SIXTH EDITION
COMMUNICATION
PRINCIPLES FOR A LIFETIME
STEVEN A. BEEBE
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Communication

Principles for a Lifetime

Sixth Edition

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Full-Service Project Management and Composition: Cenveo® Publisher Services
Printer/Binder: Courier/Kendallville
Cover Printer: Courier/Kendallville

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Beebe, Steven A., Date-
Communication : principles for a lifetime / Steven A. Beebe, Texas State University, Susan J. Beebe, Texas State University, Diana K. Ivy, Texas A&M University Corpus Christi. -- Sixth Edition.
pages cm
ISBN 978-0-13-375382-0
1. Communication. I. Beebe, Susan J. II. Ivy, Diana K. III. Title.
HM1206.B44 2015
302.2--dc23
2015000019

Student Edition:
ISBN 10: 0-13-375382-4
ISBN 13: 978-0-13-375382-0

Books à la Carte:
ISBN 10: 0-13-388248-9
ISBN 13: 978-0-13-388248-3

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For our teachers . . . and our students

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Preface

Communication is essential for life. The purpose of this book is to document this claim by presenting fundamental principles of human communication that enhance the quality of our communication with others as well as the quality of our own lives. Most students who read this book will take only one course in communication during their entire college career. We want students to view this course on communication as a vital, life-enriching one that will help them enhance their communication with others—not just as another course in a string of curricular requirements. Because communication is an essential element of living, we want students to remember essential communication principles and skills for the rest of their lives. To remember and apply these essential communication principles, we believe students need a digest of classic and contemporary research and practice that will help them with both the mundane and the magnificent, the everyday and the ever-important communication experiences that constitute the fabric of their lives.

In this edition, as in the five that preceded it, we strive to create a highly appealing, easy-to-use text that is more effective than ever in helping students understand and use five vital principles of communication.

What's New to the Sixth Edition?

REVEL™

Educational technology designed for the way today's students read, think, and learn

When students are engaged deeply, they learn more effectively and perform better in their courses. This simple fact inspired the creation of REVEL: an immersive learning experience designed for the way today's students read, think, and learn. Built in collaboration with educators and students nationwide, REVEL is the newest, fully digital way to deliver respected Pearson content.

REVEL enlivens course content with media interactives and assessments — integrated directly within the authors' narrative — that provide opportunities for students to read about and practice course material in tandem. This immersive educational technology boosts student engagement, which leads to better understanding of concepts and improved performance throughout the course.

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Rather than simply offering opportunities to read about and study communication, REVEL facilitates deep, engaging interactions with the concepts that matter most. For example, as they are introduced to the concept of communication competence in Chapter 1, students are prompted to complete a self-assessment of their own self-perceived communication competence. By providing opportunities to read about and practice communication concepts and techniques in tandem, REVEL engages students directly and immediately, which leads to a better understanding of course material. A wealth of student and instructor resources and interactive materials can be found within REVEL. Some of our favorites include:

- **Audio Examples**
  Students can listen to audio recordings of interpersonal conversations, typical and useful phrases for group discussions, and public speech excerpts while they read, bringing examples and communication tips to life in a way that a printed text cannot.
- **Videos & Video Quizzes**
  Video examples of sample speeches, interpersonal role plays, expert advice, and more throughout the narrative boost mastery, and many videos are bundled with correlating self-checks, enabling students to test their knowledge.
- **Animated Figures**
  Animations show processes in action and provide active visualizations of the relationships among components in models in a way that makes whole concepts suddenly easier to understand and lastingly easier to remember than textual descriptions can.
- **Integrated Writing Opportunities**
  To help students connect chapter content with personal meaning, each chapter offers two varieties of writing prompts: the journal prompt, eliciting free-form topic-specific responses addressing topics at the module level, and the shared writing prompt, which encourages students to share and respond to each other's brief response to high-interest topics in the chapter.

For more information about all of the tools and resources in REVEL and access to your own REVEL account for the *Communication: Principles for a Lifetime*, Sixth Edition, go to www.pearsonhighered.com/REVEL

Reviewers, instructors, and our students have given us feedback about the five previous editions. This feedback has helped us make this new edition the best possible teaching and learning resource. We listened and responded (Principle Four) to their suggestions. Our commitment to providing a digest of essentials that does not overwhelm students has also led us to make some changes. One immediate change you'll see in this edition is a fresh new design with many new photos and cartoons to help draw today's visually oriented learners into the text.

We have also included the following new features in *every* chapter:

- Updated *Learning Objectives* appear at the start of each chapter to provide student with advance organizers and reading goals for approaching the chapter. New in this edition, objectives reappear at key points in the chapter to help students gauge their progress and monitor their learning.
- An updated chapter-end Study Guide reviews the learning objectives and key terms, helping students master chapter content, prepare for exams, and apply chapter concepts to their own lives.
- Significantly updated and expanded research incorporates the latest research findings about human communication principles and skills.
- Fresh, contemporary examples and illustrations to which students can relate.
- New cartoons and other illustrations to amplify the content of our message.

We've also updated popular continuing features that appear throughout the book, including these:

- Revised "Communication & Diversity" features complement and expand discussions of new applications of research about diversity throughout the book.
- Revised "Communication & Technology" features include an expanded discussion of the role of online communication in relationships.
- Revised "Communication & Ethics" features reinforce the importance of being an ethical communicator and may spark discussion of ethical questions.
- Revised "Developing Your Speech Step by Step" features in the public speaking chapters walk students through the process of designing and delivering a speech.
- Two new speeches in Appendix B model best practices in public speaking.

We've made many other specific changes to chapter content throughout the book. Here's a brief list of selected major revisions, changes, and additions that we've made to specific chapters:

Chapter 1: Foundations of Human Communication

- Revised and streamlined chapter organization quickly introduces students to key concepts.
- Updated coverage summarizes recent research on the global value of communication skills, and online communication topics, including social media use and the potential for deceit.

Chapter 2: Self-Awareness and Communication

- New examples, and discussions of new research on topics such as the effects of difficult job searches on self-esteem of recent college graduates, engage students in the chapter.
- Revised "Communication & Technology" feature explores the relationship between Facebook and self-esteem, and new research in the "Communication & Ethics" feature discusses Facebook and narcissism.
- Updated and new coverage summarizes research on the development of self-concept, gender differences and media influences on self-esteem development, and the self-esteem benefits of honest relationships.

Chapter 3: Understanding Verbal Messages

- New "Communication & Technology" feature discusses the communication implications when our words are changed by autocorrect features on mobile devices.
- New "Communication & Diversity" feature updates readers on expanded language options to identify genders.
- New discussion of humblebrags raises awareness and engages readers' interest.

Chapter 4: Understanding Nonverbal Messages

- New "Communication & Ethics" feature contemplates the ethics of intentionally seeking interactive synchrony or mimicry of nonverbal communication.
- Engaging new "Communication & Diversity" feature explores how nonverbal communication and cultural sensitivity contribute to the success of Olympic games.
- New "Communication & Technology" feature emphasizes the risks of texting or talking on a mobile device while walking.
- New examples throughout the chapter and discussions of trends such as the popularity of using "second screen" technology maintain students' interest while enhancing understanding.

