Unit I: Communication: Creating Self and Change with Words

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR UNIT I

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- CLO: 1. Apply important elements of the communication model to a variety of scenarios.
 - ULO 1.1 Identify the nature of communication and its barriers in the digital age.
 - ULO 1.2 Recognize expert writing techniques to make messages clear and concise.
 - ULO 1.3 Label phases and specific tasks within the three step writing process.
 - ULO:1.4 Illustrate how to generate ideas and organize information to show relationships.
- CLO: 5. Create research based messages that apply communication theories and strategies.
 - ULO 5.1 Demonstrate how to organize information to show relationships.
 - ULO 5.2 Evaluate proofreading problem areas.
 - ULO 5.3 Appraise formal or informal research methods.

UNIT LESSON: Communication: Creating Self and Change with Words

Communication is often a taken-for-granted activity. You use it daily through dialogue, written messages, and even gestures. It is exciting to drill down into effective strategies to employ to become a more competent communicator and recognize these same techniques used by others.

Why do the unit readings start in Chapters 4, 5, and 6? Because this unit contains the foundational concepts of planning, organizing, and revising messages. You will apply concepts from this unit in upcoming unit assessments/assignments in the course. The purpose of this unit is to explore the concepts of planning, organizing, and revising messages to help you become a more competent communicator. Understanding these basic elements can help you continue your journey in becoming more effective in communicating in various situations. Learning about the communication process and applying the various concepts in your current role can help you build the skills needed to create change with words. In this unit, Guffey and Loewy (2015) outline various aspects of communication including the nature of communication, considerations for reaching your intended audience, and research techniques to help you support your ideas. Let's look at these specific areas which are important in your journey to becoming a proficient communicator.

The Nature of Communication

The field of communication is devoted to understanding how to recognize and enhance the elements that make up the communication process. According to Guffey and Loewy (2015), "Communication may be defined as the transmission of information and meaning from a sender to a receiver" (p. 122). Communication skills whether spoken, written, or nonverbal are learned abilities, not inborn. If some of the concepts you find in this course are new, take heart, practice makes perfect!

What does communication mean to you? What types of communicative interactions do you participate in on a daily basis? You may interact with various audiences including military personnel, emergency response victims, colleagues, customers, civilians, patients, online participants, civic or church groups, or family members. In every interaction, whether virtual or face-to-face, there are two factors to consider: self-presentation and message acceptance. Let's look at these two concepts in more detail.

Through every interaction, you have an opportunity to create "self" through the words you use and the way you present your ideas. Think about the types of communications you send. A first impression made by your initial correspondence or continual dialogue with a colleague can either enhance or hinder your reputation as a professional. What do people expect to receive from you when they see you coming into a meeting, read your name in the email inbox, or receive a phone call from you? Self-presentation is all about how you communicate and how others perceive you. Are you an encourager or complainer? Do you present ideas respectfully using goodwill or do your messages tend to come across as harsh and cold? Begin to recognize the

reputation you create for yourself through every message you share. You can impact your self-presentation as well as increase the chance that your messages will be accepted by considering the positive payoff. The positive payoff is about making your communications mutually beneficial by considering the viewpoint of your receiver. Even when you must send a serious message or if you currently occupy an authoritative role, evaluate the possible reaction of the other person and how you can create a message that will be well received. Such actions contribute to your total self-presentation to others.

Communicating effectively and enhancing your self-presentation can be applied in your professional, personal, and academic roles. Guffey and Loewy (2015) offer suggestions to help you create and send effective messages by use of the Three Step Writing Process. Some factors to consider include analyzing the audience and adapting the message to present your creative ideas and yourself as a professional. For example, you can change the atmosphere of a meeting just by how you present ideas; you can bring a smile to someone's face or plunge them into a pit of emotional despair just by your word choice; you can compose a proposal that could positively impact many people or find an important proposal rejected if not adequately researched and presented. Remember, your words are powerful, wield them carefully!

