

GLOBAL
EDITION



The Interpersonal Communication Book

FOURTEENTH EDITION

Joseph A. DeVito



ALWAYS LEARNING

PEARSON

The Interpersonal Communication Book

This page intentionally left blank

The Interpersonal Communication Book

14th edition

Global edition

Joseph A. DeVito

Hunter College of the City University of New York

PEARSON

Boston Columbus Indianapolis New York San Francisco Amsterdam
Cape Town Dubai London Madrid Milan Munich Paris Montreal Toronto Delhi
Mexico City São Paulo Sydney Hong Kong Seoul Singapore Taipei Tokyo

Publisher, Communication: Karon Bowers
Editorial Assistant: Kieran Fleming
Director of Development: Sharon Geary
Senior Field Marketing Manager: Blair Zoe Tuckman
Product Marketing Manager: Becky Rowland
Program Team Lead: Maureen Richardson
Program Manager: Anne Ricigliano
Project Team Lead: Linda Behrens
Project Manager: Raegan Keida Heerema
Acquisitions Editor, Global Edition: Vrinda Malik
Senior Project Editor, Global Edition: Daniel Luiz

Manager, Media Production, Global Edition:
M. Vikram Kumar
Senior Manufacturing Controller, Production, Global Edition: Trudy Kimber
Project Coordination, Text Design, and Electronic Page Makeup: Integra
Cover Design: Lumina Datamatics Ltd.
Design Lead: Maria Lange
Digital Media Project Manager: Sean Silver
Operations Manager: Mary Fischer
Senior Manufacturing Buyer:
Mary Ann Gloriande

Acknowledgements of third party content appear on pages 426–428, which constitutes an extension of this copyright page.

Pearson Education Limited
Edinburgh Gate
Harlow
Essex CM20 2JE
England

and Associated Companies throughout the world

Visit us on the World Wide Web at:
www.pearsonglobaleditions.com

© Pearson Education Limited 2016

The rights of Joseph A. DeVito to be identified as the author of this work have been asserted by him in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Authorized adaptation from the United States edition, entitled The Interpersonal Communication Book, 14th edition, ISBN 978-0-13-375381-3, by Joseph A. DeVito, published by Pearson Education © 2016.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a license permitting restricted copying in the United Kingdom issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency Ltd, Saffron House, 6–10 Kirby Street, London EC1N 8TS.

All trademarks used herein are the property of their respective owners. The use of any trademark in this text does not vest in the author or publisher any trademark ownership rights in such trademarks, nor does the use of such trademarks imply any affiliation with or endorsement of this book by such owners.

ISBN 10: 1292099992
ISBN 13: 9781292099996

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
14 13 12 11 10

Typeset in Palatino LT Pro Roman by Integra.

Printed and bound by Courier Kendallville in the United States of America.

Brief Contents

PART 1	Preliminaries to Interpersonal Communication	23
1	Foundations of Interpersonal Communication	23
2	Culture and Interpersonal Communication	51
3	Perception of the Self and Others in Interpersonal Communication	75
PART 2	Interpersonal Messages	103
4	Verbal Messages	103
5	Nonverbal Messages	131
6	Listening in Interpersonal Communication	169
7	Emotional Messages	191
8	Conversational Messages	213
PART 3	Interpersonal Relationships	244
9	Interpersonal Relationship Stages, Theories, and Communication	244
10	Interpersonal Relationship Types	273
11	Interpersonal Conflict and Conflict Management	305
12	Interpersonal Power and Influence	327

This page intentionally left blank

Contents

Specialized Contents

Welcome to *The Interpersonal Communication Book*

PART 1 Preliminaries to Interpersonal Communication

1 Foundations of Interpersonal Communication

Why Study Interpersonal Communication	24
Personal Success	24
Professional Success	24
The Nature of Interpersonal Communication	26
Interpersonal Communication Involves Interdependent Individuals	26
Interpersonal Communication Is Inherently Relational	26
Interpersonal Communication Exists on a Continuum	27
Interpersonal Communication Involves Verbal and Nonverbal Messages	28
Interpersonal Communication Takes Place in Varied Forms	28
Interpersonal Communication Involves Choices	29
Elements of Interpersonal Communication	30
Source–Receiver	30
Messages	32
Channel	35
Noise	35
Context	36
Ethics	37
Principles of Interpersonal Communication	39
Interpersonal Communication Is a Transactional Process	39
Interpersonal Communication Serves a Variety of Purposes	41
Interpersonal Communication Is Ambiguous	42
Interpersonal Relationships May Be Symmetrical or Complementary	43
Interpersonal Communication Refers to Content and Relationship	44
Interpersonal Communication Is a Series of Punctuated Events	45
Interpersonal Communication Is Inevitable, Irreversible, and Unrepeatable	46
Summary • Key Terms	

2 Culture and Interpersonal Communication 51

Culture	52
Cultural Evolution and Cultural Relativism	52
Sex and Gender	53
The Transmission of Culture	53
The Importance of Culture	54
The Aim of a Cultural Perspective	55
Cultural Differences	57
Individual and Collective Orientation	59
High- and Low-Context Cultures	60
Power Distance	60
Masculine and Feminine Cultures	61
High-Ambiguity-Tolerant and Low-Ambiguity-Tolerant Cultures	61
Long- and Short-Term Orientation	62
Indulgence and Restraint	63
Principles for Effective Intercultural Communication	65
Educate Yourself	66
Recognize Differences	68
Confront Your Stereotypes	69
Reduce Your Ethnocentrism	70
Adjust Your Communication	70
Summary • Key Terms	

3 Perception of the Self and Others in Interpersonal Communication 75

The Self in Interpersonal Communication	76
Self-Concept	76
Self-Awareness	78
Self-Esteem	80
Perception in Interpersonal Communication	84
Stage One: Stimulation	84
Stage Two: Organization	85
Stage Three: Interpretation–Evaluation	86
Stage Four: Memory	86
Stage Five: Recall	87
Impression Formation	87
Impression Formation Processes	88
Increasing Accuracy in Impression Formation	93
Impression Management: Goals and Strategies	95
To Be Liked: Affinity-Seeking and Politeness Strategies	97
To Be Believed: Credibility Strategies	98