Chapter 5: Listening and Responding

- Updated discussions summarize new research on people's preference for talking with good listeners, the importance of listening in medical careers and in group communication, cultural differences in listening and responding, listening styles, gender and listening, increases in listening instruction, characteristics of good listeners, the importance of motivation in listening, and paraphrasing when responding.
- New tables summarize advice for providing social support in an easier to read and understand format.

Chapter 6: Adapting to Others: Diversity and Communication

- Updated discussion of gender identities and sexual orientations raises students' awareness.
- Chapter summarizes newest diversity statistics, as well as new research on millennial generation, globalization, the importance of studying culture, using social media to adapt to new cultures, individualistic and collectivistic cultures, culture and worldview, and adaption of communication.

Chapter 7: Understanding Interpersonal Communication

- New "Communication & Diversity" feature explores research on friendships between straight women and gay men.
- New "Communication & Technology" feature debates the implications of Invisible Boyfriend and Invisible Girlfriend, online services that help users deceive people into believing the users are in a romantic relationship.
- New "Communication & Ethics" feature considers the ethics of uncensored honesty or blurting out unfiltered opinions or responses to others' messages.

Chapter 8: Enhancing Relationships

- New section of the chapter offers research-based advice for relationship breakups, and discusses on-again/off-again relationships and continued friendship after a romantic breakup.
- New "Communication & Technology" feature discusses the role of video chat technology in maintaining relationships.
- Updated coverage summarizes recent research on family relationships, development of friendships, workplace relationships, cyberinfidelity, relational dialectic theory, and conflict.

Chapter 9: Understanding Group and Team Performance

- Updated coverage summarizes recent research on virtual groups, roles of group members, communication patterns in groups, power, stages of group development, group cohesion, and conflict in groups.
- Streamlined discussion of types of groups and teams allows students to focus on learning about the nature, development, interaction and leadership of groups and teams.

Chapter 10: Enhancing Group and Team Performance

- New "Communication & Ethics" feature encourages students to develop their own potential solutions to the common group problem of a member who judges others' ideas during brainstorming sessions.
- Updated coverage summarizes recent research on sharing information in virtual and in-person groups, competent group member behaviour, creativity in group problem solving, avoiding groupthink, leadership, and effective meetings.

Chapter 11: Developing Your Speech

- Updated coverage summarizes recent research on public speaking anxiety.
- Two new figures help students visualize processes involved in selecting a speech topic.
- A new student speech for the "Developing Your Presentation Step by Step" feature focuses on the effects of poverty on the brain, a topic of current interest.
- New advice throughout the chapter helps students prepare speeches to be delivered online or via video.
- Updated examples throughout the chapter model exemplary speeches and help students relate to chapter material.

Chapter 12: Organizing and Outlining Your Speech

- New sample preparation outline and speaking notes provide continuity by showing the development of the same speech in the "Developing Your Presentation Step by Step" feature.
- Updated examples from both student presentations and some of the most acclaimed presentations of the day model techniques students can apply in their own presentations.

Chapter 13: Delivering Your Speech

- New tables offer practical, usable advice for manuscript, memorized, impromptu and extemporaneous speaking in an easy-to-access and review format.
- New and updated figures help today's visual learners understand effective language and presentation aids for speeches.
- Many new examples throughout the chapter model techniques used by exemplary speechmakers.

Chapter 14: Speaking to Inform

- New figure provides a visual advance organizer to help students understand the process of teaching new information.
- Techniques of informative speaking are modeled in the chapter construction and via many well-chosen new examples.
- A new sample informative speech is annotated to model for students how one student speaker effectively used techniques discussed in the chapter.

Chapter 15: Speaking to Persuade

- Streamlined chapter organization and coverage more efficiently introduces students to key concepts of persuasive speaking.
- New figures provide easily accessible practical advice on using fear appeals and on establishing initial, derived, and terminal credibility.
- New figures provide approachable visual reviews of propositions of fact, value, and policy and steps of Monroe's motivated sequence organization for persuasive speaking.
- Carefully chosen new examples throughout the chapter model techniques of persuasive speaking.
- A new sample persuasive speech is annotated to model for students how one student speaker effectively used techniques discussed in the chapter.

Appendix A: Interviewing

- New material on electronic submission of resumes and portfolios reflects current practice.

Appendix B: Sample Speeches for Discussion and Evaluation

- New sample informative and persuasive speeches showcase presentation techniques discussed in Chapters 11–15.

What Stays the Same in This Edition?

In our sixth edition of *Communication: Principles for a Lifetime,* our goal remains the same as in the first edition: to provide a cogent presentation of what is essential about human communication by organizing the study of communication around five fundamental communication principles that are inherent in the process of communicating with others.

Our Integrated Approach Remains Unchanged

To help students remember and integrate essential communication principles, we've organized the study of human communication around five fundamental communication principles:

Principle One: Be aware of your communication with yourself and others.
Principle Two: Effectively use and interpret verbal messages.
Principle Three: Effectively use and interpret nonverbal messages.
Principle Four: Listen and respond thoughtfully to others.
Principle Five: Appropriately adapt messages to others.

We don't claim that everything you need to know about communication is embedded in our five communication principles. These principles do, however, synthesize essential research and wisdom about communication. They are designed to help students in an introductory communication course see the "big picture" of the role and importance of communication, both as they sit in the classroom and as they live their lives.

The problem with many introduction to communication courses is there is often too much of a good thing. An introductory course covers a vast terrain of communication concepts, principles, and skills. Besides learning about several theories of communication, students are also presented with what may appear to them to be miniature courses in interpersonal communication, group communication, and public speaking. At the end of a typical hybrid or introductory communication fundamentals course, both students and instructors have made a breathless dash through an astounding amount of information and number of skills. The barrage of ideas, contexts, and theories can leave students and instructors feeling overwhelmed by a seemingly unrelated hodgepodge of information. Students may end up viewing communication as a fragmented area of study that includes a bushel basket full of concepts and applications, but have little understanding of what is truly fundamental about how we make sense out of the world and share that sense with others. Rather than seeing communication as a crazy quilt of unrelated ideas and skills, we want students to see a unified fabric of common principles that they will remember long after the course is over. The five fundamental principles provide a framework for understanding the importance of communication in our lives.

Our pentagon model illustrates the relationships among the five communication principles that are the overarching structure of the book. As a principle is being introduced or discussed, the appropriate part of the model is highlighted. In most texts, communication principles are typically presented in the first third of the book and then abandoned, as material about interpersonal, group, and public communication is presented. We don't use a "hit-and-run" approach. Instead, using examples and illustrations to which students can relate, we carefully discuss each principle early in the book. Through-

Communication Principles for a Lifetime

out the latter two-thirds of the book we gently remind students of how these principles relate to interpersonal relationships, group and team discussions, and public presentations.

