**Instructor Resources for Chapter One**

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### Chapter Outline

Opening scenario: From Fans to Friends to Collaborators

1. Why We Communicate

a. Communication meets physical needs.

b. Communication meets relational needs.

c. Communication fills identity needs.

d. Communication meets spiritual needs.

e. Communication serves instrumental needs.

Learn It, Apply it, Reflect on It

1. The Nature of Communication
   1. Three models of human communication

i. Communication as action

ii. Communication as interaction

iii. Communication as transaction

iv. Assessing the models

* 1. Six characteristics of communication

i. Communication relies on multiple channels.

ii. Communication passes through perceptual filters.

iii. People give communication its meaning.

iv. Communication has literal meanings and relational implications.

v. Communication sends a message, whether intentional or unintentional.

vi. Communication is governed by rules.

* 1. Dispelling some communication myths

i. Myth #1: Everyone is an expert in communication.

ii. Myth #2: Communication will solve any problem.

iii. Myth #3: Communication can break down.

iv. Myth #4: Communication is inherently good.

v. Myth #5: More communication is always better.

Learn it, Apply it, Reflect on it

1. How We Communicate Interpersonally

a. Characteristics of interpersonal communication

i. Interpersonal communication occurs between two people.

ii. Interpersonal communication occurs within a relationship.

iii. Interpersonal communication evolves within relationships.

iv. Interpersonal communication negotiates and defines relationships.

1. Why interpersonal communication matters

i. Interpersonal communication is pervasive.

ii. Interpersonal communication can improve our relationships.

iii. Interpersonal communication can improve our health.

Learn It, Apply it, Reflect on It

1. Building Your Communication Competence

a. What communicating competently involves

i. Communicatively effectively

ii. Communicatively appropriately

b. Characteristics of competent communicators

i. Self-awareness

ii. Adaptability

iii. Empathy

iv. Cognitive complexity

v. Ethics

1. Competent online communication

i. Beware of the potential for misunderstanding.

ii. Presume that everything is permanent and nothing is secret.

iii. Avoid communicating in anger.

Learn It, Apply it, Reflect on It

In-Text Boxes

a. Table 1: Life online: Communicating in cyberspace

b. At a Glance: Five needs served by communication

c. Got Skills? Relational dimension of communication

d. Communication/Dark Side: Smart phones versus face-to-face communication

e. Fact or Fiction? The Internet makes us happier

f. Assess Your Skills: Are you a high self-monitor?

g. Got Skills? Empathy

h. At a Glance: Five characteristics of competent communicators

### Key Terms

channel

channel-lean context

channel-rich context

cognitive complexity

communication competence

content dimension

context

decode

dyad

empathy

encode

ethics

explicit rule

feedback

implicit rule

instrumental needs

interpersonal communication

intrapersonal communication

mass communication

message

metacommunication

model

noise

receiver

relational dimension

self-monitoring

small group communication

source

stigma

symbol

**Definitions for Key Terms**

channel: a pathway through which messages are conveyed

channel-lean context: communication context involving few channels at once

channel-rich context: communication context involving many channels at once

cognitive complexity: ability to understand a given situation in multiple ways

communication competence: communication in ways that are effective and appropriate for a given situation

content dimension: literal information that is communicated by a message

context: the physical or psychological environment in which communication occurs

decode: to interpret or give meaning to a message

dyad: a pair of people

empathy: ability to think and feel as others do

encode: to put an idea into language or gesture

ethics: a code of morality or a set of ideas about what is right

explicit rule: a rule about behavior that has been clearly articulated

feedback: verbal and nonverbal responses to a message

implicit rule: a rule about behavior that has not been clearly articulated but is nonetheless understood

instrumental needs: practical, everyday needs

interpersonal communication: communication that occurs between two people within the context of their relationship and that, as it evolves, helps them to negotiate and define their relationship

intrapersonal communication: communication with oneself

mass communication: communication from one source to a large audience

message: verbal and nonverbal elements of communication to which people give meaning

metacommunication: communication about communication

model: a formal description of a process

noise: anything that interferes with the encoding or decoding of a message

receiver: the party who interprets a message

relational dimension: signals about the relationship in which a message is being communicated

