PART III

CHAPTER 3: YOU AND YOUR AUDIENCE

16. Introduction

Chapter 3 Learning Outcomes

1. Define perception and explain ways in which you organize perceptual information.
2. Describe the terms self-concept and self-esteem.
3. Discuss how social norms, family, culture, and media influence self-perception.
4. Give examples of the effect of self-fulfilling prophecies.
5. List three ways to better understand and reach your audience.
6. Explain the importance of being an active listener and active reader.

Abe recently started a job as a financial analyst in a Canadian company. Her boss asked her to prepare and deliver a presentation to the board of directors on the budget and forecast she has been working on. She has not had a lot of practical experience presenting, and she is unfamiliar with the members of the board. She wants to make a good impression and ensure she effectively communicates her work to date. As you read this chapter consider some of the ways that Abe can ensure she meets her goals in her presentation.

Optical Illusion Example

Optical illusions are one way of demonstration how one person's perception might differ from another's. In Figure 3.1 below, what can you see?

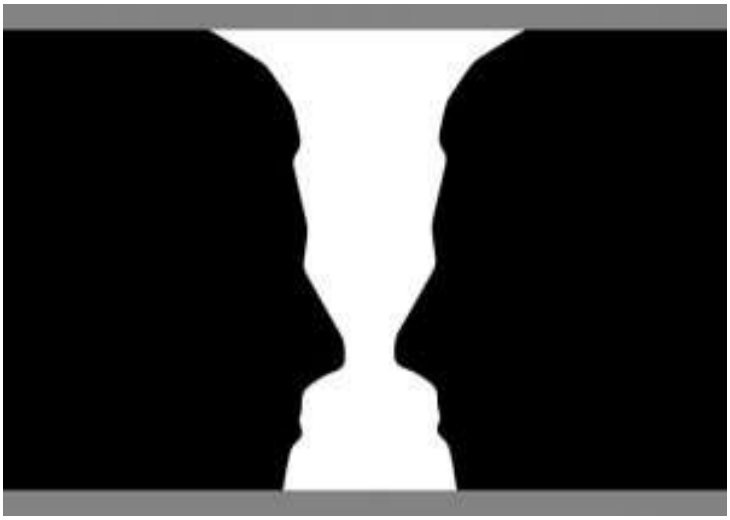

Figure 3.1. Optical illusion. The method of drawing this illustration makes it possible to either see a white vase in the centre, or two shadowed faces on the right and left.

In the same way that your visual perception can sometimes cause confusion or multiple interpretations, your perceptions related to oral and written communication can also create challenges.

Chapter Preview

- Perception
- Self-Understanding Is Fundamental to Communication
- Getting to Know Your Audience
- Listening and Reading for Understanding
- Conclusion

17. Perception

Perception is the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting information. This process, which is represented in Figure 3.2 below, includes the perception of select stimuli that pass through your perceptual filters, are organized into your existing structures and patterns, and are then interpreted based on previous experiences. How you perceive the people and objects around you affects your communication. You respond differently to an object or person that you perceive favorably than you do to someone (or something) you find unfavorable. But how do you filter through the mass amounts of incoming information, organize it, and make meaning from what makes it through your perceptual filters and into your social realities?

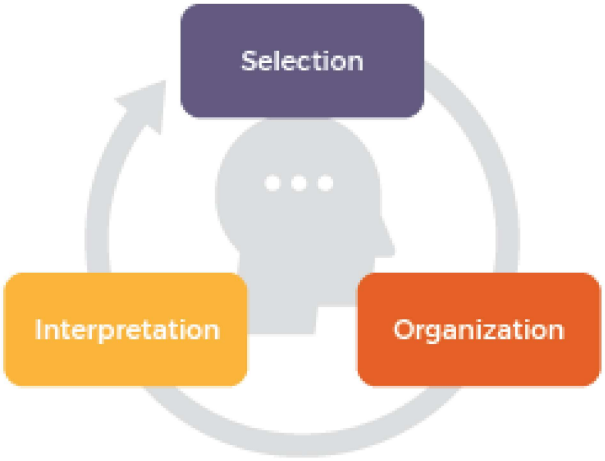

Figure 3.2. Selection, interpretation, and organization that contribute to perception.