To Excuse Failure: Self-Handicapping Strategies	99	Encoding Nonverbal Messages	165
To Secure Help: Self-Deprecating Strategies	99	Summary • Key Terms	
To Hide Faults: Self-Monitoring Strategies	100	6 Listening in Interpersonal Communication	169
To Be Followed: Influencing Strategies	100	The Process of Listening	170
To Confirm Self-Image: Image-Confirming Strategies	100	Stage One: Receiving	171
Summary • Key Terms		Stage Two: Understanding	173
PART 2 Interpersonal Messages	103	Stage Three: Remembering	174
4 Verbal Messages	103	Stage Four: Evaluating	175
Principles of Verbal Messages	104	Stage Five: Responding	176
Messages Are Packaged	104	Listening Barriers	177
Message Meanings Are in People	104	Distractions: Physical and Mental	177
Meanings Are Denotative and Connotative	105	Biases and Prejudices	177
Messages Vary in Abstraction	106	Racist, Heterosexist, Ageist, and Sexist Listening	178
Messages Vary in Politeness	107	Lack of Appropriate Focus	178
Messages Can Be Onymous or Anonymous	109	Premature Judgment	178
Message Meanings Can Deceive	111	Styles of Effective Listening	179
Messages Vary in Assertiveness	112	Empathic and Objective Listening	180
Messages Can Confirm and Disconfirm	115	Nonjudgmental and Critical Listening	181
Messages Vary in Cultural Sensitivity	121	Surface and Depth Listening	181
Guidelines for Using Verbal Messages Effectively	123	Polite and Impolite Listening	183
Extensionalize: Avoid Intensional Orientation	124	Active and Inactive Listening	186
See the Individual: Avoid Allness	124	Culture, Gender, and Listening	188
Distinguish between Facts and Inferences: Avoid Fact-Inference Confusion	125	Culture and Listening	188
Discriminate Among: Avoid Indiscrimination	126	Gender and Listening	189
Talk about the Middle: Avoid Polarization	127	Summary • Key Terms	
Update Messages: Avoid Static Evaluation	128	7 Emotional Messages	191
Summary • Key Terms		Principles of Emotions and Emotional Messages	193
5 Nonverbal Messages	131	Emotions Occur in Stages	193
Principles of Nonverbal Communication	132	Emotions May Be Primary or Blended	194
Nonverbal Messages Interact with Verbal Messages	132	Emotions Involve Both Body and Mind	195
Nonverbal Messages Help Manage Impressions	133	Emotions Are Influenced by a Variety of Factors	196
Nonverbal Messages Help Form Relationships	134	Emotional Expression Uses Multiple Channels	197
Nonverbal Messages Structure Conversation	134	Emotional Expression Is Governed by Display Rules	197
Nonverbal Messages Can Influence and Deceive	134	Emotions May Be Adaptive and Maladaptive	198
Nonverbal Messages Are Crucial for Expressing Emotions	135	Emotions Can Be Used Strategically	199
Channels of Nonverbal Communication	135	Emotions Have Consequences	199
Body Messages	135	Emotions Are Contagious	200
Facial Communication	139	Obstacles to Communicating Emotions	202
Eye Communication	142	Societal and Cultural Customs	202
Touch Communication	145	Fear	202
Paralanguage	148	Inadequate Interpersonal Skills	203
Silence	149	Emotional Competence	203
Spatial Messages and Territoriality	151	Emotional Understanding	204
Artifactual Communication	154	Emotional Expression	204
Olfactory Messages	157	Handling Anger: A Special Case Illustration	207
Temporal Communication	159	Emotional Responding	209
Nonverbal Communication Competence	164	Communicating with the Grief-Stricken: A Special Case Illustration	209
Decoding Nonverbal Messages	165	Summary • Key Terms	

8	Conversational Messages	213			
	Principles of Conversation	214		Friendship Needs	276
	The Principle of Process	214		Friendship and Communication	277
	The Principle of Cooperation	218		Friendship, Culture, and Gender	278
	The Principle of Politeness	219		Friends with Benefits	280
	The Principle of Dialogue	221		Love Relationships	280
	The Principle of Turn Taking	221		Love Types	281
	Conversational Disclosure	225		Love and Communication	283
	Revealing Yourself	225		Love, Culture, and Gender	284
	Influences on Self-Disclosure	226		Family Relationships	285
	Rewards and Dangers of Self-Disclosure	227		Characteristics of Families	286
	Guidelines for Self-Disclosure	229		Couple Types	287
	Everyday Conversations	231		Family Types	288
	Making Small Talk	231		Family and Communication	289
	Introducing People	234		Families, Culture, and Gender	291
	Making Excuses	235		Workplace Relationships	293
	Apologizing	237		Workplace Communication	293
	Complimenting	239		Networking Relationships	295
	Advising	240		Mentoring Relationships	296
	Summary • Key Terms			Romantic Relationships at Work	297
PART 3	Interpersonal Relationships	244		The Dark Side of Interpersonal Relationships	299
9	Interpersonal Relationship Stages, Theories, and Communication	244		Jealousy	299
	Relationship Stages	246		Violence	301
	Contact	248		Summary • Key Terms	
	Involvement	248		11	Interpersonal Conflict and Conflict Management
	Intimacy	249			305
	Deterioration	249		Preliminaries to Interpersonal Conflict	306
	Repair	250		Definition of Interpersonal Conflict	306
	Dissolution	251		Myths about Interpersonal Conflict	306
	Movement among the Stages	251		Interpersonal Conflict Issues	307
	Relationship Theories	253		Principles of Interpersonal Conflict	309
	Attraction Theory	254		Conflict Is Inevitable	309
	Relationship Rules Theory	256		Conflict Can Occur in All Communication Forms	309
	Relationship Dialectics Theory	258		Conflict Can Have Negative and Positive Effects	310
	Social Penetration Theory	259		Conflict Can Focus on Content and/or Relationship Issues	311
	Social Exchange Theory	260		Conflict Is Influenced by Culture and Gender	311
	Equity Theory	260		Conflict Management Is a Multistep Process	314
	Politeness Theory	261		Conflict Management Strategies	318
	Relationship Communication	262		Win-Lose and Win-Win Strategies	320
	Communicating in Developing Relationships	263		Avoidance and Active Fighting Strategies	320
	Communicating in Deteriorating Relationships	265		Force and Talk Strategies	321
	Communicating in Relationship Repair	268		Face-Attacking and Face-Enhancing Strategies: Politeness in Conflict	322
	Summary • Key Terms			Verbal Aggressiveness and Argumentativeness Strategies	323
10	Interpersonal Relationship Types	273		Summary • Key Terms	
	Friendship Relationships	275		12	Interpersonal Power and Influence
	Definition and Characteristics	275			327
	Friendship Types	276		Principles of Power and Influence	328
				Some People Are More Powerful Than Others	328
				Power Can Be Shared	329

10 Contents

Power Can Be Increased or Decreased	330	Misuses of Power and Influence	341
Power Follows the Principle of Less Interest	330	Sexual Harassment	341
Power Generates Privilege	331	Bullying	344
Power Has a Cultural Dimension	331	Power Plays	345
Relationship, Person, and Message		Summary • Key Terms	
Power	333	Glossary	349
Power in the Relationship	333	References	370
Power in the Person	336	Index	407
Power in the Message	337	Credits	426
Resisting Power and Influence	339		

Specialized Contents

Understanding Interpersonal Theory & Research

Communication Theories and Research (Chapter 1)	39
Culture Shock (Chapter 2)	67
The Just World Hypothesis (Chapter 3)	84
Theories of Gender Differences (Chapter 4)	110
Theories about Space (Chapter 5)	155
Listening to Lying (Chapter 6)	183
The Five Stages of Grief (Chapter 7)	210
Online Communication Theories (Chapter 8)	222
Relationship Commitment (Chapter 9)	249
Love Styles and Personality (Chapter 10)	283
Conflict Styles (Chapter 11)	312
Principles and Strategies of Compliance-Gaining (Chapter 12)	340

