

“Chris! Wait!” Nathalie called out across the cafe. Chris paused at the door.

After reading the scenario,



What are some factors that may impact the interpersonal communication between Nathalie and Chris in the cafeteria?

Let's Communicate

Communication is a part of every human being's daily life. From an infant's cries for milk, to a teenager's request to drive, to a college student's questions in class, to Chris and Nathalie's discussion of the party, to an employer's instructions to employees, communication is taking place. Many people take communication for granted because it happens so often in our daily interactions with one another. However, communication should never be taken for granted; it is the foundation of our human interaction.

Children communicate with their parents and caregivers to ensure that their basic needs are being met. Students communicate with teachers and professors to ensure that they are acquiring the knowledge being taught and meeting the expectations that have been set. As individuals, we communicate with our peers to form relationships and friendships. As family members, we communicate with those who are related to us as we build familial bonds based on shared relationships. As employers and employees, we communicate to meet the goals and objectives set before us and to fulfill the mission of our organizations.



Photo courtesy of Charles Long

Communication with our parents and caregivers ensures our basic needs are met.

These are but a few examples of the ways in which we communicate. If you were to take a few moments and reflect upon your daily activities as a college student, you would notice that they involve a significant amount of communication with various individuals for unique purposes in different settings and contexts. Take a moment to think about the communication that you have had over the past 3 hours. How many individuals were involved? What was the purpose of the exchange? Was it successful?

Why Study Communication?

Having thought of how often you communicate and knowing that you have been actively engaged in some form of communication since birth, you may wonder why it is important for you to be enrolled in a communication course. Well, it is important for you to be enrolled in this course because it teaches you how to communicate **EFFECTIVELY**. The fact that you engage in communication daily, does not mean that your communication is effective.

How many times have you felt that the person you were talking to did not understand what you were saying? How often have you wished that people would “get the point”? Have you ever felt that no matter how many times you explained yourself, the listener did not respond appropriately? Have you ever tried to think of other ways to say what you wanted to say? Has a person’s facial expressions ever signaled to you that you said the wrong thing? Have your facial expressions ever hurt someone’s feelings? Have you ever said something you wished you could take back? Has your tone of voice ever been inappropriate for the situation? Have you ever been in a situation similar to Nathalie and Chris?

More than likely, everyone reading this text answered “yes” to several of the questions. That is why it is important for you to take a communication course. This course will prepare you to communicate effectively in both your personal and professional lives.

Personal Communication

Personal communication is the foundation of building relationships. As a college student, a great deal of your personal communication revolves around your interaction with family members and friends. These are the people who you consider a part of your circle, the people that you trust with your thoughts and feelings. These are the people who influence you.

Communication is a direct reflection of identity. Who you are is largely determined by your personal communication. Consider the children whose parents tell them, “You can be anything you want in life!” These children usually have a positive self-image and believe that the sky is the limit for them. Unfortunately, there are other children who are sometimes told, “You will never amount to anything!” Not having the encouragement and the reinforcement necessary for a positive self-image, these children sometimes fall prey to the negative communication spoken into their lives and do not reach their potential.



Courtesy of Scott Brewer

Children whose parents tell them, you can be anything you want in life usually have a positive self-esteem.

As you can see, your personal communication with family members and friends can affect who you are as a person. In college, you meet many new people from different places with different backgrounds, cultures, and ways of thinking. Many of these individuals become your life-long friends. It is important to communicate positively with your peers in order to not only learn from them, but to also provide them with the support and encouragement that they need to be successful students. What you say and hear makes a difference in your life and the lives of others. Therefore, it is important to say the right thing, at the right time, in

the right manner. It is important to communicate effectively in your personal communication with family and friends.

Professional Communication

As a college student, you are preparing yourself for the professional world of work. Consequently, you must be prepared to communicate on a professional level. The communication styles and techniques you engage in with your family, friends, and peers are often more informal than the communication expected in the professional world.