Reaching Your Intended Audience

It is important to consider how a message is encoded and decoded in order to obtain maximum readability, affect the change you seek, and fulfill your desired intention for communicating. Kohlrieser (2006) found that understanding the process of communication can help resolve conflict, enhance respect in an organizational setting, and come to a mutual understanding in situations that could become heated. "Many people have no idea how to express themselves in a dialogue, and someone unable to build a positive bond may speak with words that carry fear, anger, or sadness" (Kohlrieser, 2006, p. 37). You have the opportunity, in this course, to become more cognizant of speaking with purpose to achieve a desired effect, rather than out of habit or out of emotion. Again, this is a learned skill that everyone can improve upon.

Being audience centered in every step of the communication process means to consider the needs of the audience from generating your ideas, choosing a channel, sending the message, to even responding to feedback from the receiver. Guffey and Loewy (2015) explain that competent communicators will anticipate possible problems in the communication process, focus on the receiver's environment and frame of reference, apply listening skills, and adapt to feedback from the receiver to ensure there is shared meaning and message acceptance. For example, when you write a paper or submit a written assignment in a college class, you are more likely to use a different level of diction in your word choice than when you are talking to friend, a family member, or even a child (Guffey & Loewy, 2015). Being a competent communicator means adapting your communication style to fit the purpose of the message, the situation, and the receiver.

As you begin to observe daily interactions you can see where possible miscommunications could arise and learn to create and recreate messages to

help you avoid misunderstandings. Consider how messages may be distorted if you use words the receiver could take as offensive or how the message could be lost if an inappropriate channel is used. When you create a written or spoken message, it is critical to deliver it in such a way that it has the highest possibility to be received and understood by the receiver(s) as intended. This can mean practicing skills to write a succinct email or memorandum, ensuring your message is drafted using words that will not offend, and helping others to communicate their ideas when you observe they may be struggling to get a point across. Shkurti (2013) studied the methods organizations use when communicating information and found that people within an organization process information based on how it is presented to them. This reinforces the importance of communicating ideas to employees in order to get maximum buyin and full acceptance of the messages sent.

You may observe a political speaker using certain language when communicating to an audience made up of members from different regions of the county. For example, he/she may use the term *y'all* in a speech if communicating to a group from the south who consider this expression acceptable to refer to a group of people. Imagine the effect this could have if this political figure used the term in a speech directed to audiences in different regions of the country or to a foreign audience who did not understand the meaning. The key is to understand how to create messages using appropriate words that will resonate with the target audience, using the most effective channel, and endeavoring to overcome communication barriers in order for your message to achieve its desired purpose.

Using Research to Support Your Ideas

Why is using research an important skill to master? Bringing in support material from a source to back up your viewpoint on various topics is the foundation upon which academic writing is built. It can enhance your credibility and help you present yourself as a well informed professional. The need to incorporate information from a credible source to support your viewpoint will be reinforced throughout this class. In your field you may have opportunity to conduct formal or informal research methods (Guffey & Loewy, 2015).

Whether writing academically or in a business setting, the basis is the same, present your ideas clearly and use information from a credible source to support your claims. For example, if you went to your boss and asked him or her to replace your current desktop computer with a laptop, the message could be enhanced by backing up your ideas with research. In order to be more persuasive, it would be helpful if you compared your new computer to an updated system, provided a list of important features, included information on how this would improve work efficiency, and added a list of prices for this purchase. By providing sources for this information you could enhance your proposal and lend credibility to your work. Additionally, if you were talking to a group about unique behaviors of the Angler Fish, you would want to let them know where you retrieved your information. If you were to cite a credible source on this topic, the facts could be better received and believable than if I

just provided your opinions about this sea creature.

Columbia Southern University uses American Psychological Association (APA) style academic writing techniques to help students support their viewpoints on various topics. The in-text citations showing quoted or paraphrased material from your source will point the reader to the full reference listing at the end of your essays, which shows the reader where to go to find more information on the topic. As you progress through your academic program, more sources will be required, so learning the skill of citing information from at least one source and showing the difference between your ideas (no citations) and information taken from a source (citations needed) is crucial. This course is designed to provide you an opportunity to practice basic research skills in order to form messages and present ideas that are well supported by a credible source. Mastering an academic writing style, such as APA style, can enhance your self-presentation and help you create change by using words that are powerful and sharing ideas that are well supported.