Selecting Information

Most people take in information through their five senses, but your perceptual field (the world around you) includes so many stimuli that it is impossible for your brain to process and make sense of it all. So, as information comes in through your senses, various factors influence what actually continues on through the perception process (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Selecting is the first part of the perception process, in which you focus your attention on certain incoming sensory information. Think about how, out of many other possible stimuli to pay attention to, you may hear a familiar voice in the hallway, see a pair of shoes you want to buy from across the mall, or smell something cooking for dinner when you get home from work. You quickly cut through and push to the background all kinds of sights, smells, sounds, and other stimuli, but how do you decide what to select and what to leave out?

Watch the following 2 minute video: *The Monkey Business Illusion*

A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: *https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/commbusprofcdn/?p=231*

You tend to pay attention to information that is salient. Salience is the degree to which something attracts your attention in a particular context. The thing attracting your attention can be abstract, like a concept, or concrete, like an object. Did you notice the person in the monkey suit while watching the video above? It was subtle. A bright flashlight shining in your face while camping at night is sure to be salient. The degree of salience depends on three features: (Fiske & Taylor, 1991) whether the object is visually or aurally stimulating, whether it meets your needs or interests, and whether it meets or challenges your expectations. Consider the image below: The Crashed Nike Ball Guerilla Marketing Example.

Source: 18 of the Most Memorable Guerilla Marketing Campaigns

Related to salience, this example may be considered visually stimulating (it's quite large), it may be considered interesting, and it challenges most people's expectations in terms of size. The artwork is meant to stimulate one's imagination to question" why is the ball so large? What kind of large person (or monster perhaps) might have kicked it so hard it became embedded in the side of a building? This example represents an impossible scenario created through art that generates salience.

Visual and Aural Stimulation – It is probably not surprising to learn that visually and/or aurally stimulating things become salient in our perceptual field and get our attention.

Needs and Interests – We tend to pay attention to information that we perceive to meet our needs or interests in some way. We also find salient information that interests us.

Expectations – The relationship between salience and expectations is a little more complex. Basically, we can find expected things salient and find things that are unexpected salient.

As a communicator, you can use this knowledge about salience to your benefit by minimizing distractions when you have something important to say. It's probably better to have a serious conversation with a significant other in a quiet place rather than a crowded food court. Aside from minimizing distractions and delivering your messages enthusiastically, the content of your communication also affects salience. Whether a sign helps you find the nearest gas station, the sound of a ringtone helps us find your missing cell phone, or a speaker tells you how avoiding processed foods will improve your health, you select and attend to information that meets your needs.

Likely you have experienced the sensation of being engrossed in a television show, video game, or random project that you paid attention to at the expense of something that actually met your needs – like cleaning or spending time with a significant other. Paying attention to things that interest you but don't meet specific needs seems like the basic formula for procrastination that you might be familiar with.

If you are expecting a package to be delivered, you might pick up on the slightest noise of a truck engine or someone's footsteps approaching your front door. Since you expect something to happen, you may be extra tuned in to clues that it is coming. In terms of the unexpected, if you have a shy and soft-spoken friend who you overhear raising the volume and pitch of his voice while talking to another friend, you may pick up on that and assume that something out of the ordinary is going on. For something unexpected to become salient, it has to reach a certain threshold of difference. If you walked into your regular class and there were one or two more students there than normal, you may not even notice. If you walked into your class and there was someone dressed up as a wizard, you would probably notice. So, if you expect to experience something out of the routine, like a package delivery, you will find stimuli related to that expectation salient. If you experience something that you weren't expecting and that is significantly different from your routine experiences, then you will likely find it salient. You can also apply this concept to your communication. Good instructors encourage their students to include supporting material in their speeches that defies audience expectations. You can help keep your audience engaged by employing good research skills to find such information.