The way in which you communicate professionally is a major factor in your success as a professional. You must communicate with your employer, other employees, business partners, clients, and various constituencies related to your profession of choice. No matter what career path you choose, at some point, you must engage in professional communication with other people.

One of the first instances when an employer gets an opportunity to evaluate your communication skills is during the face-to-face interview. At this time, both your verbal and non-verbal communication skills are on display. You should want potential employers to be impressed by your ability to communicate, but they will not be impressed if your communication in the interview is the same as your communication with family and friends.

It is important to know the difference between various modes of communication and when it is appropriate to use each. You will learn this information from your communications class. Becoming an effective communicator in your professional life is just as important as becoming an effective communicator in your personal life. This text will teach you both.

Now that you understand why it is important for you to study communication, you will be introduced to the foundations of effective communication, the different types and methods of communication will be explained to you, and you will be prepared to become an effective communicator in various settings and situations.

In order to become an effective communicator, you must know what communication is and be equipped with the tools necessary to communicate effectively.

Communication: Defined

Communication is a process described as the exchange of ideas using symbols which represent abstract and concrete ideas. Like all processes, the communication process is comprised of elements or components. The critical components work together to fulfill the objectives of the process.

To understand fully how the communication process works, let's use the model to explicate the role each element or component plays in the process.



Photo courtesy of Charles Long

The critical components work together to fulfill the objectives of the process.

The Communication Model

In our opening scenario between Nathalie and Chris, we can see the communication model in action.

When Nathalie decides to go with Chris to the party, she was engaging in **intrapersonal** communication. She took a seat next to Chris and began engaging in conversation. At this point, Nathalie and Chris become sender and receiver within the communication process and engage in **interpersonal** communication.



Photo courtesy of Charles Long

Communication is a process in action.

What does this mean? Once a communicator gets an impulse or has a mental image in mind, it must take the form of a **symbol**, or words in this case. The process of transforming mental images into words and placing these words into logical messages with meaning is called **encoding**. The process continues as the sender sends the message to the intended recipient or receiver, who in turn, **decodes** the message and attaches meaning to it. The message can be verbal or nonverbal, conscious or unconscious.

The message can travel on various types of channels to include telephone, letter, text, computer mediated and, of course, the most common channel, face-to-face.

Once the message is perceived and understood by the receiver, the decoding process occurs and that process is reversed. The receiver's feelings and thoughts are sent back to the sender for decoding. In the

case of Nathalie and Chris, when Nathalie sat down and began sharing the reasons for not attending the Café for the past couple of days, they were operating as sender and receiver. Basically, the couple was sending messages back and forth using a face-to-face channel. Each communicator was engaged in the process and was giving feedback to the messages they received. At some points in their communication, they gave **nonverbal feedback** and at other points their messages took the format of **verbal feedback**.

Most communication in interpersonal situations is two way. Each time the opportunity is given for the receiver to react to the message, the communication is open to feedback and is characterized as two-way. Where the communication process takes place is as critical as these elements are to the process of communication. The place that communication occurs is called the **context or setting**. The context refers not only to the physical environment, but also the personal perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and background each speaker brings to the communication context or setting. This, of course, affects how the sender and receiver will respond to the message being sent and, therefore, affects the feedback of each. Nathalie and Chris have their communication in the cafeteria which of course is the physical environment, but an even greater factor in their communication with each other is the fact that they are attracted to each other and have been previously involved.

As Nathalie and Chris sat in the cafeteria discussing and deliberating about going to the party that night, they communicated openly and freely because they had shared knowledge and experiences. They were successful in communicating their mental images because they were able to understand one another. There was no breakdown in the communication context or setting, even though there may have been the presence of what



Photo courtesy of Charles Long

Communication open to feedback is characterized as two-way.



Photo courtesy of Charles Long

Messages can travel on various channels.

social scientists like to call “noise.” When speakers approach communication from different contexts, this can lead to ineffective communication. When noise occurs in the communication context, it also interferes to the success of the process. **Noise**, or interference as some like to call it, is anything within the communication context that prevents the message from being transmitted successfully.