References

- Guffey, M., & Loewy, D. (2015). *Business communication: Process and product* (8th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage.
- Kohlrieser, G. (2006). The power of authentic dialogue. *Leader to Leader*, *2006*(42), 36-40. Retrieved from Business Source Complete database.
- Shkurti, L. (2013). Communicating for results organizations in Albanian context. *Albanian Journal of Agricultural Sciences*, *12*(3), 421-424. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

Required Reading	Chapter 4: Planning Business Messages Chapter 5: Organizing and Drafting Business
	Chapter 6: Revising Business Messages
	Kohlrieser, G. (2006). The power of authentic dialogue. <i>Leader To Leader</i> , 2006(42), 36-40. Retrieved from Business Source Complete database. Click here to access a PDF of the article.
Supplemental Reading (Not required, but PDF or reference to XXXXXX library is	XXX online library articles can be accessed by following these 3 steps: in the student portal, select the XXX Online Library link in the menu on the left side of the page; select the appropriate database indicated in the article reference; search for the article by title, author or key words.
provided)	Shkurti, L. (2013). Communicating for results - organizations in Albanian context. Albanian Journal Of Agricultural Sciences, 12(3), 421-424. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database.
	PowerPoint Presentations – Chapters 4, 5, 6 Click here to access a PDF of the Chapter 4 presentation. Click here to access a PDF of the Chapter 5 presentation. Click here to access a PDF of the Chapter 6 presentation.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES (Non-Graded)

(non-graded)		
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KEY TERMS

1. 3x	k3 Writing Process (p. 127)
2. Ac	cademic writing <mark>(lecture)</mark>
3. Bia	ias-Free language
4. Bu	usiness writing
5. Ch	hannel
6. Co	ommunication
7. Co	ommunication barriers
8. Di	irect Strategy <mark>(pp. 157-158)</mark>
9. Fc	ormal research methods
10. Inc	direct o Strategy (pp. 158-159)
11. Inf	formal research methods
12. Le	evels of diction <mark>(p. 135)</mark>
13. Pr	roofreading
14. Re	eadability
15. Se	elf-presentation <mark>(lecture)</mark>

DISCUSSION BOARD QUESTION

Please provide a unit applicable discussion board question in the space below.

PART 1: Introduce yourself to your fellow classmates and instructor. One way to establish common ground and get to know your fellow classmates is to discover what commonalities you may share. Feel free to provide any of the following information within your introduction:

- What degree are you pursuing?
- What is your favorite movie or book?
- Do you have any pets? What kind?
- Do you have any hobbies or other interests?
- Have you ever traveled or lived abroad?

PART 2: Acknowledge that you have read and will abide by the University's Academic Integrity Policy located in the Student Handbook and copy located on Course Announcements page by typing the word "affirm" in your response. You may also ask any questions that may concern you or discuss challenges learners face when trying to uphold XXX's Academic Integrity Policy. It is important to avoid plagiarism in your academic career at XXX, but why do you think it is important to understand and avoid plagiarism in your professional career as well? Feel free to give examples.

Part 3: (Optional) It is said that bad writing makes smart people look dumb. Do you agree or disagree, and why? What is good writing versus bad writing? Why is it important to learn writing techniques discussed in Chapters 4, 5, 6?

UNIT I ASSESSMENT

Question Type	Total # Provided	# to be pulled from the pool in Blackboard	Point Value/ Question	Point Total
Multiple Choice Questions	11	5	4	20
Matching	13	5	4	20
Short Essay (Pool 1)	3	1	30	30
Short Essay (Pool 2)	3	1	30	30
Total points				100

Add assessment questions and instructions below:

Multiple Choice:

- 1. Classify the communication barrier that has most likely occurred in the following scenario: You deliver a presentation in which you try to persuade the board of directors to approve a new policy to allow workers to bring their pets to work on Fridays. You provide research which indicates increased worker motivation when they are around their pets, an employee survey showing 99% approval for this project, and a strategic rotation to allow staff to take walk breaks throughout the day so as not to interfere with production rates at work. You reason that this building initiative would build camaraderie and enhance the organizational culture. You notice that several members are texting or looking at their laptops during your presentation. You also notice that you have failed to proofread your message for grammatical errors and the handouts contain typos, which could bring your credibility into question. The board votes and your proposal misses approval by one vote. Which barrier could have contributed to the no vote:
 - a. Adaptation
 - b. Parallelism
 - c. Bias-free language
 - d. Distractions
- 2. When creating a professional communication for an organization that prefers a more formal business communication style, which of the following guidelines is least effective:
 - a. Use expressions such as awesome and abbreviate words often.
 - b. Use a warm, friendly tone that demonstrate courtesy.
 - c. Use positive language in the message.
 - d. Use Bias-Free Language in the message.
- 3. Choose the statement below that employs the "you" view in order to demonstrate a message that is more audience focused:
 - a. We respectfully request that the proposal to institute a business casual dress be approved.
 - b. Friday is the only day that I can promise a quick response to customer inquiries; I am swamped with meetings during the first half of the week.
 - c. Our delivery truck can be on the road promptly.
 - d. If you need a fast response, please submit your request by Wednesday.
- 4. Which of the following statements employs the technique of parallelism?
 - a. The proposal will affect remote staff, customers, and employees will also be impacted who work in the on-site store.
 - b. Susan had been soaked with rain, her inbox was bombarded with emails, and shouted at.
 - c. Edgar has a habit of arriving late for meetings, he often logs into Facebook when he is supposed to be working, and eats at his desk.
 - d. Mark has been evaluated on his performance, promoted to a higher position, and received a salary increase.
- 5. Choose the statement below that does not contain flabby expressions.
 - a. Enclosed you will find a newly revised proposal at this point in time due to the fact that the new budgets for the next year has been approved.
 - b. In most cases, it has been advisable for us to borrow money for a period of a year or less.
 - c. Our income has been gradually increasing, so we will apply for a \$50,000 loan.
 - d. At this point in time, I am extremely intrigued by the mission and vision of the organization.
- 6. You have just completed the report on the biggest project that has ever been assigned to your department. Because you are up against the deadline and in a rush, you hastily forward the report to your supervisor. Suddenly you realize that you forgot to proofread the report and you know that you have used several words that are possibly misspelled or used incorrectly. There may have even been empty words and redundant phrases. This was a onetime shot at impressing upper management and it has just gotten away from you. This is what a communication tragedy looks and feels like. How could this situation have been avoided?
 - a. Avoid informal research methods.
 - b. Apply Phase Three of the 3x3 writing process.
 - c. Investigate primary sources more thoroughly.

- d. Consider the secondary audience.
- 7. The three step writing process includes prewriting, drafting, and revising a message. According to Guffey and Loewy (2015), in which step should the writer carefully conduct research or gather background data to include in the message?
 - a. Drafting
 - b. Revising
 - c. Pacing
 - d. Rewriting
- 8. When conducting research, it is important to determine if the source you choose to support your viewpoint is current, relevant, and credible. You are putting a proposal together to lengthen the workdays in an organization to 10 hours a day in order to shorten the workweek to four days a week. You decide to interview employees in the company by having them fill out a survey and find that 98% of staff members are in favor of this change. You use this data to enhance your proposal. What type of research did you just conduct by gathering data and using it to support your proposal?
 - a. Survey outline methods
 - b. Informal research methods
 - c. Brainstorming methods
 - d. Formal research methods
- 9. It is important to anticipate how an audience will react to any message. This is done by knowing the audience's possible reaction and adapting the message so the right word choice and tone can come across. At what phase in the writing process does one analyze and profile the audience?
 - a. Drafting
 - b. Prewriting
 - c. Revising
 - d. Bypassing
- 10. You are a leader in Welpen-Haus, a company that creates and manufactures dog houses around the world. You are tasked with setting up a brainstorming session with representatives from each department to generate new designs for dog house designs. To skillfully use the technique of brainstorming for this upcoming meeting, which of the following strategies should you avoid?
 - a. Set a guota of a minimum number of ideas to generate.
 - b. Avoid writing down ideas.
 - c. Encourage wild thinking.
 - d. Require every person in the brainstorming group to contribute in some way.
- 11. Your company has just been bought out by a new owner and the executive leadership decides to no longer celebrate Earth Day as it has in the past. Before employees received a paid holiday with time off, but with the change in ownership this will now be a regular work day. Which strategy for organizing ideas in a message would be best to use if you are communicating this news to the workers who you know will disagree with this change?
 - a. Direct strategy
 - b. Indirect strategy
 - c. Emphatic strategy
 - d. Revision method

Matching questions: In the Matrix below

Short Essay: (Pool 1)

1. Discuss the ethics surrounding the use of the indirect strategy when organizing a message. . Do you think it is manipulative to delay the presentation of the main idea in a message or does it help soften the blow and prepare the audience? Do you prefer the direct or indirect method to organize a message? Explain why or why not.

