

A First Look at Interpersonal Relationships

Chapter Summary

- Why We Communicate
- The Process of Communication
- Principles and Misconceptions
- The Nature of Interpersonal Communication
- Communicating About Relationships

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Why We Communicate

Four Basic Needs

- Physical Needs
- Identity Needs
- Social Needs
- Practical Goals

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Why We Communicate

Physical Needs

- Four times more likely to catch the common cold
- More likely to die prematurely
- Cancer risk is greater for those who are divorced when compared to their married counterparts
- Quantity of contact varies from person to person

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Why We Communicate

^ Identity Needs

- Our sense of identity comes from interaction with others
- Acting human is something we learn
- Messages impact and shape our self concept

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Why We Communicate

^ Social Needs

- Communication helps us satisfy our basic social needs
- Research suggests a strong link between effective communication and happiness
- In one survey respondents admitted knowing more about their dogs than they did about their neighbor's background

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Why We Communicate

^ Practical Goals

- Satisfying **Instrumental Goals**
 - Basic v. Complicated Goals
- Communication skills and finding a job
 - Communication skills ranked higher than technical competence, work experience and specific degree earned.
- Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
 - Physical, safety, social, esteem and actualization needs.

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The Process of Communication

^ A Linear View

- Communication is "done to" the receiver

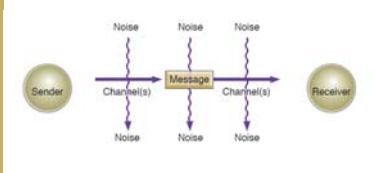


FIGURE 1.1
Linear Communication Model
Page 9

Chapter 1

7

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The Process of Communication

^ The Linear View

- Linear View is simplistic
- Represents methodology of television and radio
- Individuals do not take turns sending messages, they're sent simultaneously

Chapter 1

8

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The Process of Communication

^ A Transactional View

- Communication is uniquely a human process

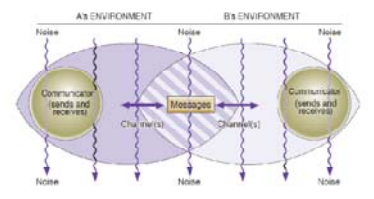


FIGURE 1.2
Transactional
Communication Model
Page 10

Chapter 1

9

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The Process of Communication

▲ The Transactional View

- Sender/Receiver becomes Communicator
- Communicators occupy different **Environments**
- Channels retain a significant role
 - Phone, email, letters, etc.
- Internal vs. External noise

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Principles & Misconceptions

▲ Principles

- Communication can be Intentional or Unintentional
 - Someone may unintentionally overhear you
 - Nonverbal messages may send an unintentional/undesired message
- It's impossible not to communicate
 - Both intentional and unintentional communication sends a message

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Principles & Misconceptions

▲ Principles

- Communication is irreversible and unrepeatable
 - Meaning is assigned by the receiver
 - Further explanation may clarify a message but can never "unsend" or "unreceive" it
- Communication works on two levels
 - Content dimension and relational dimension

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Principles & Misconceptions

▲ Misconceptions

- Meanings are not in words
 - Meaning is assigned by the receiver
 - The message sent is not the message received
 - Saying something is not the same as communicating it
- Communication and shared understanding
 - Ambiguity can be used to spare a friend's feelings
 - Honesty and Clarity could lead to unnecessary conflict

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Principles & Misconceptions

▲ Misconceptions

- More communication is not always better
 - Too much discussion can be unproductive
 - Negative communication leads to more negativity
- A person or event does not cause another's reaction
 - Meaning is assigned by the receiver
 - Depending on how a message is received, reactions will vary
 - Communication will not solve every problem

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Nature of Interpersonal Communication

▲ Two Views

- Quantitative
 - Dyadic Communication
 - Interaction between two people is considered interpersonal communication but a speaker and group is not
- Qualitative
 - Occurs when we treat others as unique individuals
 - Qualitative relationships are governed by unique rules and roles

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Nature of Interpersonal Communication

Technology

- Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)
 - Instant Messaging, bogging and telephonic text messages
 - CMC can enrich social networks
 - Text-only messages may bring people closer by minimizing misconceptions
 - CMC is not a replacement for face-to-face communication
 - Some people are more comfortable communicating electronically

Chapter 1

16

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Communicating About Relationships

Relational Messages

- Affinity
 - Degree to which we appreciate one another
- Immediacy
 - Degree of Interest
- Respect
 - Deals with esteem as apposed to affection
- Control
 - Degree of power and influence

Chapter 1

17

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Communicating About Relationships

Communication Competence

- Competence is situational
 - What works in one situation will not always work in another
- Competence is relational
 - Competence is subjective depending on who you're communicating with
- Competence can be learned
 - While heredity does play a part in competence it can be influenced through education and study

Chapter 1

18

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Communicating About Relationships

Communication Competence

- Practice Your Skills

FIGURE 1.3
Stages in Learning Communication
Page 31

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Communicating About Relationships

Communication Competence

- Cognitive Complexity
 - The ability to construct multiple scenarios for viewing an issue
- Empathy
 - Experiencing another's situation
- Self-Monitoring
 - Paying close attention to your own behaviors
- Commitment
 - People who care communicate more effectively

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Communicating About Relationships

Intercultural Competence

- Intercultural Society
 - Hispanic and Asian pops will triple over the next 50 years
- Intercultural Economy
 - 8 of the leading chemical companies are based outside the US
 - 9 of the leading banks are based outside of the US
 - All leading construction companies are based outside of the US
- Co-Cultures
 - Age, race/ethnicity, occupation, sexual orientation, physical disability and religion.

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Communicating About Relationships

↗ Intercultural Competence

- Motivation
 - The desire to communicate with different cultures
- Tolerance for ambiguity
 - Communicating from different backgrounds can be confusing
- Open-mindedness
 - Avoid viewing others' communication choices as wrong
- Knowledge and Skill
 - Educate, practice and participate

Chapter 1

22

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Chapter 1

23

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