There are three types of noise: external, internal, and semantic.

External noise or interference includes any factors outside of the communicators that make it difficult or prevent the message from being understood. For example, the loud engines of a plane flying overhead when you are speaking to someone on your outdoor deck or a fluorescent light flickering off and on as your history professor is lecturing. **Internal noise** refers to interference which occurs within the speaker. A speaker who has a speech impediment, or someone with a loud constant cough, would have difficulty being understood. Thus, the successful transmission of the message would be affected. Oftentimes, internal noise will manifest itself as psychological idiosyncrasies. **Psychological noise** consists of attitudes or beliefs held by a communicator that may interfere with the communicator’s ability to express or understand the intent message. For example, speech apprehension or a reaction resulting from a negative interaction with someone previously may impact successful communication. Just like external and internal noise, semantic noise can be disruptive to the successful transmission of the message. **Semantic noise** involves any interference that deals with language. Examples of semantic noise include the unwanted or inappropriate use of profanity or slang. A speaker’s strong dialect could be viewed as semantic noise as well. In these cases, the noise is caused by people’s emotional response to the words or use of the language.

As we examine Nathalie’s and Chris’ interaction in the cafeteria, we recognize the role each plays in the communication process and the results of their communication encounter. As we examine the process, we can describe each element.



Photo courtesy of Charles Long

Noise is interference in the process. Sometimes noise is external, other times it may be internal or psychological.



Photo courtesy of Charles Long

Communication is shared knowledge and experiences.

We might make the assumption that communication is **linear**, which asserts that communication is one-way and that the message carried on the channel flows from the sender to the receiver. In linear communication, there is no feedback. As we see in the case of Nathalie and Chris, this is not the way communication flows in an interpersonal communication context.



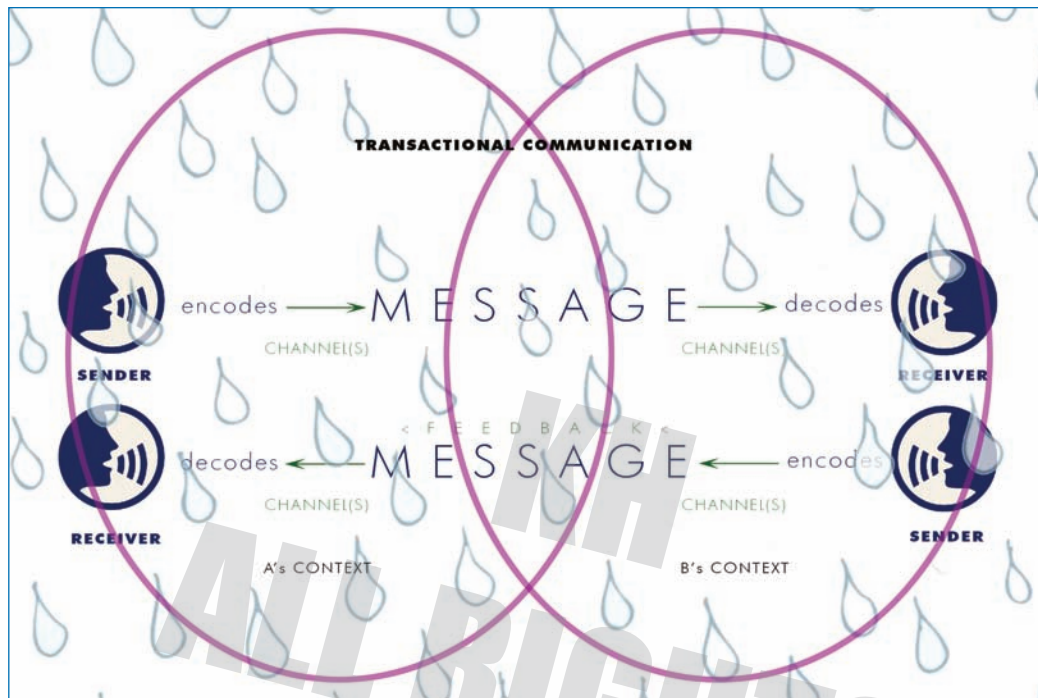
If we take the linear approach a step further and add feedback from the receiver back to the sender, the communication is interactive. The **interactive** model operates under the assumption that once the message is received and understood by the receiver, the process is complete.