self-monitoring: awareness of one’s behavior and how it affects others

small group communication: communication occurring within small groups of three or more people

source: the originator of a thought or idea

stigma: a characteristic that discredits a person, making him or her be seen as abnormal or undesirable

symbol: a representation of an idea

**Discussion Questions**

* In what ways do we negotiate our own identities through communication? How do we do that as individuals? As families? As societies?
* Of all the various needs served by communication, which ones do you attend to the most? How often do you feel you are trying to meet more than one need at once?
* Why do you suppose communication scholars prefer the transaction model? Do you think the model is sufficiently complex to describe the communication process? Is it too complex?
* Suppose your mom says to you, “I love it when you call me.” What are some ways you could describe the relational dimension of that message?
* Implicit communication rules are never taught or verbalized yet people seem to know and follow them anyway. How do you think we learn implicit rules?
* People often mistakenly believe that more communication, or better communication, will solve any problem. What are some relational problems that cannot be solved by more or better communication?
* How does a relationship get negotiated and defined by interpersonal communication? In what ways are relationships being constantly negotiated?
* Why is it important to communicate ethically, when people often have such different ideas about ethics?
* What are some of the unique pitfalls associated with online communication? How does a competent online communicator avoid these pitfalls?

### Additional Resources

**Classic Sources**

* + McCroskey, J. C., Daly, J. A., Martin, M. M., & Beatty, M. J. (Eds.) (1998). *Communication and personality: Trait perspectives*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
  + Shimanoff, S. B. (1980). *Communication rules: Theory and research*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
  + Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J. H., & Jackson, D. D. (1967). *The pragmatics of human communication*. New York, NY: Norton.

**Contemporary Sources**

* + Braithwaite, D. O., & Schrodt, P. (Eds.). (2014). *Engaging theories in interpersonal communication: Multiple perspectives* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
  + Cupach, W. R., & Spitzberg, B. H. (2010). *The dark side of close relationships II*. New York, NY: Routledge.
  + Knapp, M. L., & Daly, J. A. (Eds.) (2012). *Handbook of interpersonal communication* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

**Learning Objectives in Connect for Interpersonal Communication**

Why We Communicate

* Distinguish physical, relational, identity, spiritual, and instrumental needs met by communication.
* Describe the importance of human contact.
* Describe the relationship between social interaction and health.
* Define stigma.
* Illustrate the different types of relational needs.
* Summarize how communication meets relational needs.
* Identify the predictors of happiness in life.
* Compare and contrast relational and identity needs of communication.
* Illustrate how communication fills identity needs.
* Describe how individuals form an identity.
* Explain how others’ treatment of you affects how you view yourself.
* Define spirituality.
* Recall the importance of spiritual needs in the lives of college students.
* Summarize how communication meets spiritual needs.
* Define instrumental needs.
* Identify the characteristics of instrumental needs.
* Describe the two important reasons for meeting instrumental needs.

The Nature of Communication

* Define what is meant by a communication model.
* Define the action model of communication.
* Define the source in a communication model.
* Explain how to encode a message in a communication model.
* Define a channel in a communication model.
* Explain how receivers decode a message in a communication model.
* Explain what noise is in a communication model.
* Identify the major types of noise.
* Identify a criticism of the action model of communication.
* Explain the interaction model of communication.
* Define feedback.
* Explain how context affects communication.
* Recognize the limitations of the interaction model.
* Illustrate the major components of the transaction model of communication.
* Recognize the components of the transaction model that allow it to better reflect the complexity of communication.
* Demonstrate the utility of each model in differing situations.
* Compare and contrast the action, interaction, and transactional models of communication.
* Recognize that communication relies on multiple channels.
* Distinguish between channel-lean and channel-rich contexts.
* Explain what it means for communication to pass through perceptual filters.
* Describe how perceptual filters can influence the meaning people give words.
* Recognize the symbolic nature of words.
* Understand that words do not inherently have meaning; people give them their meaning.
* Compare and contrast the content and relational dimensions of communication.
* Evaluate communication messages to discern their relational dimensions.
* Describe metacommunication.
* Recognize that messages may be intentional or unintentional.
* Define explicit communication rules.
* Define implicit communication rules.
* Recall the six characteristics of communication.
* Recall that experience in communication does not equal expertise.
* Remember that communication will not solve every problem.
* Understand what is meant by the communication myth, “Communication can break down.”
* Recognize that communication is neither inherently good nor bad.
* Explain how the use of mobile phones influences face-to-face interaction.
* Explain that more communication is not always better.