We link the five communication principles with specific content by using a margin icon to indicate that a discussion in the text of a skill, concept, or idea is related to one or more of the five communication principles. The icons, described in Chapter 1 and illustrated here, first appear in the margin in Chapter 7, "Understanding Interpersonal Communication," which is the first context chapter of the book. The icons help students see the many applications our five communication principles have to their lives as they read about interpersonal communication, group and team communication, and presentational speaking.

A subtext for these five principles is the importance of communicating ethically with others. Throughout the book we invite students to consider the ethical implications of how they communicate with others, through the use of probes and questions. As we discuss in Chapter 1, we believe that in order to be effective, a communication message must achieve three goals: (1) it must be understood; (2) it must achieve its intended effect; and (3) it must be ethical. Our five Communication Principles for a Lifetime are designed to help students achieve these three goals.

The Successful Structure of the Book Stays the Same

This sixth edition retains the overall structure of the five previous editions and is organized into four units. Unit I introduces the five principles (Chapter 1), and then each principle is explained in a separate chapter (Chapters 2 through 6). Each communication principle is discussed and illustrated to help students see its value and centrality in their lives. Chapter 2 discusses the principle of being self-aware. Chapter 3 focuses on using and interpreting verbal messages, and Chapter 4 focuses on using and interpreting nonverbal messages. Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the interrelated processes of listening and responding, giving special attention to the importance of being other-oriented and empathic. The final principle, appropriately adapting to others, is presented in Chapter 6; we use this principle to illustrate the importance of adapting one's behavior to culture and gender differences among people.

Unit II applies the five communication principles to interpersonal relationships. Unlike many treatments of interpersonal communication, our discussion links the concepts and strategies for understanding interpersonal communication with our five Communication Principles for a Lifetime. Chapter 7 presents information to help students better understand the nature and function of communication in relationships. Chapter 8 identifies strategies that can enhance the quality of interpersonal relationships with others.

Unit III discusses how the five communication principles can help students understand and enhance communication in small groups and teams. Chapter 9 explains how groups and teams work. We offer practical strategies for collaboratively solving problems, leading groups and teams, and running and participating in meetings in Chapter 10.

Finally, Unit IV presents classic content to help students design and deliver a speech, referring to contemporary research and using the latest tools of technology. Based on our popular audience-centered approach to developing a speech, we emphasize the importance of adapting to listeners while also being an ethically vigilant communicator. Chapters 11 through 15 offer information and tips for developing speech ideas, organizing and outlining speeches, delivering a speech (including using presentational and multimedia aids), crafting effective informative speeches, and developing ethical persuasive messages.

We conclude the book with two appendixes designed to supplement our instruction about communication fundamentals. Appendix A includes practical strategies for being interviewed and for interviewing others. We relate

our discussion of interviewing to the five Communication Principles for a Lifetime. Appendix B includes examples of recent presentations to illustrate what effective, well-planned speeches look like.

Our Partnership with Students to Help Them Learn Stays the Same

A textbook is essentially a "distance learning" tool. As we write each chapter, we are separated from the learner by both time and space. To help lessen the distance between author and reader, we've incorporated a variety of learning resources and pedagogical features to engage students in the learning process. This engagement is heightened significantly in REVEL, but you'll also find many features designed to engage students in the traditional print text as well. As we note in the text, information alone is not communication. Communication occurs when the receiver of information responds to it. Our special features help turn information into a responsive communication message that has an effect on students' lives.

Principles Model and Icons Our pentagon model and margin icons help students see connections between the various communication concepts and skills we present. Throughout the text we provide an integrated framework to reinforce what's fundamental about human communication. Long after students may have forgotten the lists they memorized for an exam, we want them to remember the five fundamental principles we highlight throughout the book. Remembering these principles can also help them remember strategies and concepts to enhance their interpersonal relationships, improve group and team meetings, and design and deliver effective presentations.

Chapter-End Summary of Communication Principles for a Lifetime In addition to using the margin icons to highlight material in the text related to one or more communication principles, we conclude each chapter with a summary of the chapter content organized around the communication principles. Our chapter summaries at the ends of the first six chapters distill essential information about the specific communication principle presented in the chapter. Starting in Chapter 7, we review and summarize the chapter content using all five Communication Principles for a Lifetime as a framework. Miniature versions of our principles icons appear with headings to highlight the five fundamental principles. The purpose of this chapter-end feature is to help students synthesize the material related to the context discussed (e.g., interpersonal communication) and the five principles that undergird the descriptive and prescriptive information presented in the chapter. This feature will help students connect the variety of ideas and skills with the five communication principles.

Communication & Ethics To help students consider the ethical dimensions of human communication, in each chapter we provide a special boxed feature called "Communication & Ethics." Students are asked to consider a case study or to ponder their responses to questions of ethics. The cases and questions we pose are designed to be thought-provoking, to spark insightful class discussion, or to be used in combination with a journal assignment or other learning method to help students see connections between ethics and communication.

Communication & Technology Because of the importance of technology in our lives, in each chapter we include special material about technology and communication to help students become sensitive to the sometimes mind-boggling impact of new technology on our communication with others. We also discuss the importance and role of technology in several chapters throughout the book. The prevalence of technology in students' lives offers powerful teachable moments to help students learn and apply communication principles.

Communication & Diversity Each chapter includes a "Communication & Diversity" feature designed to help students see the importance of diversity in their lives. Yet we don't relegate discussions of diversity only to a boxed feature. Because we believe diversity is such an important communication topic in contemporary society, we discuss diversity in the text, not only in relation to our fifth principle of communication (appropriately adapt messages to others) in Chapter 6, but throughout the book.

Comprehensive Pedagogical Learning Tools To help students master the material, we've built in a wealth of study aids:

