

## Chapter 1 Outline

(Italicized words are key words)

- I. *Interpersonal communication* is the complex process through which people express, interpret, and coordinate messages in order to create shared meaning, meet social goals, manage personal identity, and carry out their relationships.
  - A. Interpersonal communication involves the exchange of *messages*, which is a performance that uses words, sentences, and/or nonverbal behavior to convey the thoughts, feelings, and intentions of the speaker.
    1. The process of choosing the words, sentences, and nonverbal behaviors to form a message is called *encoding*.
    2. *Decoding* is the process of interpreting the messages received from others.
  - B. *Canned plans* are mental library of scripts to draw on when creating certain types of messages and that informs an understanding of what others say, whereas a *script* is the text that instructs you what to say and do in a specific situation.
- II. Interpersonal communication is a *process*, or a systematic series of actions that leads to an outcome.
  - A. *Message production* is the actions performed when sending a message.
  - B. *Message interpretation* is the activities those listening to the message perform to understand what the speaker intends.
  - C. *Interaction coordination* is the activities participants perform to adjust their behavior to that of their partner.
- III. The purposes of interpersonal communication include: share meaning, meet social goals, manage personal identity, and conduct relationships.
  - A. *Meaning* is the significance that the **sender** (speaker) and the **receiver** (listener) each attach to a message, and *shared meaning* occurs when the receiver's interpretation of the message is similar to what the speaker thought, felt, and intended.
    1. The *communication setting* is the background conditions surrounding an interaction.
      - a. *Physical context* is the location where the messages are exchanged.
      - b. *Social context* is the type of relationship that exists between the participants.
      - c. *Historical context* influences understanding of current communication by providing the background of previous communication between participants.
      - d. *Psychological context* includes the moods and feelings of each participant.
      - e. *Cultural context* is the set of beliefs, values, and attitudes that belong to a specific culture and are brought by each participant into an encounter.
    2. *Noise* is any stimulus that interferes with shared meaning; there are three types of noise.

- a. *External noises* are sights, sounds, or other stimuli that draw attention away from the intended meaning.
  - b. *Internal noises* are thoughts and feelings of the receiver that interfere with meaning.
  - c. *Semantic noises* are distractions caused by a speaker's symbols.
- B. Meeting social goals is another reason people communicate.
- C. *Personal identity* is comprised of the traits and characteristics that, taken as a whole, distinguish people from one another and consists of three facets.
  - 1. Who you think you are.
  - 2. Who you want others to think you are.
  - 3. Who others think you are.
- D. Through interpersonal communication, we create and manage our *relationships*, which is a set of expectations that two people have for their behavior with respect to each other, based on the pattern of interaction between them.
- IV. There are five characteristics of interpersonal communication.
  - A. Interpersonal communication is continuous; when we are in the presence of someone, and we are aware of each other's presence, we constantly consciously or subconsciously send verbal and nonverbal messages.
  - B. Interpersonal communication is transactional; in each interpersonal communication episode, each participant gains something from the episode.
  - C. Interpersonal communication is irreversible; once the exchange takes place, it can never be ignored or taken back.
  - D. Interpersonal communication is situated; it occurs within a specific communication setting that affects how the messages are produced, interpreted, and coordinated.
  - E. Interpersonal communication is indexical; how we communicate is an index or measure of the emotional temperature of our relationship at a particular point in time.
    - 1. *Trust* is the extent to which partners in a relationship rely on, depend on, and have faith that their partner will not intentionally do anything to harm them.
    - 2. *Control* is the extent to which each person has power or is "in charge" in the relationship.
    - 3. *Intimacy* is the degree of emotional closeness, acceptance, and disclosure in a relationship.
- V. Interpersonal communication and ethics are linked.
  - A. *Ethics* is a set of moral principles held by a society, group, or individual; there are ethical principles that inform interpersonal communication.
    - 1. *Truthfulness and honesty* are ethical standards that compel people not to lie, mislead, or deceive.
    - 2. Ethical communicators act with *integrity*, which is the ethical standard that compels one to maintain consistency in belief and action.
    - 3. Ethical communicators act in *fairness* so that the right balance of interest in regard to one's own feelings and the other side of a conflict are in check.

4. Ethical communicators show *respect* or regard for a person, his point of view, and his rights.
  5. Ethical communicators are *responsible* by being accountable for their actions.
  6. Ethical communicators show *empathy*, which is the principle of understanding the feelings of others.
- VI. The dark side of interpersonal communication is a metaphor for inappropriate and/or unethical interaction.
- VII. Diversity affects interpersonal communication.
- A. *Diversity* is the variation between and among people and affects nearly every aspect of interpersonal communication.
  - B. *Culture* is the system of beliefs, values, and attitudes shared by a specific segment of the population.
- VIII. There are specific ways to increase interpersonal communication competence.
- A. *Communication competence* is the impression that communicative behavior is both effective and appropriate in a given relationship.
    1. *Effective messages* achieve the goals that you and your partner have for the interaction, and *appropriate messages* conform to the social, relational, and ethical expectations of the situation.
    2. People need to have knowledge about the communication process in order to be competent.
      - a. *Emotional intelligence* is the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions and to use this information to guide your communication.
      - b. Over time, emotional intelligence may be learned and developed.
    3. People need to practice *communication skills*, which are generic message scripts that are situationally appropriate and effective at meeting the goals of the interaction.
      - a. *Micro communication skills* are learned message templates with a specific interaction purpose.
      - b. *Communication skill scripts* are mental texts that include micro communication skills and usually require a series of messages to reach the communication goal.
    4. People need to have the motivation to improve both their knowledge and their skills to communicate competently.
    5. There are skills associated with competent communication—in particular, *behavioral flexibility*, which is the ability to analyze a communication situation and adapt use of various communication skills to fit the situation.
    6. To become a better communicator write a formal communication improvement plan.
      - a. The plan should state the problem.
      - b. The plan should state the specific goal.
      - c. The plan should outline a specific procedure for reaching the goal.

d. The plan should include a method of determining when the goal has been reached.

IX. Understanding Social Media and Interpersonal Communication

1. We use *social media* technologies that facilitate communication and interaction.
2. Using social media helps us practice *digital communication*.
3. We use social media to remain connected with others in our *social network*, a group of individuals who are connected by varying factors.

X. There are several traits of social media technology.

1. *Interactivity* refers to the ability of a communication tool to facilitate social interaction between groups or individuals through its inherent attributes.
2. *Temporal structure* refers to the time it takes to send and receive messages or the time that elapses during a communication interaction.
  - i. *Synchronous* forms of communication occur in real time.
  - ii. *Asynchronous* methods of communication do not occur at the same time.
3. *Social cues* are the verbal and nonverbal aspects of a message that offer more information about the context, meaning, and identities of involved parties.
  - i. *Media Richness Theory* suggests that certain media are better suited than others for some types of messages because digital communication varies in how well they reproduce the intended meaning.
4. *Storage and replicability* refer to the fact that digital communication transpires in an environment that saves messages and provides continued electronic access which makes it possible to view, copy, and redistribute messages.
5. *Reach* refers to the ability to connect with people in distant places.
6. *Mobility* refers to the extent to which the social media are portable.