How We Communicate Interpersonally

* Define interpersonal communication.
* Define intrapersonal communication.
* Distinguish between intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, and mass communication.
* Define dyad.
* Analyze interpersonal relationships.
* Explain how interpersonal communication evolves within relationships.
* Recall how interpersonal communication negotiates and defines relationships.
* Describe the importance of interpersonal communication.
* Identify the three reasons that interpersonal communication matters to people.

Building Your Communication Competence

* Define communication competence.
* Identify elements of effective communication.
* Identify elements of appropriate communication.
* Recall the cultural influences on appropriate communication.
* Recognize the characteristics of competent communicators.
* Describe communication that demonstrates self-awareness.
* Define self-monitoring.
* Explain adaptable communication.
* Define empathy.
* Explain empathic communication.
* Define and explain cognitive complexity.
* Discriminate between high and low self-monitors.
* Define ethics.
* Explain ethical communication.
* Describe the factors that contribute to competent online communication.
* Describe the guidelines for competent online communication when using channel-lean media.
* Describe why it is important to consider the intended and unintended audience when communicating online.
* Explain how competent communicators avoid communicating anger online.

**In-Class Exercises**

**In-Class Exercise A: Communicating Under Constraints**

1. This exercise, which doubles as a mixer, emphasizes students’ abilities to communicate creatively under imposed constraints. The exercise works best in smaller classes (20–30 students) or breakout sections.
2. Photocopy the pages below consisting of pairs of words, then cut along the lines to create slips of paper, each containing one word. Make sure you have two slips of paper with each word. Fold the slips once, put them in a bowl or a small box, and have each student draw out one slip. Students should be told to keep their slips folded in their hands and out of the view of other students. If you have an odd number of students, make an extra copy of one of the word slips (so there are three slips with that word, instead of two).
3. The object of the exercise is for students to mix and for each student to locate the other student in the class whose word is the same as his or hers. To do so, however, students must operate under certain communication constraints. Several variants are possible—you can choose one, or make up one of your own. If you have time, you can even stop the exercise every 2–3 minutes and change the constraint.
4. Here are a few options for constraints: (1) when encountering each other, students can only ask two questions and they must be questions that can only be answered with a number; (2) students are restricted to using facial expressions to communicate with each other; (3) when encountering each other, students are allowed to speak one word only, which cannot be the word on their sheet; (4) students are permitted only to “mouth” words to each other, with no use of voice or whispering. You may be able to think of additional constraints or variants on these.
5. Once two students with the same word have located each other, they should exchange some basic introductory information about each other (e.g., where they are from, what their interests are).
6. At the end of the exercise (once all pairs have located each other or at the end of a specified period of time), encourage students to talk about the experience. Specifically, ask them to explain how they overcame whatever constraint(s) you imposed. You might even give rewards for the most creative solutions (e.g., if limited to asking questions that must be answered by a number, a clever student might say “If your word is ‘giraffe,’ say ‘one,’ otherwise say ‘two’”). As part of the discussion, you could have students introduce their partners to the class.

*Word Pairs*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Captain** | **Captain** |
| **Mallet** | **Mallet** |
| **Active** | **Active** |
| **Spider** | **Spider** |
| **Rotate** | **Rotate** |
| **Turkey** | **Turkey** |
| **Fancy** | **Fancy** |
| **Corvette** | **Corvette** |
| **Gladly** | **Gladly** |
| **Silver** | **Silver** |
| **Paper** | **Paper** |
| **Working** | **Working** |
| **Sandy** | **Sandy** |
| **Checker** | **Checker** |
| **Turtle** | **Turtle** |
| **Tipsy** | **Tipsy** |
| **Older** | **Older** |
| **April** | **April** |
| **Perfume** | **Perfume** |
| **Moody** | **Moody** |
| **Tapping** | **Tapping** |
| **Reveal** | **Reveal** |
| **Friction** | **Friction** |
| **Baking** | **Baking** |
| **Glider** | **Glider** |
| **Ugly** | **Ugly** |