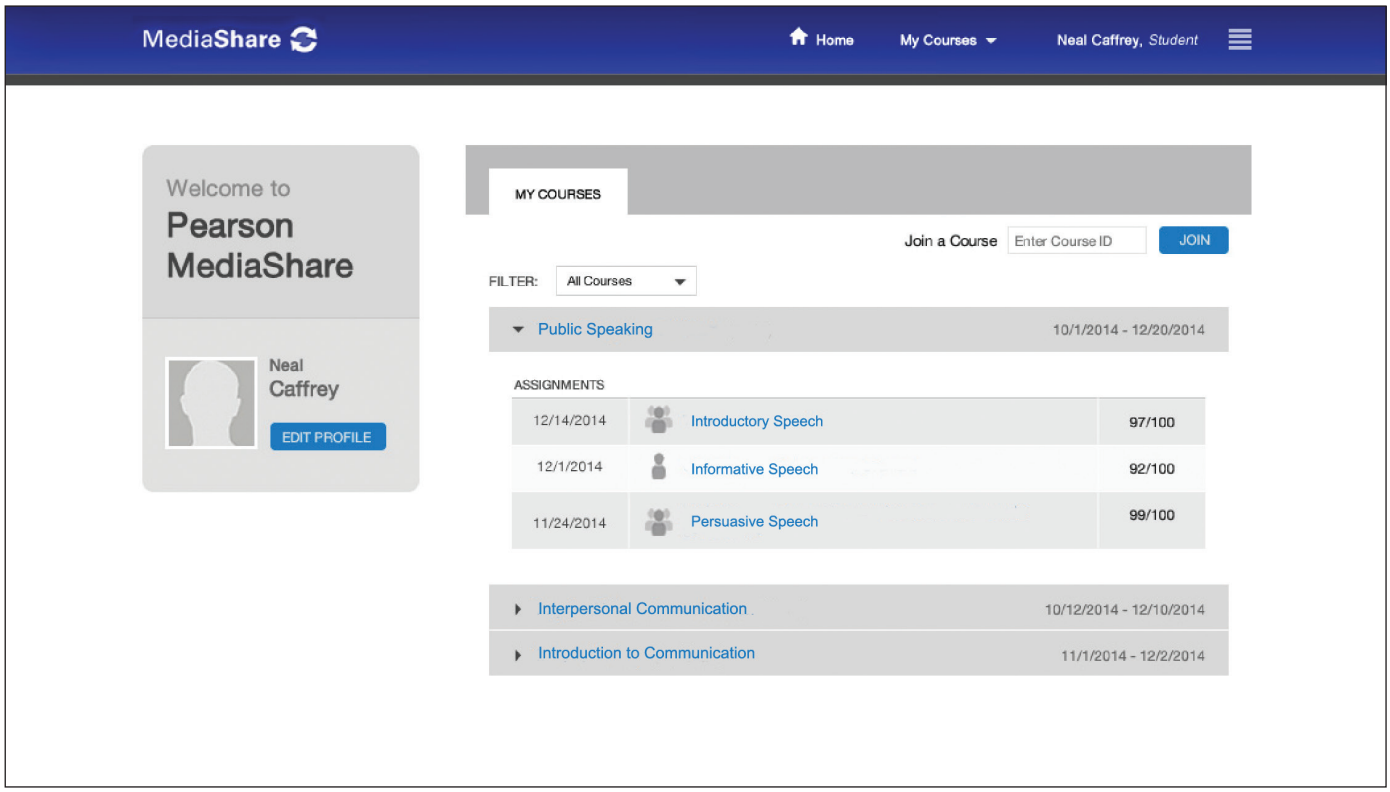
- Learning objectives provide a compass to help students know where they are headed, which they can check at key points throughout each chapter.
- Chapter outlines preview key concepts.
- Concise and highly praised Recap boxes distill essential content.
- Key terms in boldface with marginal glossary help students master essential terms.
- Chapter-end Study Guides offer narrative summaries and key terms lists.
- The Principle Points, chapter-end summaries of the five Communication Principles, recap applications of the principles to students' real-life communication.
- Chapter-end Apply Your Skill questions guide students to think critically about how they can apply chapter concepts to their lives and relationships.

- Many chapter-end skills assessment and collaborative learning activities have been revised and updated for this edition.

Our Partnership with Instructors Stays Strong

As authors, we view our job as providing resources that instructors can use to bring communication principles and skills to life. A textbook is only one tool to help teachers teach and learners learn. As part of our partnership with instructors to facilitate learning, we offer an array of print and electronic resources to help teachers do what they do best: teach. In addition to the vast array of learning resources we've built into the text, we offer a dazzling package of additional resources to help instructors generate both intellectual and emotional connections with their students.

Key instructor resources include an Instructor's Manual (ISBN 0-13-388244-6), TestBank, (ISBN 0-13-388237-3), and PowerPoint Presentation Package (ISBN 0-13-388241-1). These supplements are available at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc (instructor login required). MyTest online test-generating software (ISBN 0-13-388236-5) is available at www.pearsonmytest.com (instructor login required). For a complete list of the instructor and student resources available with the text, please visit the Pearson Communication catalog, at www.pearsonhighered.com/communication.



Pearson MediaShare

Pearson's comprehensive media upload tool allows students to post video, images, audio, or documents for instructor and peer viewing, time-stamped commenting, and assessment. MediaShare is an easy, mobile way for students and professors to interact and engage with speeches, presentation aids, group projects, and other files. MediaShare gives professors the tools to provide contextual feedback to demonstrate how students can improve their skills.

Structured like a social networking site, MediaShare helps promote a sense of community among students. In face-to-face and online course settings, MediaShare saves instructors valuable time and enriches the student learning experience by providing contextual feedback.

- Use MediaShare to assign or view speeches, outlines, presentation aids, video-based assignments, role plays, group projects, and more in a variety of formats, including video, Word, PowerPoint, and Excel.
- Assess students using customizable, Pearson-provided rubrics or create your own around classroom goals, learning outcomes, or department initiatives.
- Set up assignments for students with options for full-class viewing and commenting, private comments between you and the student, peer groups for reviewing, or as collaborative group assignments.
- Record video directly from a tablet, phone, or other webcam (including a batch upload option for instructors) and tag submissions to a specific student or assignment.
- Embed video from YouTube via assignments to incorporate current events into the classroom experience.
- Set up quiz questions on video assignments to ensure students master concepts and interact and engage with the media.
- Import grades into most learning management systems.
- Ensure a secure learning environment for instructors and students through robust privacy settings.
- Upload videos, comment on submissions, and grade directly from our new MediaShare app, available free from the iTunes store and GooglePlay; search for Pearson MediaShare.

Pearson MediaShare is available as a standalone product, as part of MyCommunicationLab, or in a package with REVEL.

Acknowledgments

Although our three names appear on the cover as authors of the book you are holding in your hands, in reality hundreds of people have been instrumental in making this book possible. Communication scholars who have dedicated their lives to researching the importance of communication principles, theories, and skills provide the fuel for this book. We thank each author we reference in our voluminous endnotes for the research conclusions that bring us to our contemporary understanding of communication principles. We thank our students who have trusted us to be their guides in a study of human communication. They continue to enrich our lives with their enthusiasm and curiosity. They have inspired us to be more creative by their honest quizzical looks and challenged us to go beyond "textbook" answers with their thought-provoking questions.

We are most appreciative of the outstanding editorial support we continue to receive from our colleagues and friends at Pearson. We thank Joe Opiela for helping us keep this project moving forward when we wondered if the world needed another communication book. Karon Bowers, Pearson Publisher, has continued to provide valued support and encouragement. Our exceptionally thoughtful and talented development editor, Sheralee Connors, helped us polish and prune our words and gave us a wealth of ideas and suggestions. We acknowledge and appreciate the ideas and suggestions from Mark Redmond, a valued friend, gifted teacher, and skilled writer at Iowa State University. His coauthorship with us on *Interpersonal Communication: Relating to Others* significantly influenced our ideas about communication, especially interpersonal communication.