Understanding Interpersonal Skills

Mindfulness: A State of Mental Awareness (Chapter 1)	33
Cultural Sensitivity: Responsiveness to Cultural Variation (Chapter 2)	66
Other-Oriented: A Focus on the Other Person and That Person's Perspective (Chapter 3)	98
Metacommunication: The Ability to Talk about Your Talk (Chapter 4)	106
Immediacy: Interpersonal Closeness and Togetherness (Chapter 5)	145
Openness: Willingness to Disclose and Be Honest (Chapter 6)	184
Flexibility: The Ability to Change Communication Patterns to Suit the Situation (Chapter 7)	207
Expressiveness: Communication of Genuine Involvement (Chapter 8)	233
Empathy: Feeling What Another Person Feels from That Person's Point of View (Chapter 9)	264
Supportiveness: Messages That Express Understanding Rather Than Evaluation (Chapter 10)	292
Equality: Attitude and Behavior in Which Each Person Is Treated as Interpersonally Equal (Chapter 11)	316
Interaction Management: The Ability to Carry on an Interpersonal Interaction Smoothly and Effectively (Chapter 12)	329

Ethics in Interpersonal Communication

Culture and Ethics (Chapter 2)	57
The Ethics of Impression Management (Chapter 3)	99

Lying (Chapter 4)	113
Interpersonal Silence (Chapter 5)	150
Ethical Listening (Chapter 6)	179
Motivational Appeals (Chapter 7)	200
The Ethics of Gossip (Chapter 8)	231
Your Obligation to Reveal Yourself (Chapter 9)	253
Relationship Ethics (Chapter 10)	299
Ethical Fighting (Chapter 11)	324
The Ethics of Compliance-Gaining Strategies (Chapter 12)	341

The Cultural Map

Introduction (Chapter 2)	64
Ambiguity Tolerance (Chapter 3)	94
High- and Low-Context Cultures (Chapter 4)	108
Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation (Chapter 5)	160
Politeness (Chapter 6)	185
Indulgent and Restraint Orientation (Chapter 7)	196
Apologies (Chapter 8)	238
Relationship Length (Chapter 9)	265
Masculine and Feminine Orientation (Chapter 10)	279
Success (Chapter 11)	313
High- and Low-Power Distance (Chapter 12)	332

Test Yourself

Your Beliefs about Interpersonal Communication (Chapter 1)	25
Your Cultural Orientation (Chapter 2)	57
Your Self-Esteem (Chapter 3)	81
Your Perception Strategies (Chapter 3)	87
Your Communication Assertiveness (Chapter 4)	113
Your Ability to Distinguishing Facts from Inferences (Chapter 4)	125
Your Accuracy in Estimating Heights (Chapter 5)	138
Your Time Orientation (Chapter 5)	159
Your Listening Habits (Chapter 6)	179
Your Attitudes about Expressing Feelings (Chapter 7)	192
Your Conversational Politeness (Chapter 8)	220
Your Small-Talk Behavior (Chapter 8)	231
Your Relationship Advantages and Disadvantages (Chapter 9)	245
Your Attractiveness Preferences (Chapter 9)	254
Your Love Style (Chapter 10)	281
Your Involvement in Relationship Violence (Chapter 10)	301
Your Interpersonal Conflict Behavior (Chapter 11)	319
Your Interpersonal Power (Chapter 12)	333
Your Credibility (Chapter 12)	336

This page intentionally left blank

Welcome to *The Interpersonal Communication Book*

It's a great privilege to present this fourteenth edition of *The Interpersonal Communication Book*. I've been extremely fortunate to have this luxury. Each revision has enabled me to improve and fine-tune the presentation of interpersonal communication so that it accurately reflects what we know about the subject and is as clear, interesting, involving, and as up-to-date as it can possibly be.

Like its predecessors, this fourteenth edition provides in-depth coverage of interpersonal communication, blending theory and research on one hand and practical skills on the other. The book's philosophical foundation continues to be the concept of *choice*. Choice is central to interpersonal communication (as it is to life in general). As speaker and listener, you're regularly confronted with choice points at every stage of the communication process: *What do I say? When do I say it? How do I say it? Through what channel should I say it?* And so on. The choices you make will determine in large part the effectiveness of your messages and your relationships. The role of this text, then, is threefold: (1) to identify the choices you have available in a vast array of interpersonal situations; (2) to explain the theory and research evidence bearing on these choices—enabling you to identify your available choices and to select more reasoned, more reasonable, and more effective communication choices; and (3) to provide you with the skills needed to communicate your choices effectively.

One new element of choice introduced with the fourteenth edition is how you read and experience *The Interpersonal Communication Book*—and, if in REVEL, on what type of digital device. Available both in REVEL as well as in its traditional print format, the format options of the new edition of *The Interpersonal Communication Book* encourage students to make choices about their own learning style preferences and become more engaged and more involved in the learning process.

What's New in This Fourteenth Edition?

- **New objectives** are presented in the chapter opener, repeated in the text with each major head, and iterated again in the summary. This feature helps focus attention

on the key concepts and principles discussed and how this learning can be demonstrated.

- Throughout the text are **Nutshell summary tables and bullet lists** to help students review the content of the section and fix it more firmly in memory.
- The **Cultural Map** recalls the major cultural differences discussed in Chapter 2 and relates them to the content of the remaining chapters.
- The **Interpersonal Choice Points** now each contain four alternatives that will stimulate discussion on the most effective approach to a variety of interpersonal communication situations.
- **Social media** are given greater attention and are integrated throughout the text in all chapters.
- A great deal of **new research** is integrated throughout the text, much of it from the past five years.

In addition, a variety of changes have been made in each of the chapters. Among the more important are these:

- Chapter 1, Foundations of Interpersonal Communication, now includes an expanded discussion of ethics with an integrated self-test and new discussions of code-switching and strategic ambiguity.
- Chapter 2, Culture and Interpersonal Communication, now includes an interesting table on the metaphors of culture and new discussions of Internet dating and dialect and accent.
- Chapter 3, Perception of the Self and Others in Interpersonal Communication, now includes discussions of the impostor phenomenon and the Pygmalion effect and new material on attacking self-destructive beliefs and social comparisons in social media. In addition, a new table applies communication insights to writing your online profile.
- Chapter 4, Verbal Messages, includes a new principle especially important in this time of social media: Messages Can Be Oonymous or Anonymous.
- Chapter 5, Nonverbal Messages, includes a new time test, a new section on interpersonal time, an integrated exercise on height, a discussion of smiling, and a table offering suggestions for effective time management.

- Chapter 6, *Listening in Interpersonal Communication*, formerly Chapter 4, now includes a new definition of listening and a new section on lie detection.
- Chapter 7, *Emotional Messages*, includes a restructuring of the principles on body and mind, new principles of influences and channels, a new *Understanding Theory & Research* box on the *Five Stages of Grief*, and a new table on emotional expressions.
- Chapter 8, *Conversational Messages*, contains a new section on introducing people and a new table on the handshake. Excuses and apologies are now treated separately.
- Chapter 9, *Interpersonal Relationship Stages, Theories, and Communication*, contains a new table on the causes of relationship deterioration.
- Chapter 10, *Interpersonal Relationship Types*, now includes a discussion of friends with benefits, social networking politeness, and a new love styles text.
- Chapter 11, *Interpersonal Conflict and Conflict Management*, includes a revised conflict model to bring it more in line with the concept of choice, a new principle that conflict can occur in all communication forms, and a new discussion of social allergens.
- Chapter 12, *Interpersonal Power and Influence*, now contains a revised section on bullying (moved from Chapter 10) and an expanded and restructured discussion of power plays.


INTERPERSONAL CHOICE POINT

Misusing Linguistic Privilege

You enter a group of racially similar people who are using terms normally considered offensive to refer to themselves. You too use such terms in an effort to fit in, but you are met with extremely negative nonverbal feedback. What might you say in response to these reactions?