**In-Class Exercise B: Letters Home**

1. This exercise, which is adapted from Keith (1999), focuses on students’ abilities to explain course principles in ways that are understandable to those outside the course. It can be used once or multiple times throughout the semester.
2. For the exercise, students are instructed to write a letter to someone they know (e.g., a parent, sibling, friend, romantic partner) who is not also taking the class. In the letter, students should explain, reflect on, and react to the material currently being covered in the course. You can either direct students to write about specific topics or allow them to choose their own. Emphasize that the letters are to be written in the students’ own words and communication style and should not be a simple reiteration of their class notes. They should talk about what they found interesting in the course material, what new things they are learning about themselves, etc.
3. You can grade the letters both on form (punctuation, grammar) and content (understanding of material, depth of reflection). Reading the letters can also give you, as the instructor, a good idea of what your students are finding interesting and how well they comprehend the material. Assigning the letters not long before an exam might serve the additional task of helping students to review.
4. One option is to have students submit two copies of each letter, one with a stamped envelope addressed to the person to whom the student wrote. You could then add a cover letter explaining the purpose of the assignment and mail the letter to the addressee. Keith (1999) notes that when he has done this, he has occasionally received replies from the recipients and that these replies are invariably positive.

[*Source*: Keith, K. D. (1999). Letters home: Writing for understanding in introductory psychology. In L. T. Benjamin, B. F. Nodine, R. M. Ernst, & C. B. Broeker (Eds.), *Activities handbook for the teaching of psychology* (Vol. 4, pp. 30–32). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.]

**Out-of-Class Exercises**

**Out-of-Class Exercise A: The Role of Communication in Relationship Challenges**

1. In this exercise, students conduct interviews of their relatives, friends, and coworkers, and construct a model of significant challenges in personal relationships. The objects of the exercise are for students to (1) create categories of relational challenges, (2) determine which challenges are communicative and which are not, and (3) offer speculation about the role of communication in dealing with some relational challenges. This exercise can be done individually, in pairs, or in small groups.
2. Each student (or pair, or team) should begin by identifying a list of acquaintances to be interviewed. The list should include some family members, some friends, some coworkers or classmates, and some casual acquaintances. You can determine how many interviews each student should conduct.
3. The primary purpose of each interview is to elicit the interviewee’s opinions about the most substantial challenges to the success or stability of personal relationships. The term “relationships” should be understood to be inclusive of all relational forms, although some challenges (e.g., sexual infidelity) will be more relevant to certain relationship types than others. Essentially, each interviewee should be asked for his or her ideas about what the biggest problems in interpersonal relationships are. Students should be instructed not to prompt interviewees to think specifically of *communicative* problems.
4. Students should take notes during each interview (or, with permission of the interviewees, record the interviews). Afterward, they should construct a master list of all of the relationship challenges identified in their interviews, and then group the challenges into categories. (How many categories, and how conceptually broad or narrow they are, should be left to students to decide.) In the form of a paper or a poster presentation, students should: (1) graphically represent their model or category scheme of relationship challenges, and (2) offer insight as to the role of interpersonal communication in dealing with each set of challenges, if communication is relevant at all.
5. You can use this exercise to stimulate discussion regarding how communication can be used to improve relationships and the ways in which communication is limited (e.g., not every relational problem can be solved with more or better communication).