We are grateful to the many educators who read the manuscript and both encouraged and challenged us. We thank the following people for drawing on their teaching skill, expertise, and vast experience to make this a much better book:

Reviewers of the First Edition: Michael Bruner, University of North Texas; Diana O. Cassagrande, West Chester University; Dan B. Curtis, Central Missouri State University; Terrence A. Doyle, Northern Virginia Community College; Julia F. Fennell, Community College of Allegheny County, South Campus; Phil Hoke, The University of Texas at San Antonio; Stephen Hunt, Illinois State University; Carol L. Hunter, Brookdale Community College; Dorothy W. Ige, Indiana University Northwest; A. Elizabeth Lindsey, The New Mexico State University; Robert E. Mild, Jr., Fairmont State College; Timothy P. Mottet, Texas State University–San Marcos; Alfred G. Mueller II, Pennsylvania State University, Mont Alto Campus; Kay Neal, University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh; Kathleen Perri, Valencia Community College; Beth M. Waggenspack, Virginia Tech University; Gretchen Aggert Weber, Horry-Georgetown Technical College; Kathy Werking, Eastern Kentucky University; Andrew F. Wood, San Jose State University

Reviewers of the Second Edition: Lawrence Albert, Morehead State University; Leonard Assante, Volunteer State Community College; Dennis Dufer, St. Louis Community College; Annette Folwell, University of Idaho; Mike Hemphill, University of Arkansas at Little Rock; Teri Higginbotham, University of Central Arkansas; Lawrence Hugenberg, Youngstown State University; Timothy P. Mottet, Texas State University–San Marcos; Penny O'Connor, University of Northern Iowa; Evelyn Plummer, Seton Hall University; Charlotte C. Toguchi, Kapi'olani Community College; Debra Sue Wyatt, South Texas Community College

Reviewers of the Third Edition: Dom Bongiorni, Kingwood College; Jo Anne Bryant, Troy University; Cherie Cannon, Miami–Dade College; Thomas Green, Cape Fear Community College; Gretchen Harries, Austin Community College; Xin-An Lu, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania; Sara L. Nalley, Columbia College; Kristi Schaller, University of Hawaii; David Shuhy, Salisbury University; John Tapia, Missouri Western State College

Reviewers of the Fourth Edition: Ellen B. Bremen, Highline Community College; Patricia A. Cutspec, East Tennessee State University; Edgar D. Johnson III, Augusta State University; Peter S. Lee, California State University, Fullerton; Kelly Aikin Petcus, Austin Community College; Natalia Rybas, Bowling Green State University; Sarah Stout, Kellogg Community College

Reviewers of the Fifth Edition: Leonard Assante, Volunteer State Community College; Sandra Bein, South Suburban College; Robert Dixon, St. Louis Community College; Glynis Holm Strause, Coastal Bend College; Linda Kalfayan, Westchester Community College; Barbara Maxwell, Linn State Technical College; Kay Neal, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh; Jeff Pomeroy, Southwest Texas Junior College

Reviewers of the Sixth Edition: Kevin Clark, Austin Community College; Cynthia Brown El, Macomb Community College; Diane Ferrero-Paluzzi, Iona College; Gary Kuhn, Chemeketa Community College; Travice Obas, Georgia Highlands College; John Parrish, Tarrant County College; Daniel Paulnock, Saint Paul College; Shannon Proctor, Highline Community College; Kimberly Schaefer, Baker University; Katie Stevens, Austin Community College; Jayne Violette, Eastern Kentucky University.

We have each been influenced by colleagues, friends, and teachers who have offered support and inspiration for this project. Happily, colleagues, friends, and teachers are virtually indistinguishable for us. We are each blessed with people with whom we work who offer strong support.

Steve and Sue thank their colleagues at Texas State University for their insights and ideas that helped shape

key concepts in this book. Cathy Fleuriet and Tom Burkholder, who served as basic course directors at Texas State, influenced our work. Tim Mottet, also a former basic course director at Texas State and now Provost at Northwest Missouri State University, is a valued, inspirational friend, coauthor, and colleague who is always there to listen and freely share his ideas and experience. Marian Houser, a former basic course director at Texas State, is a wonderful friend and provides important insight and support. Michael Burns, current basic course director at Texas State is a valued friend and continues to offer his generous support, as does Kristen LeBlanc Farris, Associate Director of Texas State's award-winning basic communication course. Long time friend Kosta Tovstiadi, University of Colorado, provided skilled research assistance to help us draw upon the most contemporary interpersonal communication research. Michael Hennessy, Patricia Margerison, and Daniel Lochman are Texas State English faculty who have been especially supportive of Sue's work. Finally, Steve thanks his skilled and dedicated administrative support team at Texas State. Administrative assistant Sue Hall, a cherished friend and colleague. Bob Hanna provided exceptional support and assistance for this project and many others.

Ivy is grateful to her students, colleagues, and friends at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, for their patience and unwavering support for her continued involvement in this book project. In particular, Dean Kelly Quintanilla and Chair Amy Aldridge Sanford constantly reaffirm the value of a well-written, carefully crafted book—one that speaks to students' lives. Their support of Ivy's research efforts, along with constant fueling from her wonderful students, always make this project a joy. Special thanks go to research assistant Roe Cantu, for her help with the sixth edition. Ivy's deepest thanks also go to Steve and Sue Beebe for their generosity in bringing her into this project, and for their extraordinary friendship.

Finally we express our appreciation to our families. Ivy thanks her ever-supportive sister Karen Black, and nephew, niece, and grandnieces Brian, Sumitra, Mackenzie, and Sidney Black. They have been constant and generous with their praise for her writing accomplishments. Ivy will always be especially grateful to her late parents, Carol and Herschel Ivy, for lovingly offering many lessons about living the highly ethical life.

Sue and Steve especially thank their parents, Herb and Jane Dye and Russell and Muriel Beebe, who taught them much about communication and ethics that truly are principles for a lifetime. They also thank their sons, Mark and Matthew Beebe, and their daughter-in-law, Brittany Beebe, for teaching them life lessons about giving and receiving love that will remain with them forever.

Steven A. Beebe and Susan J. Beebe

Diana K. Ivy

Communication

Principles for a Lifetime

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Chapter 1

Identifying Foundations of Human Communication

There is no pleasure to me without communication. —MICHELE DE MONTAIGNE

Monkey Business Images/Shutterstock

Chapter Outline

- Why Study Communication?
- The Communication Process
- Communication Models
- Communication Competence
- Communication in the 21st Century
- Communication Contexts
- Communication Principles for a Lifetime
- Study Guide: Review, Apply, and Assess Your Knowledge and Skill

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to

1.1 Explain why it is important to study communication.

1.2 Define communication and describe five characteristics of the communication process.

1.3 Explain three communication models.

1.4 Describe three criteria that can be used to determine whether communication is competent.

1.5 Describe the nature of communication in the 21st century.

1.6 Identify and explain three communication contexts.

1.7 List and explain five fundamental principles of communication.

Like life-sustaining breath, communication is ever-present in our lives. That makes understanding and improving how we communicate with others a basic life skill.

Communication is an inescapable and fundamental aspect of being human. Consider the number of times you have purposefully communicated with someone today as you worked, ate, studied, shopped, or went about your daily duties. Most people spend between 80 and 90 percent of their waking hours communicating with others.[1] Even if you live in isolation from other people, you talk to yourself through your thoughts. It is through the process of communication that we convey who we are, both to ourselves and to others; it is our primary tool for making our way in the world.