Organizing Information

Organizing is the second part of the perception process, in which you sort and categorize information that you perceive based on innate and learned cognitive patterns. Three ways you sort things into patterns are by using proximity, similarity, and difference (Coren & Girgus, 1980).

Proximity – In terms of proximity, we tend to think that things that are close together go together.

Similarity – We also group things together based on similarity. We tend to think similar-looking or similar-acting things belong together.

Difference – We also organize information that we take in based on difference. In this case, we assume that the item that looks or acts different from the rest doesn't belong with the group.

Since you often organize perceptual information based on proximity, you may automatically perceive that two people are together, just because they are standing close together in line.

This type of strategy for organizing information is so common that it is built into how you function in your daily life. If you think of the literal act of organizing something, like your desk at home or work, you follow these same strategies. If you have a bunch of papers and mail on the top of your desk, you will likely sort papers into separate piles for separate classes or put bills in a separate place than personal mail. You may have one drawer for pens, pencils, and other supplies and another drawer for files. In this case you are grouping items based on similarities and differences. You may also group things based on proximity, for example, by putting financial items like your checkbook, a calculator, and your pay stubs in one area so you can update your budget easily. In summary, you simplify information and look for patterns to help conduct tasks and communicate efficiently in all aspects of your life.

Simplification and categorizing based on patterns isn't necessarily a bad thing. In fact, without this capability you would likely not have the ability to speak, read, or engage in other complex cognitive/behavioral functions. There are differences among people, and looking for patterns helps you in many practical ways. However, the judgments you might place on various patterns and categories are not natural; they are learned and culturally and contextually relative. Your perceptual patterns do become unproductive and even unethical when the judgments you associate with certain patterns are based on stereotypical or prejudicial thinking.

Interpreting Information

Although selecting and organizing incoming stimuli happens very quickly, and sometimes without much conscious thought, interpretation can be a much more deliberate and conscious step in the perception process. Interpretation is the third part of the perception process, in which you assign meaning to your experiences using mental structures known as schemata. Schemata are like databases of stored, related information that you use to interpret new experiences. Schemata are like lenses that help you make sense of the perceptual cues around you based on previous knowledge and experience.

It's important to be aware of schemata because your interpretations affect your behavior. For example, if you are doing a group project for class and you perceive a group member to be shy based on your schema of how shy people communicate, you may avoid giving him or her presentation responsibilities because you do not think shy people make good public speakers. Schemata also guide your interactions, providing a script for your behaviors. Many people know how to act and communicate in a waiting room, in a classroom, on a first date, and on a game show. Even a person who has never been on a game show can develop a schema for how to act in that environment by watching The Price Is Right, for example.

A final example, you often include what you do for a living in your self-introduction, which then provides a schema through which others interpret your communication.

18. Self-Understanding Is Fundamental to Communication

You need to know what you want to say before you can say it to an audience. Understanding your perspective can lend insight to your awareness, the ability to be conscious of events and stimuli. Awareness determines what you pay attention to, how you carry out your intentions, and what you remember of your activities and experiences each day. Awareness is a complicated and fascinating area of study. The way we take in information, give it order, and assign it meaning has long interested researchers from disciplines including sociology, anthropology, and psychology.

Your perspective is a major factor in this dynamic process. Whether you are aware of it or not, you bring to the act of reading this sentence a frame of mind formed from experiences and education across your lifetime. Learning to recognize how your perspective influences your thoughts is a key step in understanding yourself and preparing to communicate with others. In the image that follows there are two skydivers that seem to be having a lot of of fun. That is their perspective. Perhaps skydiving might not be fun for everyone, it might be quite frightening to some.

Self-Concept

When you communicate, you are full of expectations, doubts, fears, and hopes. Where you place emphasis, what you focus on, and how you view your potential has a direct impact on your communication interactions. You gather a sense of self as you grow, age, and experience others and the world. Much of what you know about yourself you have learned through interaction with others.