- “Sorry, that was really inappropriate.”
- “Why the negative reaction? You use the term all the time.”
- “Well, I guess I’m not really one of the group. Thanks for letting me know.”
- Say nothing.

VIEWPOINTS CRYING ON THE

JOB  When workers cry on the job, the most frequent reason—for both men and women—is that stress from home spread into the workplace (Kreamer, 2011). What other reasons might account for crying (or wanting to cry) on the job? Will these reasons be different for men and women? How do you evaluate the crying of your male and female coworkers? When might crying be adaptive? When might it be maladaptive?

Features

This text is a complete learning package that will provide you with the opportunity to learn about the research and theory in interpersonal communication and to practice and acquire the skills necessary for effective interpersonal interaction.

Interpersonal Choice Points and ViewPoints

Interpersonal choice points—brief scenarios asking learners to apply the material in the chapter to a specific interaction—appear throughout the text in the margins. These are designed to encourage the application of the research and theory discussed in the text to real-life situations.

ViewPoints appear as captions to the interior photos and ask you to consider a wide variety of issues in interpersonal communication. These are designed to encourage students to explore significant communication issues discussed in the chapter from a more personal point of view.

Balance of Theory/Research and Skills

This text recognizes the practical importance of interpersonal skills and so gives considerable attention to skills. But it bases these skills on theory and research, which are discussed throughout the text. Each chapter also contains an *Understanding Interpersonal Theory & Research* box, which focuses on a specific theory relevant to the chapter contents. The aim of these boxes is simply to encourage learners to focus on a theory of interpersonal communication as a theory. These boxes include *Communication Theories and Research*, *Culture Shock*, *The Just World Hypothesis*, *Listening to Lying*, *Theories of Gender Differences*, *Theories about Space*, *The Five Stages of Grief*, *Online Communication Theories*, *Relationship Commitment*, *Love Styles and Personality*, *Conflict and Gender*, and *Compliance-Gaining Strategies*.

Like theory and research, interpersonal skills are discussed throughout this text. In addition, each chapter contains an *Understanding Interpersonal Skills*

box. These boxes are designed to highlight some of the most important skills of interpersonal communication: Mindfulness, Cultural Sensitivity, Other-Orientation, Openness, Metacommunication, Flexibility, Expressiveness, Empathy, Supportiveness, Equality, and Interaction Management.

Both of these boxes contain a section on “working with” the theories and research and the skills to encourage you to apply what you’re reading about to specific interpersonal interactions.

Understanding Interpersonal Theory & Research

THE FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF

When people experience grief, they normally go through five stages, identified by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross (1969) in *On Death and Dying*. This five-stage model is not necessarily followed by everyone, nor does everyone go through the five stages in neat order—there can be overlap in the stages. One stage doesn’t necessarily end before the next stage occurs. Kubler-Ross developed this model from her work with cancer patients who were confronting their own impending deaths. But it has been applied more widely to anyone experiencing grief, whether because of one’s own illness or because of the illness or death of a loved one.

Stage 1. Denial. When someone close to you dies or is diagnosed with a serious illness, the first reaction is denial. It is a common one nevertheless. Or you might direct your anger at the doctor or hospital for not detecting the illness at a stage when it could have been cured.

Stage 3. Bargaining. For religious people, this stage often takes the form of making a deal with God—perhaps to stop drinking, perhaps to be more generous toward the poor, perhaps to contribute money for some religious purpose. Almost invariably it is a promise to be a better person and to do good works.

Stage 4. Depression. Perhaps the stage you think about most often when you think of grief is depression—for the loss or impending loss of someone you love. Or you might feel that you have been deceived.

Understanding Interpersonal Skills

MINDFULNESS: A STATE OF MENTAL AWARENESS

Mindfulness is a state of mental awareness; in a mindful state, you’re conscious of your reasons for thinking or communicating in a particular way. You’re conscious of the uniqueness of the situation and of the many choices you have for interacting (Beard, 2014). And, especially important in interpersonal communication, you become aware of your choices. You act with an awareness of your available choices.

Its opposite, **mindlessness**, is a lack of conscious awareness of your thinking or communicating (Langer, 1989). To apply interpersonal skills appropriately and effectively, you need to be mindful of the unique communication situation you’re in, of your available communication options or choices, and of the reasons you can

- **Be open to new information and points of view**, even when these contradict your most firmly held stereotypes. New information forces you to reconsider what might be outdated ways of thinking. New information can help you challenge long-held but now inappropriate beliefs and attitudes. Be willing to see your own and others’ behaviors from a variety of viewpoints, especially from the perspective of people very different from yourself.
- **Beware of relying too heavily on first impressions** (Langer, 1989; Beard, 2014). Treat your first impressions as tentative—as hypotheses that need further investigation. Be prepared to revise your initial impressions.

Culture and Interpersonal Communication

As our knowledge of culture and its relevance to interpersonal communication grows, so must culture’s presence in an interpersonal communication textbook and course. The entire text stresses the importance of culture to all aspects of interpersonal communication.

An entire chapter devoted to culture (Chapter 2, Culture and Interpersonal Communication) is presented early in the text as one of the foundation concepts

for understanding interpersonal communication. This chapter covers the relationship of culture and interpersonal communication, the ways in which cultures differ, and ways to make intercultural communication more effective. In addition to this separate chapter, here are some of the more important discussions that appear throughout the text, as well:

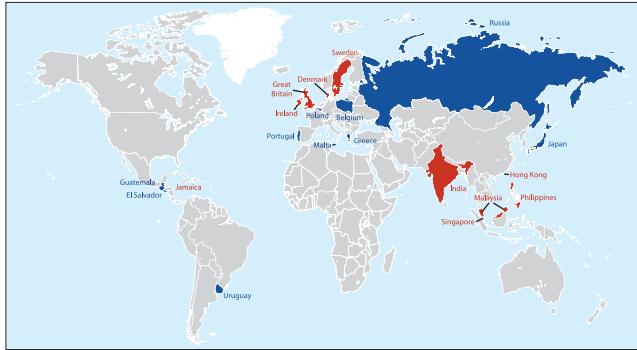
- The cultural dimension of context; culture in complementary and symmetrical relationships, in the principle of adjustment, and in ethical questions (Chapter 1)
- The role of culture in the development of self-concept, accurate perception, implicit personality theory, the self-serving bias, and uncertainty (Chapter 3)
- Listening, culture, and gender (Chapter 4)
- Cultural and gender differences in politeness, directness, and assertiveness; cultural identifiers, sexism, heterosexism, racism, and ageism in language and in listening (Chapter 5)
- Culture and gesture, facial expression, eye communication, color, touch, paralanguage, silence, and time (Chapter 6)
- The influence of culture on emotions; cultural customs as an obstacle to the communication of emotions (Chapter 7)
- Conversational maxims, culture, and gender; culture and expressiveness; the influence of culture on self-disclosure (Chapter 8)
- The influence of culture on interpersonal relationships and the stages of relationships (Chapter 9)
- Cultural differences in friendship; cultural differences in loving; culture and the family (Chapter 10)
- Cultural influences on conflict and conflict management (Chapter 11)
- The cultural dimension of power (Chapter 12)

A new feature, *The Cultural Map*, returns to the basic concepts of cultural differences discussed in Chapter 2 and connects these concepts with the content of the various chapters.