Your response should be at least 200 words in length. You are required to use at least your textbook as source material for your response. All sources used, including the textbook, must be referenced; paraphrased and guoted material must have accompanying citations.

- 2. You are the editor of your organization's monthly newsletter and are responsible for the content communicated through this medium. You receive an article written by one of the executive leaders that he wants you to include in the next issue. He describes his article as a brilliantly designed piece. You find that the article is filled with clichés, negative language, and redundancies, and the main points are hard to distinguish. You realize the article will need considerable revising to make it readable. What action will you take?
 - Your response should be at least 200 words in length. You are required to use at least your textbook as source material for your response. All sources used, including the textbook, must be referenced; paraphrased and quoted material must have accompanying citations.
- 3. Analyze a problem that exists where you work or within an organization in which you are a member. Some examples include noisy work areas, understaffing, inappropriate cell phone/computer use, outdated equipment, problem employees, or other issues. Discuss the problem in detail, identify three ideas to solve the issueexplain if you would use the direct or indirect strategy as discussed in the unit reading to organize a message suggesting your proposed changes to the leader of this organization and why you chose that strategy.

Your response should be at least 200 words in length. You are required to use at least your textbook as source material for your response. All sources used, including the textbook, must be referenced; paraphrased and quoted material must have accompanying citations.

Short Essay: (Pool 2)

- 1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Using paragraphs to organize a written message is NOT important. Support your viewpoint. Explain what using or not using paragraphs portrays about you as a writer/professional.
 - Your response should be at least 200 words in length. You are required to use at least your textbook as source material for your response. All sources used, including the textbook, must be referenced; paraphrased and quoted material must have accompanying citations.
- 2. Evaluate your own writing techniques and identify proofreading problem areas. Explain what types of mistakes you tend to make and how you can overcome them in the future. If you never make mistakes, provide advice to someone else who needs help in proofreading his or her work. In your response, discuss why proofreading is important to your career.
 - Your response should be at least 200 words in length. You are required to use at least your textbook as source material for your response. All sources used, including the textbook, must be referenced; paraphrased and quoted material must have accompanying citations.
- 3. When presenting your ideas it is important to support your viewpoint with information from a credible source to strengthen your position on a topic. Your task is to identify a circumstance you want to change in your personal or professional life. Be sure to describe your intended audience and reveal the specific research method you would use and the kind of support material you would gather to back up your ideas. Explain why this method would lend credibility to your proposal for a needed change. Be creative!

Your response should be at least 200 words in length. You are required to use at least your textbook as source material for your response. All sources used, including the textbook, must be referenced; paraphrased and quoted material must have accompanying citations.

UNIT I

Reading Assignment	Chapter 4:
Chapter(s) with page	Planning Business Messages
parameters	
	Chapter 5:
	Organizing and Drafting Business
	Chapter 6:
	Revising Business Messages
	Kohlrieser, G. (2006). The power of authentic dialogue. <i>Leader To Leader</i> ,
	2006(42), 36-40. Retrieved from Business Source Complete database.

Multiple-Choice Questions			
Question #	Correct Answer	Page #	Linked to Outcome #
1.	D	124-125	1.1
2.	Α	135-139	1.2
3.	D	134-135	1.2
4.	D	163	1.2
5.	С	178-179	1.2
6.	В	177	1.3
7.	Α	127 &	1.3
		152	
8.	В	152-153	1.3
9.	В	127	1.3
10.	В	154-155	1.4
11.	В	156-159	1.4