In the interactive model, once Chris suggests that Nathalie go the party and she responds negatively, “Boy, I got a GPA and scholarship to maintain and Chris states “Me too,” the communication would be ended. We know that this is not true in the case of Nathalie and Chris nor is it true in most communication contexts. The **interactive model** presumes the message of the sender will match the message that is decoded by the receiver. The interactive model does not allow for misunderstanding or, in some cases, totally misunderstood messages. The transactional model does.

Communication Is Transactional

Communication is a **transactional** process which means the process possesses three identifiable characteristics. The first characteristic is that communication is “continuous.” Communicators are constantly and simultaneously encoding and decoding messages. For example, in the case of Nathalie and Chris, even when Chris turns and walks to the door as if to terminate the information exchange, he was communicating with Nathalie. What message was he sending? How does Nathalie respond?



The second characteristic of communication as a transactional process is all “communicators play roles.” We communicate with our differently from the way we communicate with our minister. Our language choice differs significantly in many cases. Our topics or subject matter may differ. Since Nathalie and Chris are involved in a relationship, the language they choose to use with each other facilitates the needs of their interpersonal relationship. For example, Chris refers to his friends as “my boys” when talking with Nathalie. His language choice is specific to the communication with Nathalie. In a different context, for example speaking to his math professor he may choose to refer to his “boys” as his “friends.” Their degree of disclosure is significantly, different from the degree of disclosure that each has with their other classmates or even their instructors.

The last characteristic of the transactional theory is that “all communication has a past, present and future.” As communicators, we receive and send messages based upon what has occurred in our past. We act upon these messages based upon our experiences. Those experiences will have an impact upon how we communicate in the future.

Types of Communication

The communication context can occur within several types of communication. While the types share characteristics, they each have their own identity. Let’s look at each to gain a clear understanding of the different types that are most often used: intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, public, intercultural and computer mediated communication.

Intrapersonal Communication

Intrapersonal communication can be best described as communication within oneself. Intrapersonal communication is the ongoing dialogue that you have in your head. The alarm goes off. You sit up in the bed to think, “Man, how I would love to go back to sleep for twenty more minutes.” You have just engaged in a conversation in which you are both the sender and receiver. As the sender and receiver, you are actively involved in the encoding and decoding of messages within yourself! As you encode yourself generated messages, you are continuously providing feedback. The stronger our ability as intrapersonal communicators, the greater understanding we have of ourselves. In essence, strong intrapersonal communication yields increased ability to recall and retain information. Strong intrapersonal communication leads to an increased ability to solve problems and make responsible decisions. In our story of Nathalie and Chris, when Chris gets up from the table and Nathalie thinks, *“Come on Nathalie. He’s never asked you to chill with him before. This could be your way in there with him. And besides you are a little drained from studying and little drink may relax you,”* she is engaging in intrapersonal communication. Most importantly, as we engage in this ongoing internal processing, we increase our ability to communicate effectively with others.

Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal or dyadic communication is an interaction between two people. Interpersonal communication occurs whenever one person willingly or unwillingly exchanges information with another. Our success in life is greatly affected by our effectiveness in interpersonal communication. From our engagement in social relationships, to our effectiveness on the job, to our successful completion of an employment interview, we are dependent upon our ability to communicate effectively one-on-one as well as to develop and maintain relationships. The majority of the college student’s communication takes place within the interpersonal communication context. As a student engages in other contexts, a student will find him/herself communicating in multiple dialogues within larger groups.