The Cultural Map

AMBIGUITY TOLERANCE

Ambiguity tolerance refers to the degree to which members of a culture are accepting of uncertainty; high-ambiguity tolerant cultures are comfortable with not knowing exactly what will happen next, whereas low-ambiguity tolerant cultures resist uncertainty and, in many cases, are stressed out by it.



In these **high-ambiguity tolerant cultures** (generally, the top 10 countries are highlighted in these cultural maps), uncertainty is considered normal and expected. High ambiguity tolerant people are comfortable in uncertain situations and with unfamiliar tasks and assignments. They are also tolerant of ethnic differences and diversity and are generally positive to foreigners.

In these **low-ambiguity tolerant cultures**, members try to avoid uncertainty, because uncertainty is typically uncomfortable and anxiety provoking for them. Members of these cultures are also more prejudiced toward other ethnic groups and would not be welcoming to immigrants.

How do you feel when an instructor gives an ambiguous assignment? Do you see the lack of specific direction as stressful or as an opportunity to get creative and think of different ways you might approach the assignment?

People with disabilities may also be viewed from a cultural perspective, and in this edition, three special tables offer suggestions for more effective communication between people with and people without disabilities. These tables provide tips for communication between people with and without visual problems (Table 5.4 in Chapter 5); between people with and without hearing deficiencies (Table 6.1 in Chapter 6); and between people with and without speech and language disorders (Table 8.1 in Chapter 8).

Politeness

Politeness in interpersonal communication is stressed throughout this text as one of the major features of effective interaction. Some of the major discussions include politeness strategies for increasing attractiveness, message politeness, polite listening, conversational politeness, politeness theory of relationships, and politeness in conflict management.

Social Media

The ways and means of social media are integrated throughout the text. For example, the principle of anonymity in interpersonal communication is included as a

basic principle because of its increasing importance due to social media. The ubiquity of the cell phone and the accompanying texting has changed interpersonal communication forever and is recognized throughout the text. Likewise, dating, keeping in touch with family and friends, making friends, and engaging in conflict—and much more—is viewed in a world dominated by (not simply a world that includes) social media.

In-Text Application

This text includes a variety of features that encourage interaction and self-exploration.

- **Self-Tests**, appearing throughout the text, encourage you to analyze your own communication behavior and to consider any possible changes that you'd like to make.
- **Interpersonal Choice Points** appearing in the margins encourage you to apply the principles and skills of the text to specific interpersonal situations.
- **ViewPoints** captions encourage you to explore the implications of a variety of communication theories and research findings.
- **Understanding Interpersonal Theory & Research** and **Understanding Interpersonal Skills** boxes contain activities to enable you to actively engage with theories, research, and skills. **Ethics in Interpersonal Communication** boxes present ethical issues and ask what you would do in each of the presented scenarios.

Ethics in Interpersonal Communication

LYING

Lies have ethical implications. In fact, one of the earliest cultural rules children are taught is that lying is wrong. At the same time, children also learn that in some cases lying is effective—in gaining some reward or in avoiding some punishment.

Some prosocial, self-enhancement, and selfish-deception lies are considered ethical (for example, publicly agreeing with someone you really disagree with to enable the person to save face, saying that someone will get well despite medical evidence to the contrary, or simply bragging about your accomplishments). Some lies are considered not only ethical but required (for example, lying to protect someone from harm or telling the proud parents that their child is beautiful). Other lies (largely those in the antisocial category) are considered unethical (for example, lying to defraud investors or to accuse someone falsely).

However, a large group of lies are not that easy to classify as ethical or unethical, as you'll see in the Ethical Choice Points.

ETHICAL CHOICE POINTS

I can't get any other way? For example, would you hurt a colleague's reputation?

In addition, visit **The Communication Blog** (<http://tcbdevito.blogspot.com>). Maintained by the author, this site offers a forum for instructors and students of interpersonal communication as well as hybrid and public speaking courses. Regular posts by the author update the text material and share ideas for teaching.

End of Chapter

Each chapter has a two-part ending: (1) **Summary**, a numbered propositional summary of the major concepts that are discussed in the chapter, organized by major topic headings. Each topic heading also contains the learning objective. (2) **Key Terms**, a list of key terms that are used in the chapter (and included in the “Glossary of Interpersonal Communication Concepts” at the end of the text) and the page number on which the term is introduced.

Summary

This chapter introduced the importance of interpersonal communication, its essential nature, its elements, and some of its major principles.

Why Study Interpersonal Communication

1.1 Identify the potential personal and professional benefits from studying interpersonal communication.

1. Intellectual benefits include a deeper understanding of yourself and others and of relationships.
2. Practical benefits include personal, social or relationship, and professional benefits.

messages are messages that preface other messages and ask that the listener approach future messages in a certain way.

11. Channels are the media through which messages pass and which act as a bridge between source and receiver; for example, the vocal-auditory channel used in speaking or the cutaneous-tactile channel used in touch.
12. Noise is the inevitable physical, physiological, psychological, and semantic interference that distorts messages.
13. Context is the physical, social-psychological, temporal, and cultural environment in which communication takes place.
14. Ethical standards...

Instructor and Student Resources

Key instructor resources include an Instructor’s Manual, TestBank, and PowerPoint Presentation Package. These supplements are available at www.pearsonglobaleditions.com/DeVito (instructor login required). For a complete list of the instructor and student resources available with the text, please visit www.pearsonglobaleditions.com/DeVito.

The screenshot shows the Pearson MediaShare interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'My Courses', and the user's name 'Neal Caffrey, Student'. On the left, a welcome message says 'Welcome to Pearson MediaShare' with the user's profile picture and name 'Neal Caffrey'. The main content area is titled 'MY COURSES' and features a 'Join a Course' button with an 'Enter Course ID' field. Below this, a dropdown menu is set to 'All Courses'. A course titled 'Public Speaking' is expanded, showing its duration as '10/1/2014 - 12/20/2014'. Underneath, an 'ASSIGNMENTS' table is displayed:

Date	Assignment Name	Score
12/14/2014	Introductory Speech	97/100
12/1/2014	Informative Speech	99/100
11/24/2014	Persuasive Speech	99/100

At the bottom, two more courses are listed: 'Interpersonal Communication' (10/12/2014 - 12/10/2014) and 'Introduction to Communication' (11/1/2014 - 12/2/2014).

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 part of MyCommunicationLab.

Acknowledgments

I wish to express my appreciation to the many specialists who carefully reviewed this text. Your comments resulted in a large number of changes; I'm extremely grateful. Thank you:

Nanci Burk, Glendale Community College

Charla Crump, Clarendon College

Amy Edwards, Oxnard College

Linda Heil, Harford Community College

Cynthia Langham, University of Detroit–Mercy

Melissa Martin, Laramie County Community College

Lori Montalbano, Governors State University

Thomas Morra, Northern Virginia Community College

Nancy Tobler, Utah Valley University

A special thank you goes to the members of the speech team and other students at the University of Texas at

Austin, especially Video Project Director Brendan Chan, for their work to create the Interpersonal Communication Choice Point videos: Kevin Chiu, Angelica Davis, Kevin Giffin, Caleb Graves, John Groves, Natalie Groves, Alex Hatoum, Daniel Hatoum, Matthew King, Melissa Lamb, Leah LeFebvre, Christy Liu, Joe Muller, Aviva Pinchas, Chelsea Rodriguez, Tanisha Shang, Emma Wilhelm, and Austin Witherspoon.