The concept of the looking glass self explains that you see yourself reflected in other people's reactions to you and then form your self-concept based on how you believe other people see you (Cooley, 1922). This reflective process of building your self-concept is based on what other people have actually said, such as "You're a good listener," and other people's actions, such as coming to you for advice. These thoughts evoke emotional responses that feed into your self-concept. For example, you may think, "I'm glad that people can count on me to listen to their problems."

Carol Dweck, a psychology researcher at Stanford University, states that "something that seems like a small intervention can have cascading effects on things we think of as stable or fixed, including extroversion, openness to new experience, and resilience." (Begley, 2008) Your personality and expressions of it, like oral and written communication, were long thought to have a genetic component. But, says Dweck, "More and more research is suggesting that, far from being simply encoded in the genes, much of personality is a flexible and dynamic thing that changes over the life span and is

shaped by experience." (Begley, 2008) If you were told by someone that you were not a good listener, know this: You can change. You can shape your performance through experience, and a business communication course, a mentor at work, or even reading effective business communication authors can result in positive change.

In Figure 3.3 below, the trio of the looking glass self is represented.

Figure 3.3. Self-concept, self-efficacy, and self-esteem.

Attitudes, Beliefs, and Values

When you consider what makes you you, the answers multiply as do the questions. As a baby, you learned to recognize that the face in the mirror was your face. But as an adult, you begin to wonder what and who you are. While you could explore the concept of self endlessly and philosophers have wrestled and will continue to wrestle with it, for your learning purpose, focus on self, which is defined as one's own sense of individuality, motivations, and personal characteristics (McLean, 2003). You also must keep in mind that this concept is not fixed or absolute; instead it changes as you grow and change across your lifetime.

One point of discussion useful for your study about yourself as a communicator is to examine your attitudes, beliefs, and values. These are all interrelated, and researchers have varying theories as to which comes first and which springs from another. You learn your values, beliefs, and attitudes through interaction with others.

An **attitude** is your immediate disposition toward a concept or an object. Attitudes can change easily and frequently. You may prefer vanilla while someone else prefers peppermint, but if someone tries to persuade you of how delicious peppermint is, you may be willing to try it and find that you like it better than vanilla.

Beliefs are ideas based on your previous experiences and convictions and may not necessarily be based on logic or fact. You no doubt have beliefs on political, economic, and religious issues. These beliefs may not have been formed through rigorous study, but you nevertheless hold them as important aspects of self. Beliefs often serve as a frame of reference through which you interpret your world. Although they can be changed, it often takes time or strong evidence to persuade someone to change a belief.

Values are core concepts and ideas of what you consider good or bad, right or wrong, or what is worth the sacrifice. Your values are central to your self-image, what makes you who you are. Like beliefs, your values may not be based on empirical research or rational thinking, but they are even more resistant to change than are beliefs. To undergo a change in values, a person may need to undergo a transformative life experience.

Self-Image and Self-Esteem

Your self-concept is composed of two main elements: self-image and self-esteem. Your self-image is how you see yourself, how you would describe yourself to others. It includes your physical characteristics—your eye color, hair length, height, and so forth. It also includes your knowledge, experience, interests, and relationships. What is your image of yourself as a communicator? How do you feel about your ability to communicate? While the two responses may be similar, they indicate different things.

Your self-esteem is how you feel about yourself; your feelings of self-worth, self-acceptance, and self-respect. Healthy self-esteem can be particularly important when you experience a setback or a failure. High self-esteem will enable you to persevere and give yourself positive messages like "If I prepare well and try harder, I can do better next time."

Use the following link to participate in a small Psychology Today experiment about self-esteem:

Activity: Test your self esteem

Putting your self-image and self-esteem together yields your self-concept: your central identity and set of beliefs about who you are and what you are capable of accomplishing. When it comes to communicating, your self-concept can play an important part. You may find that communicating is a struggle, or the thought of communicating may make you feel talented and successful. Either way, if you view yourself as someone capable of learning new skills and improving as

you go, you will have an easier time learning to be an effective communicator. Whether positive or negative, your self-concept influences your performance and the expression of that essential ability: communication.

Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

In a psychology experiment that has become famous through repeated trials, several public school teachers were told that specific students in their classes were expected to do quite well because of their intelligence (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). These students were identified as having special potential that had not yet "bloomed." What the teachers didn't know was that these "special potential" students were randomly selected. That's right: as a group, they had no more special potential than any other students. Can you anticipate the outcome? As you may guess, the students lived up to their teachers' level of expectation. Even though the teachers were supposed to give appropriate attention and encouragement to all students, in fact they unconsciously communicated special encouragement verbally and nonverbally to the special potential students. And these students, who were actually no more gifted than their peers, showed significant improvement by the end of the school year. This phenomenon came to be called the "Pygmalion effect" after the myth of a Greek sculptor named Pygmalion, who carved a marble statue of a woman so lifelike that he fell in love with her—and in response to his love she did in fact come to life and marry him (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Insel & Jacobson, 1975).

In more recent studies, researchers have observed that the opposite effect can also happen: when students are seen as lacking potential, teachers tend to discourage them or, at a minimum, fail to give them adequate encouragement. As a result, the students do poorly (Anyon, 1980; Oakes, 1985; Sadker & Sadker, 1994, Schugurensky, 2009).

When people encourage you, it affects the way you see yourself and your potential. Seek encouragement for your writing and speaking. Actively choose positive reinforcement as you develop your communication skills. You will make mistakes, but the important thing is to learn from them. Keep in mind that criticism should be constructive, with specific points you can address, correct, and improve. The concept of a self-fulfilling prophecy, in which someone's behavior comes to match and mirror others' expectations, is not new. Robert Rosenthal, a professor of social psychology at Harvard, observed four principles while studying this interaction between expectations and performance:

1. We form certain expectations of people or events.
2. We communicate those expectations with various cues, verbal and nonverbal.
3. People tend to respond to these cues by adjusting their behavior to match the expectations.
4. The outcome is that the original expectation becomes true.

To summarize, you can become a more effective communicator by understanding yourself and how

others view you: your attitudes, beliefs, and values; your self-concept; and how the self-fulfilling prophecy may influence your decisions.

19. Getting to Know Your Audience

Writing to your audience's expectations is key to your success, but how do you get a sense of your readers? Research, time, and effort. At first glance you may think you know your audience, but if you dig a little deeper you will learn more about them and become a better speaker.

Figure 3.4, below is often called the iceberg model. When you see an iceberg on the ocean, the great majority of its size and depth lie below your level of visual awareness. When you write a document or give a presentation, each person in your reading or listening audience is like the tip of an iceberg. You may perceive people of different ages, races, ethnicities, and genders, but those are only surface characteristics. This is your challenge. When you communicate with a diverse audience, you are engaging in intercultural communication. The more you learn about the audience, the better you will be able to navigate the waters, and your communication interactions, safely and effectively.