Small-Group Communication

Small groups are a critical part of a student’s life. If you are on the track team, a member of the editorial board of the school newspaper, a cast member of the Christmas play at church or a member of a group of students working on a class project, you are a member of a small group. Most students prefer not to work in small groups because they believe that working in a group requires more work than working alone. This perception often factors directly into the effectiveness of the group. The key to a positive small group interaction is to learn strategies that help you function effectively



Small groups are a critical part of a students life.

within the group to achieve a positive outcome. These essential strategies, coupled with the type of leader who takes the authoritative role within the group, leads to a successful and positive group experience, minimizing anxiety.

Public Communication

You have been asked to introduce the speaker for Founder's Day at Ogden Hall. While you have made a few group presentations in your biology class, you have never even stepped on the stage of the 1800 seat Ogden Hall auditorium. Suddenly, you feel sick and break out in a sweat, and you cannot keep from shaking. You are suffering from stage fright or public speaking anxiety. Research shows that the fear of speaking in public is second to the fear of dying. Yes, dying.

Truth of the matter is, all successful people will at some point engage in public communication. The success of this communication context is greatly dependent upon a speaker's ability to make a connection with the audience regardless of its size.

Public communication can be described as a communication context in which the membership becomes too large for more than one or two people to speak. By its nature, the audience provides nonverbal feedback to the speaker. The audience is unable to provide verbal feedback due to the numbers of the participants. This provides a greater need for the speaker to connect with the audience to convey a message by keeping the audience engaged and involved.

Good public speakers employ skills that accomplish their goals. While some public speakers demonstrate an innate talent for this communication context, most speakers develop such skills by observation and practice.



Photo courtesy of Charles Long

Public communication differs from small group communication but how?

Intercultural Communication

The tragedy of 911 greatly impacted our view of culture and diversity in the field of communication. The term culture has almost as many definitions as the word communication. For communicators today, a successful relationship greatly depends on one's ability to demonstrate communication competency across cultures. For our exploration and discussion, **culture** will be referred to as shared perceptions and expectations of a group of people. As we further explore these communication patterns



Photo courtesy of Charles Long

Culture is learned, dynamic, and pervasive.

and expectations, our engagement with other cultures becomes more socially positive and, in some cases, professionally productive. Based upon the premise that culture is learned, dynamic and pervasive, we can begin to understand the role culture plays in the success of our relationships. Good communicators must develop a personal approach to maintain successful diverse interpersonal relationships. *Communication For Today's Student* will assist in reaching your goals with regards to culture and diversity.

Computer Mediated Communication

The major difference between Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) and face to face communication is control. **Computer Mediated Communication (CMC)** can be described as the use of computer networks to exchange information and to facilitate the interactive sharing of information. This exchange differs from other types of communication as it occurs over a single channel, whether it is via emails, discussion groups, chat, IM, web pages or news groups. Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) best facilitates our communication goals and objectives when coupled with digital literacy. This broadens the scope of our communication and affects our ability to process and exchange information in a manner in which social and economic subjectifiers can be eliminated. So, why would today's student choose Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) over face-to-face communication? The reasons range from personal preferences to accepted social risks.

Ethics in Communication

When we communicate with individuals, we have an unspoken expectation that the information being shared with us is true. How would you feel if you had a long conversation with a friend and later discovered that everything you had been told was a lie? What would you think if you attended a seminar on increasing your finances, completed all of the steps outlined for you to follow, and discovered that your finances never increased? In each of these situations, you would more than likely be extremely disappointed or possibly hurt and angered. To avoid such situations happening to you or causing them to happen to others, it is pertinent that you practice **ethics** in your personal and professional communication.



Photo courtesy of Charles Long

When is computer mediated communication preferred over face-to-face communication?

As you communicate with others, you must decide what to say and what not to say. You must decide whether to present factual information or fictitious information. You must decide whether to tell half of the story or the whole story. You must decide whether to tell the truth or tell a lie. You must decide whether or not to practice ethical communication. The decision to be ethical in your communication is a decision that will impact your listener(s) and, ultimately, you. It is a decision that must be made with much thought and careful consideration.