In addition, I wish to express my appreciation to the people at Pearson who contributed so heavily to this text, especially Karon Bowers, publisher; Mary Piper Hanson, development editor; Kieran Fleming, editorial assistant; Blair Tuckman, senior field marketing manager; Becky Rowland, product marketing manager; Anne Ricigliano, program manager; Raegan Keida Heerema, project manager; Sue Nodine, Integra-Chicago project editor; and the photo researchers at Lumina. I thank them all for making me—and this book—look good.

Joseph A. DeVito

jadevito@earthlink.net

www.pearsonglobaleditions.com/DeVito

<http://tcbdevito.blogspot.com>

Pearson wishes to thank the following people for their work on the content of the Global Edition:

Contributors:

Vandana Kakar

Reviewers:

Urmishree Bedamatta, Ravenshaw University

Sneha Bhattacharjee

Stefanie A. Stadler, Nanyang Technological University

This page intentionally left blank

The Interpersonal Communication Book

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter 1

Foundations of Interpersonal Communication




Success starts with a strong foundation.

✓	Chapter Objectives
1.1	Identify the potential personal and professional benefits from studying interpersonal communication.
1.2	Define <i>interpersonal communication</i> and explain the nature of interpersonal communication.
1.3	Define the essential elements of interpersonal communication including source-receiver, encoding-decoding, messages, channels, noise, context, and ethics.
1.4	Paraphrase the principles of interpersonal communication.

CHAPTER TOPICS
Why Study Interpersonal Communication
The Nature of Interpersonal Communication
Elements of Interpersonal Communication
Principles of Interpersonal Communication



VIEWPOINTS PARTNER COMMUNICATION  What specific communication skills would you like your life partner to have?

This chapter introduces the study of interpersonal communication and explains why interpersonal communication is so important; it examines the nature of this unique form of communication, its elements, and its principles.

Why Study Interpersonal Communication

1.1 Identify the potential personal and professional benefits from studying interpersonal communication.

Fair questions to ask at the beginning of this text and this course are “What will I get out of this?” and “Why should I study interpersonal communication?” One very clear answer is given by the importance of interpersonal communication: it’s a major part of human existence that every educated person needs to understand. Much as you need to understand history, science, geography, and mathematics, for example, you need to understand how people interact (how people communicate interpersonally)—whether face to face or online.

You’ll find answers to these questions throughout this course and this text; you’ll recognize the situations discussed and the skills suggested as crucial to your personal as well as professional success.

Personal Success

Your personal success and happiness depend largely on your effectiveness as an interpersonal communicator. Close friendships and romantic relationships are developed, maintained, and sometimes destroyed largely through your interpersonal interactions. Likewise, the success of your family relationships depends heavily on the interpersonal communication among members. For example, in a survey of 1,001 people over 18 years of age, 53 percent felt that a lack of effective communication was the major cause of marriage failure—significantly greater than money (38 percent) and in-law interference (14 percent) (How Americans Communicate, 1999).

Likewise, your success in interacting with neighbors, acquaintances, and people you meet every day depends on your ability to engage in satisfying conversation—conversation that’s comfortable and enjoyable.

Professional Success

The ability to communicate interpersonally is widely recognized as crucial to professional success (Morreale & Pearson, 2008). From the initial interview at a college job fair to interning, to participating in and then leading meetings, your skills at interpersonal communication will largely determine your success.

Employers want graduates who can communicate orally and in writing (Berrett, 2013). This ability is even considered more important than job-specific skills, which employers felt could be learned on the job. For example, one study found that among the 23 attributes ranked as “very important” in hiring decisions, “communication and interpersonal skills,” noted by 89 percent of the recruiters, was at the top of the list. This was a far higher percentage of recruiters than the percentage who noted “content of the core curriculum” (34 percent) or “overall value for the money invested in the recruiting effort” (33 percent) (Alsop, 2004). Interpersonal skills offer a “key career advantage for finance professionals in the next century” (Messmer, 1999), play an important role in preventing workplace violence (Parker, 2004), reduce medical mishaps and improve doctor–patient communication (Smith, 2004; Sutcliffe, Lewton, & Rosenthal, 2004), and are one of six

INTERPERSONAL CHOICE POINTS

Throughout this book you’ll find marginal items labeled **Interpersonal Choice Points**. These items present brief scenarios where a decision needs to be made. For each scenario several possible decisions are identified. These are not the only possible choices, just some of them. In some instances all four responses are logical and each may well prove effective. It depends on the specific situation and your own personality and communication style. So, in responding to these ICPs ask yourself which response is likely to work best for you in the specific situation you imagine.

These Choice Points are designed to encourage you to apply the material discussed in the text to specific interpersonal situations by first analyzing your available choices and then making a communication decision. In making your choices, try to identify as specifically as possible your reasons for selecting one choice and rejecting the others; ask yourself, what are the advantages and disadvantages of each choice.

areas that define the professional competence of physicians and trainees (Epstein & Hundert, 2002). In a survey of employers who were asked what colleges should place more emphasis on, 89 percent identified “the ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing” as the highest of any skill listed (Hart Research Associates, 2010). And in that same survey, the largest number of employers (84 percent), when asked what would prepare college students for success, identified “communication skills.” In still another survey of women and leadership, the ability to communicate and to build relationships—the essential of interpersonal communication—were noted among the competencies exemplified by top leaders (*Harvard Business Review*, 2013). The importance of interpersonal communication skills extends over the entire spectrum of professions.

Clearly, interpersonal skills are vital to both personal and professional success. Understanding the theory and research in interpersonal communication and mastering its skills go hand in hand (Greene & Burlison, 2003). The more you know about interpersonal communication, the more insight and knowledge you’ll gain about what works and what doesn’t work. The more skills you have within your arsenal of communication strategies, the greater your choices for communicating in any situation. In a nutshell, the greater your knowledge and the greater the number of communication choices at your disposal, the greater the likelihood that you’ll be successful in achieving your interpersonal goals. This concept of choice figures into many of the principles and skills discussed throughout this text. You might even look at this text and your course as aiming to enlarge your interpersonal communication choices and give you a greater number of options than you had before this exposure to the study of interpersonal communication.

As a preface to an area of study that will be enlightening, exciting, and extremely practical, examine your beliefs about interpersonal communication by responding to the following questions with T if you believe the statement is usually true or F if you believe the statement is usually false.

- ___ 1. Good communicators are born, not made.
- ___ 2. The more you communicate, the better at it you will be.
- ___ 3. In your interpersonal communication, a good guide to follow is to be as open, empathic, and supportive as you can be.
- ___ 4. When communicating with people from other cultures, it’s best to ignore the differences and treat the other person just as you’d treat members of your own culture.
- ___ 5. Fear of meeting new people is detrimental and must be eliminated.
- ___ 6. When there is conflict, your relationship is in trouble.