In the course of our study of human communication, we will discuss myriad skills, ideas, concepts, and contexts. To help you stitch together the barrage of ideas and information, we will organize our study around five fundamental communication principles:

Principle One:	Be aware of your communication with yourself and others.
Principle Two:	Effectively use and interpret verbal messages.
Principle Three:	Effectively use and interpret nonverbal messages.
Principle Four:	Listen and respond thoughtfully to others.
Principle Five:	Appropriately adapt messages to others.

We don't claim that everything you need to know about communication is covered by these five principles. They do, however, summarize decades of research, as well as the wisdom of those who have taught communication over the years, about what constitutes effective and ethical communication.

Before we elaborate on the five fundamental communication principles, it is helpful in this first chapter to provide some background for our study of communication. We will discuss why it is important to study communication, define communication, examine various models of or perspectives on communication, and identify characteristics of human communication. Having offered this prelude, we will then discuss the five foundational principles of human communication that we will use throughout the book to help you organize the concepts, skills, and ideas we present in our discussion of interpersonal, group, and presentational speaking situations.

Why Study Communication?

1.1 Explain why it is important to study communication.

Why are you here? No, we don't mean "Why do you exist?" or "Why do you live where you do?" What we mean is "Why are you taking a college course about communication?" Perhaps the short answer is "It's required." Or maybe your advisor, parent, or friend encouraged you to take the course. But required or not, what can a systematic study of human communication do for you?

Communication touches every aspect of our lives. To be able to express yourself to other people is a basic requirement for living in a modern society. From a practical standpoint, it's very likely that you will make your living with your mind rather than your hands.[2] Even if you do physical labor, you will need communication skills to work with others. When you study communication, you are also developing leadership skills. "The art of communication," says author James Humes, "is the language of leadership."[3]

Although the value of being a competent communicator is virtually undisputed, there is evidence that many people struggle to express themselves clearly or to accurately understand messages from others. One study estimated that one-fifth of the students in the United States were not successful with even elementary communication tasks; in addition, more than 60 percent of the students could not give clear oral directions for someone else to follow.[4] When leaders in major corporations were asked to specify the most important skills for workers to have, 80 percent said listening was the most important work skill; 78 percent identified interpersonal communication skill as the next most important. However, the same leaders said only 28 percent of their employees had good listening skills and only 27 percent possessed effective interpersonal communication skills.[5] In support of these leaders' observations, another national study found that adults listen with 25 percent accuracy.[6] There is also evidence that the majority of adults are fearful of speaking in public and that about 20 percent of the population is highly apprehensive of presentational speaking.[7]

Aren't some people just born to be better communicators than others? If so, why should you work to develop your communication skill? Just as some people have more innate musical talent than others, there is evidence that some people may have an inborn biological ability to communicate with others.[8] This does not mean you should not work to develop your communication ability. Throughout the book, we will offer ample evidence that if you work to improve your skill, you will be rewarded by enjoying the benefits of enhanced communication competence. What are these benefits? Read on.

Warren Buffett, whose savvy investing has made him one of the richest people on the planet, agrees with many other leaders about the importance of communication skills at work. In one televised interview, Buffet declared, "If you improve your communication skills I guarantee you that you will earn 50 percent more money over your lifetime![10]
Rick Wilking/Reuters/Corbis

To Improve Your Employability

Regardless of your specific title or job description, the essence of what you do when working at any job is to communicate; you talk, listen, relate, read, and write. People who can communicate effectively with others are in high demand. As noted by John H. McConnell, CEO of Worthington Industries, "Take all the speech and communication courses you can because the world turns on communication."[9] McConnell's advice is supported by research as well as by personal observations.

Based on a survey of personnel managers—those people who are in charge of hiring you for a job—here's a ranking of the top factors in obtaining employment immediately after college:[11]

1. Oral communication (speaking) skills
2. Written communication skills
3. Listening ability
4. Enthusiasm
5. Technical competence
6. Work experience
7. Appearance
8. Poise
9. Resumé
10. Part-time or summer work experience

We're sure you know why we cited this survey. Communication skills were the number one *and* number two factors; note that listening ability was also highly valued. And this survey isn't the only one that reached the same conclusion; several other research studies have shown that communication skills are the most sought-after skills in the workplace.[12] Specifically, new research has found that communication skills, including interpersonal and teamwork skills, continue to be the most valued skills on the planet.[13]

To Improve Your Relationships

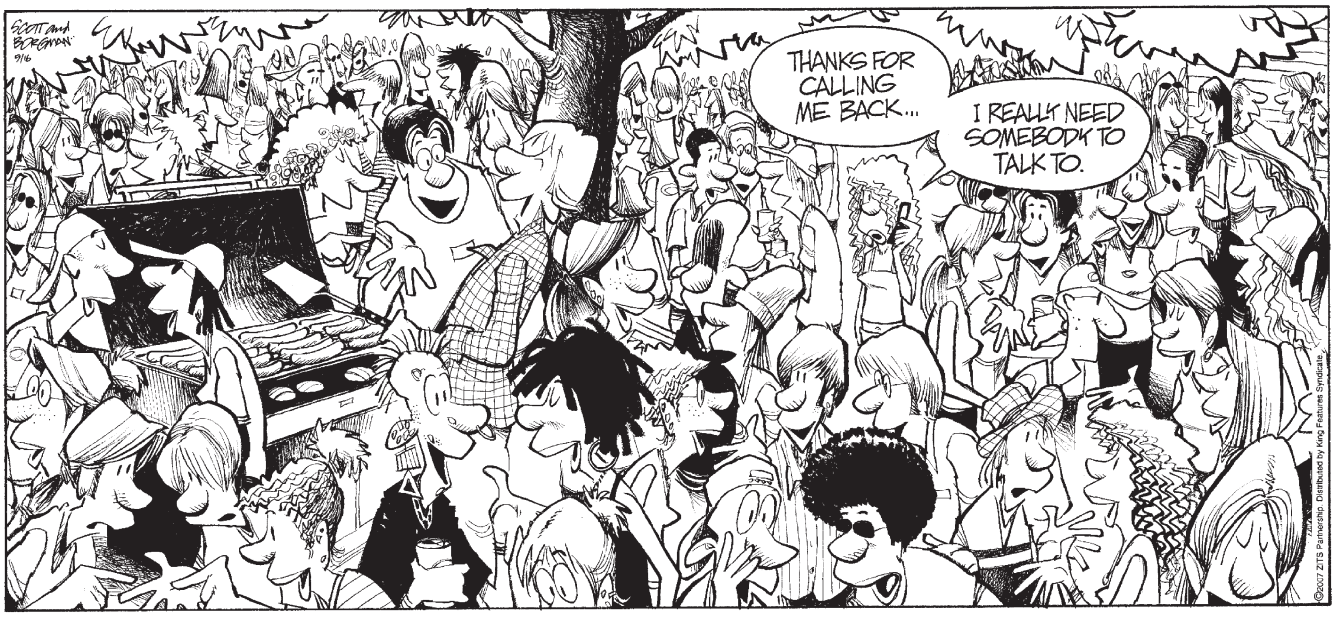
We don't choose our biological families, but we do choose our friends. For unmarried people, developing friendships and falling in love are the top-rated sources of satisfaction and happiness in life.[14] Conversely, losing a relationship is among life's most stressful events. Most people between the ages of 19 and 24 report that they have had from five to six romantic relationships and have been "in love" once or twice.[15] Understanding the role and function of communication can help unravel some of the mysteries of human relationships. At the heart of a good relationship is good communication.[16]

Virginia Satir, a pioneer in family enrichment, described family communication as "the largest single factor determining the kinds of relationships [we make] with others."[17] Learning principles and skills of communication can give us insight into why we relate to other family members as we do. Our early communication with our parents had a profound effect on our self-concept and self-worth. According to Satir, people are "made" in families. Our communication with family members has shaped how we interact with others today.