The best decision to make when it comes to ethics in communication is the decision to be ethical. As the communicator, you should want to share information that is accurate and factual with the listener, whether for personal or professional purposes. When you practice ethics in communication, those with whom you communicate will be able to trust you. When you tell your employer that you have completed a task, he or she will trust that it has been done. If you tell your friends that you will meet them, they will trust that you will be there.

From this point forward, it is important for you to take a moment before you speak and consider the ethics of what you are saying. Is the information accurate? How will it affect the listener? Should I share this information or keep it to myself? Once you begin taking ethics into consideration, you will have made one more giant step towards becoming an effective communicator.

Let's Get Started

In Chapter 1, you were introduced to the foundations of communication. We discussed the importance of studying communication and how it can affect our personal and professional lives. The communication process was defined, and we used the Communication Model to explicate the role that each element of communication plays in the process. You learned that communication is transactional. The Nathalie and Chris scenario served as our reference and guide to the explication. You were introduced to the types of communication (intrapersonal, interpersonal, small-group, public, intercultural, computer-mediated) and presented a discussion on the ethics of communication.

This text will provide the opportunity to engage in activities that introduce you to and familiarize you with the theories of effective communication that will be useful to you, both personally and professionally.

The topic of Chapter 2, *Perception and Listening*, examines the manner in which individuals process information. The chapter covers the factors that influence perception as well as the steps to effective listening. Chapter 3, *What is the Power of Verbal and Nonverbal Communication*, will identify the differences between verbal and non-verbal messages and how each is used in the communication process. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 are all related to the role communication plays in relationships. *Understanding Interpersonal Relationships* describes the essential elements that draw people together and explains the role of emotional intelligence in communication. *Building Relationships* discusses the stages of relationships as they are formed and dissolved. The chapter also addresses conflict resolution within relationships. *Intercultural Relationships* defines culture, identifies the characteristics of culture, and evaluates the impact cultural values have on interpersonal communication. Additionally, the chapter provides strategies to enhance effective interpersonal communication in diverse relationships.

The second half of the textbook provides the blueprint for successful oral presentations. In Chapter 7, *Researching Your Topic*, the text offers strategies for accessing, analyzing, and using information in your speech. You are also given guidelines for the using various forms of support. *Organizing Your Ideas and Structuring Your Outline*, Chapter 8, teaches you how to generate the main points of the

speech and presents patterns for organizing the points. The chapter also offers guidance in planning the outlines sentence and keyword of the speech. Chapter 9, *Delivering The Speech*, addresses the methods of delivery and the aspects of vocal and physical delivery.

After all of the foundational materials are presented, the next two chapters focus on two unique purposes for speaking. First, Chapter 10 addresses *Speaking to Inform* and expands upon the types of informative speeches and the goals of informative speaking.

Second, Chapter 11 addresses *Speaking to Persuade* by an examination of the elements of persuasion, inductive and deductive reasoning, emotion, and logic. The chapter also discusses the speaker's ethical responsibility when preparing a persuasive speech.

The last two chapters in the text deal with groups. In Chapter 12, *What are the Roles of Leadership and Power in Group Dynamics?*, the differences between leadership and power are identified. The chapter offers the six bases of power that are typical in a small group as well as ways to deal with conflict within small groups. The closing chapter, *Small Group Presentations*, presents the characteristics of small groups and the role and responsibilities of individuals within small groups. The chapter offers suggestions for presenting in small groups and identifies small group formats.

By the time you have completed reading the text and completed the related assignments, both in class and on the website, you will be equipped with all of the tools necessary to be an effective communicator in both your personal and professional lives. These tools will last a lifetime and contribute to your success as an individual. Now, let's get started!



Photo courtesy of Charles Long

Communication is important to our everyday lives.