Short Essay Questions Add lines as necessary.			
Pool 1			
1.	157-158,	1.4, 5.1	
	165-166		
2.	136-138,	1.4, 5.2	
	165-168,		
	178-186		
	& 193		
3.	154-158	1.4, 5.1	
4.	38-40	1.1, 5.1	
Pool 2			
1.	165-168	1.4, 5.1	
2.	191-192	1.4, 5.2	
3.	129-131&	1.4, 5.3	
	152-153		

Mat	Matching Questions: Choose the best answer for each item.				
#	Question Items	Answer Items	Page #	Linke d to Outc ome	
1	A verbal and/or nonverbal response of the receiver to the sender	Feedback	p. 123	1.1	
2	Female doctor, woman attorney, boys in the mailroom are examples	Biased Language	pp. 137-138	1.2	
3	Informal words with arbitrary and extravagantly changed meanings are referred to as	Slang	p. 185	1.2	
4	Technical expressions that have become fashionable and often are meant to impress rather than express	Buzzwords	p. 185	1.2	
5	Expressions that have become exhausted by overuse and may be difficult to explain to those from another culture such as <i>good to go are called:</i>	Clichés	pp. 184-185	1.2	
6	In this type of sentence, the subject, or the actor, performs the action such as <i>Erica must submit a tax return</i> .	Active Voice	p. 162	1.2	
7	The medium over which the message travels to the receiver is called	Channel	p. 123	1.1	
8	Converting an idea into words or gestures that will convey meaning	Encoding	p. 123	1.1	
9	Translating a message from its symbol form into a meaning is the process of	Decoding	p. 123	1.1	
10	Bypassing, differing frames of reference, lack of language skill, and distractions are types of	Communication Barriers	pp. 124-125	1.1	
11	This phase of the writing process involves analyzing the audience and your purpose for writing	Prewriting	p. 127	1.3	
12	This phase of the writing process involves editing, proofreading, and evaluating your message	Revising	p. 128	1.3	
13	This phase of the writing process includes researching, organizing, and then composing the message	Drafting	p. 128	1.3	
	EXTRA WORDS	Purposeful			
	EXTRA WORDS	Persuasive Appeals			

Notes for Professors:

Possible suggested feedback for multiple choice questions:

- Distractions are a type of communication barrier that can be emotional, physical, or digital interruptions including careless formatting or typographical errors that could impede the full message from fully received by the audience.
- 2. When an organization's culture prefers more formal and professional messages, it is best to avoid using more casual language, for a person wants to personify maturity and professionalism in their communications.
- 3. It is important to speak and write in terms of the recipient's wishes, interests, hopes, and preferences. Replacing terms such as I, me, us, ours with you and yours is how to do this.
- 4. Parallelism is a writing technique that involves writing sentences so that their parts are balanced or parallel and easy to read and understand. The writer should use similar structure to express similar ideas to achieve parallelism. Answers A, B, and C all contain phrases that lack parallelism, so Answer D is the best answer.
- It is important to provide messages that are concise and avoid wordy messages. Flabby expressions are those that contain unnecessary introductory words or other phrases and should be shorted to one concise word or a few words to express meaning.
- 6. The final phase of the 3x3 writing process focuses on editing, proofreading, and evaluating the document. Editing means improving the content and sentence structure of your message. Proofreading involves correcting its grammar, spelling, punctuation, format, and mechanics.
- 7. The drafting phase is the second phase in the three step writing process, which begins with formal and informal research to collect background information to support the message.
- 8. Informal Research methods include gathering unscientific but helpful information through questionnaires, surveys, or online surveys. This can help gauge the attitudes of stakeholders on a proposed initiative.
- 9. The prewriting phase gives the writer a chance to analyze the audience and purpose for writing a message. The drafting and revising phases are used to organize and evaluate the message. In this first phase it is pivotal to understand your audience and purpose of the communication so you can build the rest of the message around this knowledge.
- 10. It is important to write ideas down on flipchart or on sheets of paper hung around the room to keep track of all creative thoughts that are shared. Brainstorming is a great technique to help participants develop new ways of thinking about issues and can reveal creative and innovative ideas.
- 11. Messages can be organized directly with main ideas first or indirectly with main ideas delayed. In this scenario, the indirect strategy is best to use to act as a buffer and delay the bad news or main idea of the message until the opening of the message to prepare the receive to receive the negative news.

CM 1010 – Business Communication

Unit I – Traci Frees