Many of us will spend as much or more time interacting with people in our places of work as we do at home. And although we choose our friends and lovers, we don't always have the same flexibility in choosing those with whom or for whom we work. Increasing our understanding of the role and importance of human communication with our colleagues can help us better manage stress on the job as well as enhance our work success.

To Improve Your Health

Life is stressful. Research has clearly documented that the lack or loss of close relationships can lead to ill health and even death. Having a social support system—good friends and supportive family members—seems to make a difference in our overall health and quality of life. Good friends and intimate relationships with others help us manage stress and contribute to both physical and emotional health. For example, physicians have noted that patients who are widowed or divorced experience more medical problems, such as heart disease, cancer, pneumonia, and diabetes, than do married people.[18] Grief-stricken spouses are more likely than others to die prematurely, especially around the time of the departed spouse's birthday or near their wedding anniversary.[19] Terminally ill patients with a limited number of friends or social support die sooner than those with stronger ties.[20] Without companions and



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close friends, our opportunities for intimacy and stress-managing communication are diminished. Studying how to enrich the quality of our communication with others can make life more enjoyable and enhance our overall well-being. Because of Facebook and other social networking software, we are increasingly involved in relationships with others even when we are not interacting face to face. Relating to others, whether online or in person, occurs through communication.[21]

So again, we ask the question: Why are you here? We think the evidence is clear: People who are effective communicators are more likely to get the jobs they want; have better-quality relationships with friends, family, and colleagues; and even enjoy a healthier quality of life.

The Communication Process

1.2 Define communication and describe five characteristics of the communication process.

Communication is one of those words that seem so basic you may wonder why they need to be formally defined. Yet scholars who devote their lives to studying communication don't always agree on the definition of the term. One research team counted more than 126 published definitions.[22] In this section, we'll examine our definition of communication, the characteristics shared by all communication, major models that researchers and theorist have used to explain and study communication, and the three general contexts in which communication happens.

Communication Defined

In its broadest sense, **communication** is the process of acting on information.[23] Someone does or says something, and others think or do something in response to the action or the words as they understand them. Communication is not unique to humans; researchers study communication in other species, as well as between species. For example, you communicate with your pet dog if the dog sits in response to your spoken command, or if you respond to your dog's begging gaze by giving him a treat. However, the focus of this text is **human communication**, *the process of making sense out of the world and sharing that sense with others by creating meaning through the use of verbal and nonverbal messages.*[24] Let's look at the key components of this definition.

communication
The process of acting on information.

human communication
The process of making sense out of the world and sharing that sense with others by creating meaning through verbal and nonverbal messages.

- *Communication is about making sense.* We make sense out of what we experience when we begin to interpret what we see, hear, touch, smell, and taste with sensations, feelings, thoughts, and words. Identifying patterns and structure in what we experience is key to making sense out of what happens to us. Although we often think that "making sense out of something" means rationally and logically interpreting what we experience, we also make sense through intuition, feelings, and emotions.[25]
- *Communication is about sharing sense.* We share what we experience by expressing to others and to ourselves what we experience. We typically use words to express our thoughts, but we also use music, art, clothing, and a host of other means to convey what we are thinking and feeling to others.
- *Communication is about creating meaning.* As we will see again later in this chapter, it's more appropriate to say that meaning is *created* through communication rather than sent or transmitted. To say that we send or transmit messages is to imply that what we send is what is received. However, presenting information to others does not mean communication has occurred: "But I told you what to do!" "It's there in the memo. Why didn't you do what I asked?" "It's in the syllabus." These exasperated communicators assumed that if they sent a message, someone would receive it. However, communication does not operate in a simple, linear, what-you-send-is-what-is-received process. *Information is not communication.* In fact, what is expressed by one person is rarely interpreted by another person precisely as intended.
- *Communication is about verbal and nonverbal messages.* We communicate by using **symbols,** words, sounds, gestures, or visual images that represent thoughts, concepts, objects, or experiences. The words on this page are symbols you use to derive meaning that makes sense to you. Not all symbols are verbal; some are nonverbal. You use gestures, posture, facial expression, tone of voice, clothing, and jewelry to express ideas, attitudes, and feelings. Nonverbal messages primarily communicate emotions, such as our likes and dislikes, whether we're interested or uninterested, and our feelings of power or lack of power.

symbol
A word, sound, gesture, or visual image that represents a thought, concept, object, or experience.

Signs are usually carefully crafted examples of symbolic communication. What are the creators of this sign trying to communicate?
© Patrick Strattner/AGEfotostock

Some scholars assert that *all* human behavior is really communication. When you cross your arms while listening to your friend describe her day, she may conclude that you're not interested in what she's talking about. But it could just be that you're chilly. While all human expression has the potential to communicate a message (someone may act or respond to the information they receive from you), it does not mean that you *intentionally* are expressing an idea or emotion. People don't always accurately interpret the messages we express—and this unprofound observation has profound implications.

Because of the ever-present potential for misunderstanding, communication should be *other-oriented*—it should acknowledge the perspective of others, not just that of the creator of the message. Communication that does not consider the needs, background, and culture of the receiver is more likely to be misunderstood than other-oriented communication. We'll emphasize the importance of considering others or considering your audience throughout the book. Knowing something about the experiences of the person or persons you're speaking to can help you communicate more effectively and appropriately.

Communication Characteristics

The following characteristics are evident any time communication occurs: Communication is inescapable, irreversible, and complicated; it emphasizes content and relationships; and it is governed by rules.

COMMUNICATION IS INESCAPABLE Opportunities to communicate are everywhere. We spend most of our waking hours sending messages to others or interpreting messages from others.[26] Many of our messages are not verbalized. As you silently stand in a supermarket checkout line, for example, your lack of eye contact with others waiting in line suggests you're not interested in striking up a conversation. Your unspoken messages may provide cues to which others respond. As was noted earlier, some communication scholars question whether it is possible to communicate with someone unintentionally. However, even when you don't intend to express a particular idea or feeling, others may try to make sense out of what you are doing—or not doing. Remember: People judge you by your behavior, not your intent.