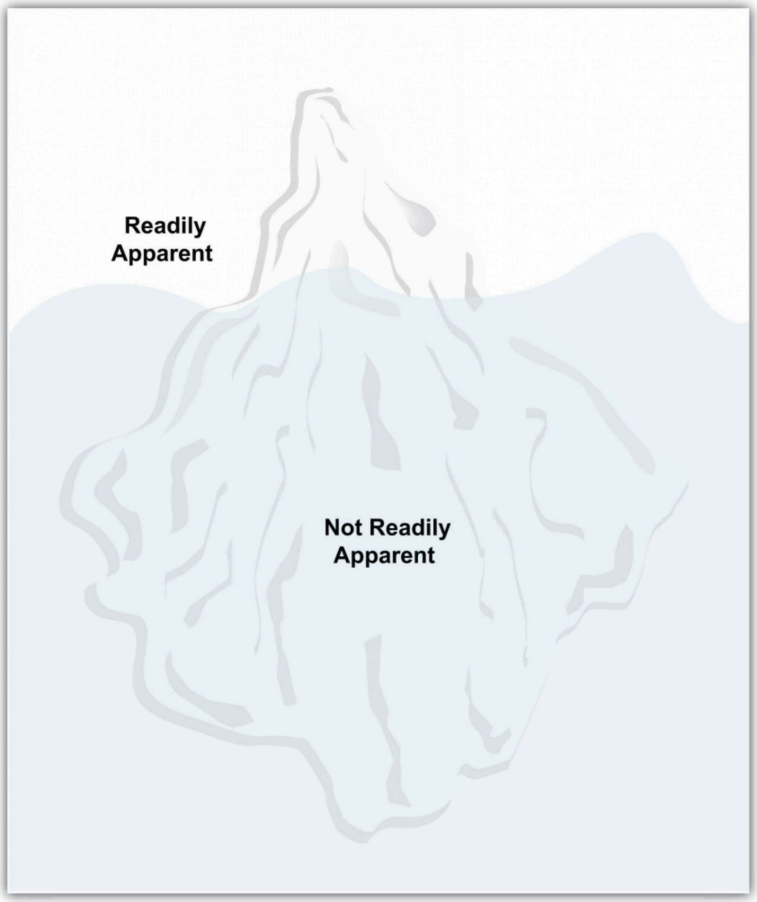

Figure 3.4. Iceberg Model

Theodore Roosevelt pointed out that "the most important single ingredient in the formula of success

is knowing how to get along with people." Knowing your audience well before you speak is essential. Here are a few questions to help guide you in learning more about your audience:

- How big is the audience?
- What are their backgrounds, gender, age, jobs, education, and/or interests?
- Do they already know about your topic? If so, how much?
- Will other materials be presented or available? If so, what are they, what do they cover, and how do they relate to your message?
- How much time is allotted for your presentation, or how much space do you have for your written document? Will your document or presentation stand alone or do you have the option of adding visuals, audio-visual aids, or links?

Demographic Traits

Demographic traits refer to the characteristics that make someone an individual, but that he or she has in common with others. Imagine that you are writing a report on the health risks associated with smoking. To get your message across to an audience of twelve-year-olds, clearly you would use different language and different examples than what you would use for an audience of adults age fifty-five and older.

Tailor your message to your audience

Source: Pixabay.com Public Domain

Writing for readers in the insurance industry, you would likely choose examples of how insurance claims are affected by whether or not a policyholder smokes, whereas if you were writing for readers who are athletes, you would focus on how the human body reacts to tobacco.

Audiences tend to be interested in messages that relate to their interests, needs, goals, and motivations. Demographic traits can give us insight into our audience and allow for an audience-centered approach to your assignment that will make you a more effective communicator (Beebe & Beebe, 1997).

Improving Your Perceptions of Your Audience

The better you can understand your audience, the better you can tailor your communications to reach them. To understand them, a key step is to perceive clearly who they are, what they are interested in, what they need, and what motivates them. This ability to perceive is important with audience members from distinct groups, generations, and even cultures. William Seiler and Melissa Beall

offer us six ways to improve our perceptions, and therefore improve our communication, particularly in public speaking; they are listed in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Perceptual Strategies for Success

Perceptual Strategy	Explanation
Become an active perceiver	You need to actively seek out as much information as possible. Placing yourself in the new culture, group, or co-culture can often expand your understanding.
Recognize each person's unique frame of reference	You and others perceive the world differently. Recognize that even though you may interact with two people from the same culture, they are individuals with their own set of experiences, values, and interests.
Recognize that people, objects, and situations change	The world is changing and so is each individual. Recognizing that people and cultures, like communication process itself, are dynamic and ever changing can improve your intercultural communication.
Become aware of the role perceptions play in communication	Perception is an important aspect of the communication process. By understanding that your perceptions are not the only ones possible can limit ethnocentrism and improve intercultural communication.
Keep an open mind	The adage "A mind is like a parachute—it works best when open" holds true. Being open to differences can improve intercultural communication.
Check your perceptions	By learning to observe, and acknowledging your perceptions, you can avoid assumptions, expand your understanding, and improve your ability to communicate across cultures.