As you probably figured out, all six statements are generally false. As you read this text, you’ll discover not only why these beliefs are false but also the trouble you can get into when you assume they’re true. For now, and in brief, here are some of the reasons each of the statements is generally false:

- (1) Effective communication is a learned skill; although some people are born brighter or more extroverted, all can improve their abilities and become more effective communicators.
- (2) It’s not the amount of communication people engage in but the quality that matters; if you practice bad habits, you’re more likely to grow less effective than more effective, so it’s important to learn and follow the principles of effectiveness (Greene, 2003; Greene & Burlison, 2003).
- (3) Each interpersonal situation is unique, and therefore the type of communication appropriate in one situation may not be appropriate in another.
- (4) This assumption will probably get you into considerable trouble because people from different cultures often attribute different meanings to a message;

INTERPERSONAL CHOICE POINT

Interpersonal Communication Is Relational

Your supervisor posted a comment on Facebook that you feel is highly objectionable. What will you do in this situation?

- a. Ignore it.
- b. Like the comment on Facebook.
- c. Express your honest opinion and ask her to delete it.
- d. Send her a private message warning her about the consequences of posting such a message.

members of different cultures also follow different rules for what is and is not appropriate in interpersonal communication.

- (5) Many people are nervous meeting new people, especially if these are people in authority; managing, not eliminating, the fear will enable you to become effective regardless of your current level of fear.
- (6) All meaningful relationships experience conflict; relationships are not in trouble when there is conflict, though dealing with conflict ineffectively can often damage the relationship.

The Nature of Interpersonal Communication

1.2 Define *interpersonal communication* and explain the nature of interpersonal communication.

Although this entire text is in a sense a definition of interpersonal communication, a working definition is useful at the start. **Interpersonal communication** is *the verbal and nonverbal interaction between two (or sometimes more than two) interdependent people*. This relatively simple definition implies a variety of characteristics, to which we now turn.

Interpersonal Communication Involves Interdependent Individuals

Interpersonal communication is the communication that takes place between people who are in some way “connected.” Interpersonal communication thus includes what takes place between a son and his father, an employer and an employee, two sisters, a teacher and a student, two lovers, two friends, and so on. Although largely dyadic (two-person) in nature, interpersonal communication is often extended to include small intimate groups such as the family. Even within a family, however, the communication that takes place is often dyadic—mother to child, father to mother, daughter to son, and so on.

Not only are the individuals simply “connected”—they are also interdependent: What one person does has an impact on the other person. The actions of one person have consequences for the other person. In a family, for example, a child’s trouble with the police affects the parents, other siblings, extended family members, and perhaps friends and neighbors.

In much the same way that Facebook may have changed the definition of friendship, it may also have changed the definition of interpersonal communication. Sending a message to your closest 15 friends who then respond to you and the others would be considered interpersonal communication by some theorists and not by others. Online chats and phone and Skype conferences, on the other hand, are also considered interpersonal by some and not by others. Still another issue is the blurring of the lines between what is interpersonal and what is public. When you send a message to a friend on any of the social media sites, that message is, potentially at least, a public message. Although your intended message may be interpersonal—between you and a close friend, say—that message can (and often does) become a public one—between you and people with whom you have absolutely no connection.

Interpersonal Communication Is Inherently Relational

Because of this interdependency, interpersonal communication is inevitably and essentially relational in nature. Interpersonal communication takes place within a relationship—it has an impact on the relationship; it defines the relationship.


The communication that takes place in a relationship is in part a function of that relationship. That is, the way you communicate is determined in great part by the kind of relationship that exists between you and the other person. You interact

differently with your interpersonal communication instructor and your best friend; you interact with a sibling in ways very different from the ways in which you interact with a neighbor, a work colleague, or a casual acquaintance. You interact on Facebook and Twitter in ways very different from the way you interact in a face-to-face situation.

But also notice that the way you communicate, the way you interact, influences the kind of relationship you develop. If you interact with a person in friendly ways, you're likely to develop a friendship. If you regularly exchange hateful and hurtful messages, you're likely to develop an antagonistic relationship. If you regularly express respect and support for each other, a respectful and supportive relationship is likely to develop. This is surely one of the most obvious observations you can make about interpersonal communication. And yet many people seem not to appreciate this very clear relationship between what they say and the relationships that develop (or deteriorate).

At the same time that interpersonal communication is relational, it also says something about you. Regardless of what you say, you are making reference, in some way, to yourself—to who you are and to what you're thinking and feeling, to what you value. Even your "likes" on Facebook, research shows, can reveal, for example, your sexual orientation, age, intelligence, and drug use; and photos—depending on the smile—can communicate your level of personal well-being (Entis, 2013).



VIEWPOINTS INTERPERSONAL METAPHORS  Metaphors are useful for providing different perspectives on communication (Krippendorff, 1993). How would you explain interpersonal communication in terms of metaphors such as a seesaw, a ball game, a television sitcom, or a rubber band?

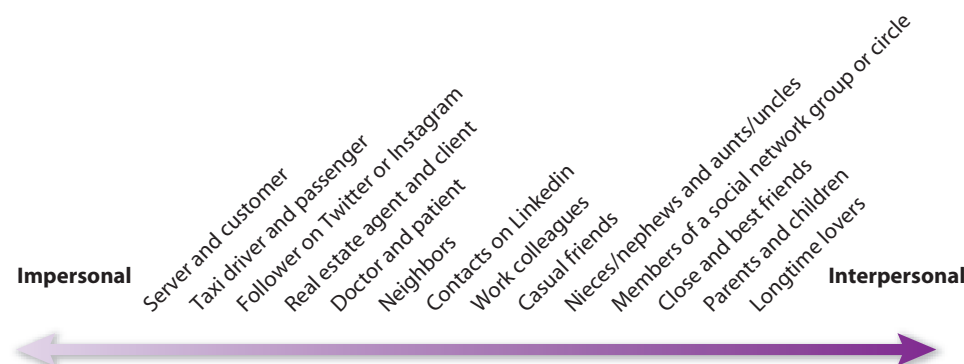
Interpersonal Communication Exists on a Continuum

Interpersonal communication exists along a continuum (see Figure 1.1) that ranges from relatively impersonal to highly personal (Miller, 1978, 1990). At the impersonal end of the spectrum, you have simple conversation between people who really don't know each other—the server and the customer, for example. At the highly personal end is the communication that takes place between people who are intimately interconnected—a father and son, two longtime lovers, or best friends, for example. A few characteristics distinguish the impersonal from the personal forms of communication.

- **Social role versus personal information.** Notice that, in the impersonal example, the individuals are likely to respond to each other according to the *roles* they are currently playing; the server treats the customer not as a unique individual but as one of many customers. And the customer, in turn, acts toward the server not as


Figure 1.1 An Interpersonal Continuum

Here is one possible interpersonal continuum. Other people would position the relationships differently. You may want to try constructing an interpersonal continuum of your own face-to-face and online relationships.





VIEWPOINTS BLOGS, ETC.

 Blogs and social networking websites are among the chief means by which people express themselves interpersonally but also to a broader audience. How would you compare the typical blog post and the typical social networking post in terms of the five purposes of interpersonal communication identified here?

- **Social versus personal messages.** Still another difference is found in the messages exchanged. The messages that the server and customer exchange, for example, are themselves *impersonal*; there is little personal information exchanged and there is little emotional content in the messages they exchange. In the father–son example, however, the messages may run the entire range and may at times be *highly personal*, with lots of personal information and lots of emotion.

a unique individual but as he or she would act with any server. The father and the son, however, react to each other as unique individuals. They act on the basis of *personal information*.