COMMUNICATION IS IRREVERSIBLE "Disregard that last statement made by the witness," instructs the judge. Yet the clever lawyer knows that, once the witness has said something, he or she cannot really "take back" the message. In conversation, we may try to modify the meaning of a spoken message by saying something like "Oh, I really didn't mean it." But in most cases, the damage has been done. Once created, communication has the physical property of matter; it can't be uncreated. As the spiral shown in Figure 1.1 suggests, once communication begins, it never loops back on itself. Instead, it continues to be shaped by the events, experiences, and thoughts of the communication partners. A Russian proverb nicely summarizes the point: "Once a word goes out of your mouth, you can never swallow it again."

COMMUNICATION IS COMPLICATED Communicating with others is not simple. If it were, we would know how to reduce dramatically the number of misunderstandings and conflicts in our world. This book could also offer you a list of simple techniques and strategies for blissful management of communication hassles in your relationships. But you won't find that list in this book or any other credible book, because human communication is complicated by the number of variables and unknown factors involved when people interact.

To illustrate the complexity of the process, communication scholar Dean Barnlund has suggested that whenever we communicate with another person, at least six "people" are really involved:

1. Who you think you are
2. Who you think the other person is
3. Who you think the other person thinks you are
4. Who the other person thinks he or she is
5. Who the other person thinks you are
6. Who the other person thinks you think he or she is.[27]

Whew! And when you add more people to the conversation, it becomes even more complicated.

Life is not only complicated but also uncertain. There are many things we do not know. We seek information about such everyday things as the weather or about such questions as what others think about us. Several communication theorists suggest that we attempt to manage our uncertainty through communication.[28] In times of high uncertainty (when there are many things we do not know), we will communicate more actively and purposefully so as to manage our uncertainty. For example, we are likely to ask more questions, seek information, and listen intently when we are uncertain.

Adding to the complexity of communication and the problem of our own uncertainty is that messages are not always interpreted as we intend them. Osmo Wiio, a

Figure 1.1 Helical Model of Communication

Interpersonal communication is irreversible. Like the spiral shown here, communication never loops back on itself. Once it begins, it expands infinitely as the communication partners contribute their thoughts and experiences to the exchange.
Nishi 55/Fotolia

Scandinavian communication scholar, points out the challenges of communicating with others when he suggests the following maxims:

1. If communication can fail, it will.
2. If a message can be understood in different ways, it will be understood in just the way that does the most harm.
3. There is always somebody who knows better than you what you meant by your message.
4. The more communication there is, the more difficult it is for communication to succeed.[29]

Although we are not as pessimistic as Wiio, we do suggest that the task of understanding each other is challenging.

COMMUNICATION EMPHASIZES CONTENT AND RELATIONSHIPS What you say—your words—and how you say it—your tone of voice, amount of eye contact, facial expression, and posture—can reveal much about the true meaning of your message. The **content dimension** of communication messages refers to the new information, ideas, or suggested actions the speaker wishes to express. When you tell your roommate you want the room cleaned, you convey an intentional message that you want a tidier room.

content dimension
The new information, ideas, or suggested actions that a communicator wishes to express; *what* is said.

relationship dimension
The aspect of a communication message that offers cues about the emotions, attitudes, and amount of power and control the speaker directs toward others; *how* something is said.

rule
A followable prescription that indicates what behavior is required or preferred and what behavior is prohibited in a specific situation.

The **relationship dimension** of a communication message is usually less explicit; it offers cues about the emotions, attitudes, and amount of power and control the speaker directs toward others.[30] If one of your roommates loudly and abruptly bellows, "HEY, DORK! CLEAN THIS ROOM!" and another roommate uses the same verbal message but more gently and playfully suggests, with a smile, "Hey, dork. Clean this room," both are communicating the same message content, aimed at achieving the same outcome. But the two messages have very different relationship cues.

Another way to distinguish between the content and relationship dimensions of communication is to consider that the content of a message refers to *what* is said. The relationship cues are provided in *how* the message is communicated. For example, when you read a transcript of what someone says, you can get a different meaning than you would if you actually heard the person's words.

COMMUNICATION IS GOVERNED BY RULES When you play Monopoly, you know there are rules about how to get out of jail, buy Boardwalk, or pass "Go" and get $200. According to communication researcher Susan Shimanoff, a **rule** is a "followable

What are the implicit rules for waiting in a medical waiting room?
Robert Kneschke/Shutterstock

prescription that indicates what behavior is obligated, preferred, or prohibited in certain contexts."[31] The rules that help define appropriate and inappropriate communication in any given situation may be explicit or implicit. The rules of Monopoly are explicit; they are even written down. For a class, explicit rules are probably spelled out in your syllabus.

However, your instructor has other rules that are more implicit. They are not written or verbalized because you learned them long ago: Only one person speaks at a time; you raise your hand to be called on; you do not send text messages. Similarly, you may follow implicit rules when you play Monopoly with certain friends or family members, such as "always let Grandpa buy Boardwalk." Communication rules are developed by those involved in the interaction and by the culture in which the individuals are communicating. Most people learn communication rules from experience, by observing and interacting with others.

Communication Models

1.3 Explain three communication models.

Communication researchers have spent considerable time trying to understand precisely how communication takes place. In the course of their study, they have developed visual models that graphically illustrate the communication process. By reviewing the development of communication models, you can see how our understanding of communication has evolved over the past century.

Communication as Action: Message Transfer

"Did you get my message?" This simple question summarizes the earliest, communication-as-action approach to human communication. These early models viewed communication as a transfer or exchange of information; communication takes place when a message is sent and received. Period. Communication is a way of transferring meaning from sender to receiver. In 1948, Harold Lasswell described the process as follows:

Who (sender)
Says what (message)
In what channel
To whom (receiver)
With what effect[32]

Figure 1.2 shows a simplified representation of the communication process developed by communication pioneers Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver, who viewed communication as a linear input/output process. Today, although researchers view
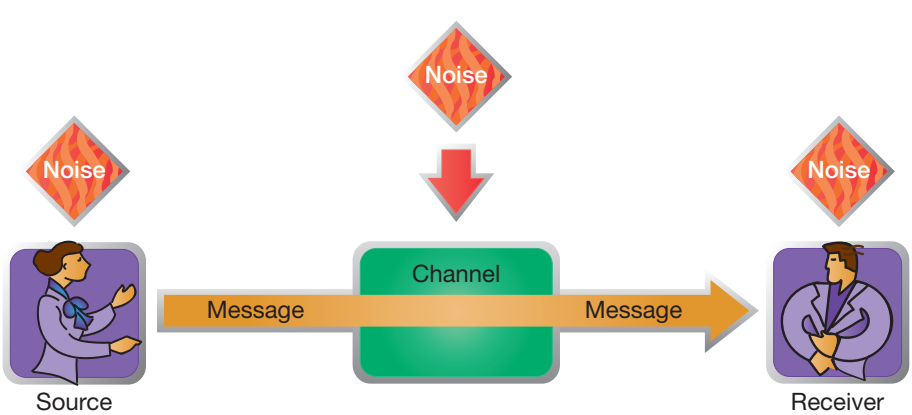
Figure 1.2 A Model of Communication as Action