Fairness in Communication

Consider that your audience has several expectations of you. No doubt you have sat through a speech or classroom lecture where you asked yourself, "Why should I listen?" You have probably been assigned to read a document or chapter and found yourself wondering, "What does this have to do with me?" These questions are normal and natural for audiences, but people seldom actually state these questions in so many words or say them out loud.

In a report on intercultural communication, V. Lynn Tyler offered insight into these audience expectations, which was summarized as the need to be fair to your audience. One key fairness principle is reciprocity, or a relationship of mutual exchange and interdependence. Reciprocity has four main components: mutuality, non-judgmentalism, honesty, and respect.

Mutuality means that the speaker searches for common ground and understanding with his or her audience, establishing this space and building on it throughout the speech. This involves examining viewpoints other than your own and taking steps to insure the speech integrates an inclusive, accessible format rather than an ethnocentric one.

Nonjudgmentalism involves willingness to examine diverse ideas and viewpoints. A nonjudgmental communicator is open-minded, and able to accept ideas that may be strongly opposed to his or her own beliefs and values.

Another aspect of fairness in communication is honesty: stating the truth as you perceive it. When you communicate honestly, you provide supporting and clarifying information and give credit to the sources where you obtained the information. In addition, if there is significant evidence opposing your viewpoint, you acknowledge this and avoid concealing it from your audience.

Finally, fairness involves respect for the audience and individual members—recognizing that each person has basic rights and is worthy of courtesy. Consider these expectations of fairness when designing your message and you will more thoroughly engage your audience.

To summarize this section, as a presenter or communicator it's very important to understand your audience. You can learn about their demographic traits, such as age, gender, and employment status, as these help determine their interests, needs, and goals. In addition, you can become more aware of your perceptions and theirs, and practice fairness in your communications.

20. Listening and Reading for Understanding

Learning to listen to your conversational partner, customer, supplier, or supervisor is an important part of business communication. Often, instead of listening you mentally rehearse what you want to say. Similarly, when you read, you are often trying to multitask and therefore cannot read with full attention. Inattentive listening or reading can cause you to miss much of what the speaker (or writer) is sharing with you.

Communication involves the sharing and understanding of meaning. To fully share and understand, practice active listening and reading so that you are fully attentive, fully present in the moment of interaction. Pay attention to both the actual words and for other clues to meaning, such as tone of voice or writing style. Look for opportunities for clarification and feedback when the time comes for you to respond, not before.

Active Listening and Reading

You've probably experienced the odd sensation of driving somewhere and, having arrived, realized you don't remember driving. Your mind may have been filled with other issues and you drove on autopilot. It's dangerous when you drive like that, and it is dangerous in communication. Choosing to listen or read attentively takes effort. People communicate with words, expressions, and even in silence, and your attention to them will make you a better communicator. From discussions on improving customer service to retaining customers in challenging economic times, the importance of listening comes up frequently as a success strategy.

Here are some tips to facilitate active listening and reading:

- Maintain eye contact with the speaker; if reading, keep your eyes on the page.
- Don't interrupt; if reading, don't multitask.
- Focus your attention on the message, not your internal monologue.
- Restate the message in your own words and ask if you understood correctly.
- Ask clarifying questions to communicate interest and gain insight.

When the Going Gets Tough

Tips in this chapter will serve you well in daily interactions, but suppose you have an especially difficult subject to discuss, or you receive a written document delivering bad news. In a difficult situation like this, it is worth taking extra effort to create an environment and context that will facilitate positive communication.