- **Societal versus personal rules.** Notice too that the server and the customer interact according to the *rules of society* governing the server–customer interaction. The father and the son, on the other hand, interact on the basis of *personally established rules*. The way they address each other, their touching behavior, and their degree of physical closeness, for example, are unique to them and are established by them rather than by society.

Interpersonal Communication Involves Verbal and Nonverbal Messages

Interpersonal interaction involves the exchange of both verbal and nonverbal messages. The words you use as well as your facial expressions, your eye contact, and your body posture—in face-to-face interaction—and your online text, photos, and videos send interpersonal messages. Likewise, you receive interpersonal messages through all your senses—hearing, vision, smell, and touch. Even silence sends interpersonal messages. These messages, as you’ll see throughout this course, vary greatly depending on the other factors involved in the interaction. You don’t talk to a best friend in the same way you talk to your college professor or your parents.

One of the great myths in communication is that nonverbal communication accounts for more than 90 percent of the meaning of any message. Actually, it depends. In some situations the nonverbal signals indeed carry more of your meaning than the words you use, perhaps in expressing strong emotions. In other situations, however, the verbal signals communicate more information, for example, when you talk about accounting or science. Most often, of course, they work together.

Interpersonal Communication Takes Place in Varied Forms

Interpersonal communication often takes place face-to-face, as when we talk with other students before class, interact with family or friends over dinner, or trade secrets with intimates. But interpersonal communication also takes place over some kind of computer network, through texting, e-mailing, posting to Facebook, phoning, pinning to Pinterest, and tweeting. Some would argue that online communication is today’s communication platform; others argue that online communication is tomorrow’s communication platform. No one seems to argue that online communication is not here to stay and grow.

In this text, face-to-face communication and online/social media communication are integrated for a number of important reasons:

1. It’s the way we communicate; we interact face-to-face and online. Some interactions are likely exclusively face-to-face, while others are exclusively online. Increasingly, our interactions are with people with whom we communicate both online and offline.
2. Contemporary interpersonal communication can only be understood as a combination of online and offline interaction. The research and theory discussed here on

face-to-face and on online communication inform each other. Most of the interpersonal theories discussed here were developed for face-to-face interaction but have much to say about online relationships as well.

3. It's part of the skill set that employers expect potential employees to have. As already noted, the ability to communicate orally and in writing (and, of course, that includes online and offline) is consistently ranked among the most important qualities employers are looking for.
4. Both forms of communication are vital to developing, maintaining, and even dissolving relationships. More and more relationships are started and maintained online, with many of them moving to face-to-face interactions if the online interaction proves satisfying.
5. Both forms of communication are important to your achieving your goals. For example, your employability will depend, in great part, on how effectively you communicate in your e-mails, in your phone conferences, in your Skype interviews, and in your in-person interviews. Social networking recruiting is perhaps the major means used to hire new employees (Bersin, 2013).

Table 1.1 identifies some of the major similarities and differences between face-to-face and computer-mediated communication.

Interpersonal Communication Involves Choices

The interpersonal messages that you communicate are the result of choices you make. Many times you don't think of what you say or don't say as involving a choice—it seems so automatic that you don't think of it as under conscious control. At other times, the notion of choice is paramount in your mind—do you admit your love openly, and if so where and when do you do it? What do you say when you face the job interviewer?

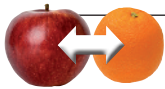


Table 1.1 Face-to-Face and Computer-Mediated Communication

Throughout this text, face-to-face and computer-mediated communication are discussed, compared, and contrasted. Here is a brief summary of some communication concepts and some of the ways in which these two forms of communication are similar and different.

Human Communication Element	Face-to-Face Communication	Computer-Mediated Communication
Sender <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of self and impression management • Speaking turn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal characteristics (sex, approximate age, race, etc.) are open to visual inspection; receiver controls the order of what is attended to; disguise is difficult. • You compete for the speaker's turn and time with the other person(s); you can be interrupted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal characteristics are hidden and are revealed when you want to reveal them; anonymity is easy. • It's always your turn; speaker time is unlimited; you can't be interrupted.
Receiver <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number • Opportunity for interaction • Third parties • Impression formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or a few who are in your visual field. • Limited to those who have the opportunity to meet; often difficult to find people who share your interests. • Messages can be overheard by or repeated to third parties but not with complete accuracy. • Impressions are based on the verbal and nonverbal cues the receiver perceives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtually unlimited. • Unlimited. • Messages can be retrieved by others or forwarded verbatim to a third party or to thousands. • Impressions are based on text messages and posted photos and videos.
Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical • Temporal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essentially the same physical space. • Communication is synchronous; messages are exchanged at the same (real) time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be in the next cubicle or separated by miles. • Communication may be synchronous (as in chat rooms) or asynchronous (where messages are exchanged at different times, as in e-mail).
Channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All senses participate in sending and receiving messages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual (for text, photos, and videos) and auditory.
Message <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal and nonverbal • Permanence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words, gestures, eye contact, accent, vocal cues, spatial relationships, touching, clothing, hair, etc. • Temporary unless recorded; speech signals fade rapidly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words, photos, videos, and audio messages. • Messages are relatively permanent.



In a Nutshell Interpersonal communication

- Involves interdependent individuals; the individuals are connected in some way
- Is inherently relational
- Exists on a continuum
- Involves verbal and nonverbal messages
- Takes place in varied forms
- Involves choice making

Look at it this way: throughout your interpersonal life and in each interpersonal interaction, you're presented with **choice points**—moments when you have to make a choice about whom you communicate with, what you say, what you don't say, how you phrase what you want to say, and so on. This course and this text aim to give you reasons (grounded in communication theory and research discussed throughout the text and highlighted in the Understanding Interpersonal Theory & Research boxes) for the varied choices you'll be called upon to make in your interpersonal interactions. The course and text also aim to give you the skills you'll need to execute these well-reasoned choices (many of which are written into the text and some of which are highlighted in the Understanding Interpersonal Skills boxes).

Elements of Interpersonal Communication

1.3 Define the essential elements of interpersonal communication including source-receiver, encoding-decoding, messages, channels, noise, context, and ethics.

The model presented in Figure 1.2 is designed to reflect the circular nature of interpersonal communication; both persons send messages simultaneously rather than in a linear sequence, where communication goes from person 1 to person 2 to person 1 to person 2 and on and on.

Each of the concepts identified in the model and discussed here may be thought of as a universal of interpersonal communication in that it is present in all interpersonal interactions: (1) source–receiver (including competence, encoding–decoding, and code-switching), (2) messages (and the metamessages of feedback and feedforward), (3) channels, (4) noise, (5) contexts, and (6) ethics (though not indicated in the diagram but an overriding consideration in all interpersonal communication).

Source–Receiver

Interpersonal communication involves at least two people. Each individual performs source functions (formulates and sends messages) and also performs receiver functions (perceives and comprehends messages). The term **source–receiver** emphasizes that both functions are performed by each individual in interpersonal communication. This, of course, does not mean that people serve these functions equally. As you've no doubt witnessed, some people are (primarily) talkers and some people are (primarily) listeners. And some people talk largely about themselves and others participate more in the give and take of communication. In an interesting analysis of Twitter messages, two major types of users were identified (Bersin, 2013; Dean, 2010a):

- *informers* were those who shared information and also replied to others; these made up about 20 percent.
- *meformers* were those who mainly gave out information about themselves; these made up about 80 percent.