Communication for Today's Student

Chapter 1 – Communication for Today's Student: An Introduction

Exercise 1.1 – Communication Journal

- I. Good communication skills are guaranteed to make us more successful in life.

Establish a communication journal for one week which chronicles your communication experiences within each context:

Communication Contexts

Intrapersonal
Interpersonal
Intercultural
Small Group
Public

KH
ALL RIGHTS
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Ask yourself

As you record your experiences consider the following for inclusion, if applicable:

- Are the elements of communication represented in the communication experience?
- What is the channel that the message is being transmitted upon?
- Was there any noise involved, and if so, what type?
- Was there anything that you would like to change about your communication experience?
- Would consider the experience positive or negative?
- How would you approach changing the outcome of that experience?

Chapter 1

Exercise 1.1 Continued

Communication Journal

Day 1	
Day 2	
Day 3	
Day 4	
Day 5	
Day 6	
Day 7	

Be prepared to share your journal entries with the class.

II. Choose one context to illustrate, using a cartoon format. Label the elements!

Elements

Context (Setting)
Sender (Encoder)
Receiver (Decoder)
Message (Verbal/Nonverbal)
Channel
Feedback (Verbal/Nonverbal)
Noise (Interference)

III. Describe in one or two paragraphs what occurs in your cartoon illustration.



- Who are the sender and receiver?
- In what communication context does the illustration occur?
- Is there any noise in the context? Which type?
- What type of channel does the message travel upon?
- Did your sender or receiver demonstrate any nonverbal behavior?

Communication for Today's Student

Chapter 1 – Communication for Today's Student: An Introduction

Exercise 1.2 – Credo for Communication Ethics

The National Communication Association published a *Credo for Communication Ethics* which describes the expectations of ethical behavior. The document condemns such behavior as distortion, intimidation, coercion, intolerance, and hatred; while it advocates truthfulness, accuracy and honesty, freedom of expression and so on.

With a partner, document a media event in which ethical communication practices were in question according to the standards of the *Credo*. Prepare a 2 to 3 minute speech to explain why the situation was one in which the National Communication Association would condemn or advocate based upon the Credo and why? Be sure to cite the specific principle from the *Credo*.

For example:

Pharrell Williams' *Happy* video get Iranian youths arrested – The Associated Press

Video of Iranians dancing to Pharrell's *Happy* leads to arrests – Los Angeles Times

Iranian Pharrell Williams' fans detained over 'obnoxious' video – The Guardian

NCA Credo

NCA Credo for Ethical Communication, available at www.natcom.org

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NCA Credo for Ethical Communication

(Approved by the NCA Legislative Council in 1999)

Questions of right and wrong arise whenever people communicate. Ethical communication is fundamental to responsible thinking, decision-making, and the development of relationships and communities within and across contexts, cultures, channels, and media. Moreover, ethical communication enhances human worth and dignity by fostering truthfulness, fairness, responsibility, personal integrity, and respect for self and others. We believe that unethical communication threatens the quality of all communication and consequently the well-being of individuals and the society in which we live. Therefore, we, the members of the National Communication Association, endorse and are committed to practicing the following principles of ethical communication:

We advocate truthfulness, accuracy, honesty, and reason as essential to the integrity of communication.

We endorse freedom of expression, diversity of perspective, and tolerance of dissent to achieve the informed and responsible decision-making fundamental to a civil society.

We strive to understand and respect other communicators before evaluating and responding to their messages.

We promote access to communication resources and opportunities as necessary to fulfill human potential and contribute to the well-being of families, communities, and society.

We promote communication climates of caring and mutual understanding that respect the unique needs and characteristics of individual communicators.

We condemn communication that degrades individuals and humanity through distortion, intimidation, coercion, and violence, and through the expression of intolerance and hatred.

We are committed to the courageous expression of personal convictions in pursuit of fairness and justice.

We advocate sharing information, opinions, and feelings when facing significant choices while also respecting privacy and confidentiality.

We accept responsibility for the short- and long-term consequences for our own communication and expect the same of others.