Here are some strategies that may be helpful:

- Set aside a special time. To have a difficult conversation or read bad news, set aside a special time when you will not be disturbed. Close the door and turn off the TV, music player, and instant messaging client.
- Don't interrupt. Keep silent while you let the other person "speak his or her piece." If you are reading, make an effort to understand and digest the news without mental interruptions.
- Be nonjudgmental. Receive the message without judgment or criticism. Set aside your opinions, attitudes, and beliefs.
- Be accepting. Be open to the message being communicated, realizing that acceptance does not necessarily mean you agree with what is being said.
- Take turns. Wait until it is your turn to respond, and then measure your response in proportion to the message that was delivered to you. Reciprocal turn-taking allows each person have her of his say.
- Acknowledge. Let the other person know that you have listened to the message or read it attentively.
- Understand. Be certain that you understand what your partner is saying. If you don't understand, ask for clarification. Restate the message in your own words.
- Keep your cool. Speak your truth without blaming. A calm tone will help prevent the conflict from escalating. Use "I" statements (e.g., "I felt concerned when I learned that my department is going to have a layoff") rather than "you" statements (e.g., "you want to get rid of some of our best people").
- Finally, recognize that mutual respect and understanding are built one conversation at a time. Trust is difficult to gain and easy to lose. Be patient and keep the channels of communication open, as a solution may develop slowly over the course of many small interactions. Recognize that it is more valuable to maintain the relationship over the long term than to "win" in an individual transaction.

Watch the following 8 minute video from Julian Treasure: 5 Ways to Listen Better

A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/commbusprofcdn/?p=244

To summarize this section, part of being an effective communicator is learning to receive messages from others through active listening and reading.

21. Conclusion

Returning to Abe, who is preparing a presentation for her company's board of directors, how might her presentation be more successful based on what you've learned in this chapter? What type of research might she do to understand her audience better (e.g., board members are often described on organizational websites)? What might she want to examine about her self-perception and confidence in presenting for this audience? What might she need to watch out for as she presents?

Check Your Understanding

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: [*https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/commbusprofcdn/?p=247*](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/commbusprofcdn/?p=247)

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: [*https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/commbusprofcdn/?p=247*](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/commbusprofcdn/?p=247)

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: [*https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/commbusprofcdn/?p=247*](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/commbusprofcdn/?p=247)

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: [*https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/commbusprofcdn/?p=247*](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/commbusprofcdn/?p=247)

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/commbusprofcdn/?p=247

Glossary

Attitude – your immediate disposition toward a concept or an object.
Awareness – what you pay attention to, how you carry out your intentions, and what you remember of your activities and experiences each day.
Beliefs – ideas based on your previous experiences and convictions and may not necessarily be based on logic or fact.
Demographic traits – refer to the characteristics that make someone an individual, but that he or she has in common with others (e.g., age, gender, height, ethnicity).
Difference – ideas or items that are distinct or even opposite from each other.
Fairness – involves respect for the audience and individual members—recognizing that each person has basic rights and is worthy of courtesy.
Honesty – stating the truth as you perceive it.
Interpretation – how you assign meaning to your experiences using mental structures known as schemata.
Looking glass self – how you see yourself reflected in other people's reactions to you and then form your self-concept based on how you believe other people see you.
Mutuality – the speaker searches for common ground and understanding with his or her audience, establishing this space and building on it throughout the speech.
Nonjudgmentalism – involves willingness to examine diverse ideas and viewpoints.
Organizing – how you sort and categorize information that you perceive based on innate and learned cognitive patterns.
Perception – the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting information.
Perceptual field – the world around you (your environment).
Proximity – ideas or physical items that are close together.
Reciprocity – a relationship of mutual exchange and interdependence.
Salience – the degree to which something attracts your attention in a particular context.
Selecting – how you focus your attention on certain incoming sensory information.
Self-esteem – how you feel about yourself; your feelings of self-worth, self-acceptance, and self-respect.
Self-fulfilling prophecy – how your behavior comes to match and mirror others' expectations (i.e., if other expect you to perform poorly, it's likely that you will).
Self-image – how you see yourself, how you would describe yourself to others.