**Out-of-Class Exercise B: Perceptual Filters**

1. In this simple exercise, students will evaluate and respond to segments of text that are attributed to dramatically different sources. The exercise can be done using paper and pencil materials or via e-mail. The point of the exercise is to illustrate how much students’ perceptions of the source of a message influence their evaluation of the message itself.
2. Below are paragraphs of text. Each paragraph contains a message that is provocative in content but ambiguous in terms of its source. You should select one or more of these paragraphs to use in the exercise; alternatively, you might write similar paragraphs about issues that are contentious for your students.
3. Each paragraph in the exercise has four potential sources associated with it. For example, that paragraph about the social evils of the Internet can be attributed to: (1) a sociology professor who is a recognized authority on the topic; 2) a stay-at-home mother of three; (3) a conservative, religious television personality; or (4) the CEO of a dot-com company.
4. Divide your class into four groups, and give each group the same paragraph (either on paper or via email) but attributed to a different source. You can use as many paragraphs as you want, so long as each group of students sees the paragraph attributed to a different source. However, you should make it clear to students that the purpose of the activity is to evaluate the paragraphs themselves—do not remark on the source of the messages at all (and do not indicate to students that they are in different groups receiving paragraphs attributed to different sources).
5. Give each student a copy of the set of semantic differential scales for evaluating the logic, credibility, and persuasiveness of each paragraph. Have students complete these scales after reading each paragraph. You might also ask them to make notes about the paragraph’s impact, their subjective reactions to it, and so on.
6. Have students submit their evaluations to you, and then you can compile them and compare them across groups. If you are a quantitative researcher, you might actually compare the scores from the semantic differential scales across groups to see if a given paragraph is judged more favorably when attributed to one source than another. Even without statistical analysis, however, you will be able to gain a sense of group differences by looking at students’ scores on the semantic differential scales and by reading their comments. Some comments may implicate the source (e.g., “Obviously a conservative religious leader is going to be against the Internet”), but others may not.
7. After running the exercise and looking at the results, report the results to your class and use them to generate discussion about how your students evaluated the same message differently when attributed to different sources. This illustrates the concept of perceptual filters.

*Perception Paragraphs*

Note to instructor: These are example paragraphs, and you may choose to develop one of your own for use in the exercise. It is important that the paragraph take a position on a somewhat controversial issue so that there is room for disagreement and the qualifications of the person to whom the paragraph is attributed may be relevant. It is also important that the sources represent diverse backgrounds.

Example 1

The Internet is a wolf in sheep’s clothing. No matter how much we accept it as part of our daily lives, it single-handedly has corrupted our youth through easy access to sexually explicit material and detailed instructions for building and using weapons. When a 6-year-old can log onto a pornographic website, there is something seriously wrong with our society.

*Sources*:

Terrell Wright, PhD, a sociology professor and Internet expert

Denise Ford, a stay-at-home mother of three

Lindsey Allen, pastor of a large conservative Southern church

Blake Timmins, CEO of Web Solutions, Inc.

Example 2

A government-run health-care plan sounds like a great idea. “Free health care for all!” In reality, it would be a disaster. I defy you to name *one thing* that the government does better than private industry. When the government ran the telephone industry, phone service was extremely expensive and it was illegal to use an answering machine. Today, telephones and service are more economical than ever. Right now, the postal service is in massive debt and is closing post offices left and right because private couriers like FedEx and UPS deliver better service at a better price. Anyone who believes a government-run health-care system would be better than one run by private industry has a pretty short memory.

*Sources*:

Chris Jacobsen, MD, a primary care physician in private practice

Rene Ashford, author of *It’s Time for a New Government*

Claire Costello, president of Americans for Health Reform

Donna Guest, actress and singer

Example 3

The right to privacy is something many Americans hold dear—so much so that a sizeable percentage of Americans believe the U.S. Constitution gives them this right. Curiously enough, a sizeable percentage of those people have never actually read the Constitution. Not only is the right to privacy never guaranteed in the Constitution or the Bill or Rights, neither document even so much as *mentions* it. They only reason Americans believe they have a right to privacy is that they think they should…not because they actually do.

*Sources*:

Merrill Hall, local president of the Young Republicans National Federation

Hon. Richard Craig, federal district court judge

Audrey Cunningham, arts critic for a large metropolitan newspaper

Kurt Simmins, chief of staff to a democratic U.S. Senator from California

*Self-Report Scales*

After reading the paragraph you have been assigned, indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements by circling the number that best represents your position. Higher numbers indicate stronger agreement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Strongly Strongly  Disagree Agree |
| I agree with the argument being presented. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| The paragraph takes a logical and thought-out position. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| Most reasonable people would agree with these arguments. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| I find this paragraph to be very persuasive. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| This paragraph presents highly credible arguments. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| I support what this paragraph says. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |

Take a moment now to jot down an answer or two to each of the following questions:

1. Why do you agree or disagree with what this paragraph says?

2. What do you find most appealing or most troublesome about the argument in this paragraph?