

type of communication, public communication, involves having an individual share information with a large group.

The last section of this introductory chapter included a discussion of difference and diversity and their relationship to communication. First encounters with new people and public speaking are two common causes of anxiety, yet there are

ways for us to become better, more effective communicators. Most importantly, we must celebrate and appreciate the different approaches to communication we all have as a means of improving our communication effectiveness. Throughout this book specific techniques for improving our communication will accompany the discussions of each communication topic.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Define communication.
2. Explain the difference between encoding and decoding.
3. How can people use nonverbal communication to give a sender feedback?
4. Differentiate between external and internal noise.
5. How does communication create our sense of self?
6. Describe the different types of communication.

## KEY CONCEPTS

linear model  
transactional model  
communication  
frame of reference  
source  
receiver  
message  
encoding

decoding  
channel  
feedback  
context  
physical setting  
psychological climate  
noise  
interference

internal noise  
external noise  
intrapersonal communication  
interpersonal communication  
dyadic communication  
small-group communication  
public communication

anything in common with them.” When the group begins to work together, Noelle discovers that she and Katie live in the same town, that Mo knows Cathy’s son, and that they are all nervous about doing presentations in front of the class.

At first Noelle saw only the differences between herself and her group members. But after taking the time to get to know them, Noelle found they all had much in common.

The first part of this chapter discussed the nature and components of the communication process. Building on this foundation, future chapters will explore the numerous aspects of both interpersonal and public communication, including our perceptions of ourselves and others, listening, nonverbal communication, improving the communication climate, selecting speech topics, analyzing the audience, and organizing speeches.

Each chapter presents an explanation of the topic and then suggests specific skills that can be used to improve your effectiveness as a communicator. By embracing our differences, your confidence, and ultimately your effectiveness, will be enhanced. For example, after reading Chapter 7 on improving the communication climate, you will be better acquainted with the subject of supportive climates; as a result, you will be better able to see how you can play an active role in creating this type of climate. At the same time, you will be able to recognize when you and others act defensively.

In each chapter both the discussion of the topic and the suggested skills will help you to become an active participant in the communication process. Your involvement in a particular activity (Embracing Difference, Global Connections, Skill Building, or Serving Your Community), whether it is gathering evidence for a persuasive speech or observing nonverbal behavior of an interviewer, has the potential to strengthen your confidence because it forces you to practice what you have learned. We hope this text will help you to enhance your ability to interpret, adjust, and respond to others in a variety of communication situations with people who are just like you and, more importantly, with people who are different from you.

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## SUMMARY

Communication is the interdependent process of sending, receiving, and understanding messages. Although it is an ongoing, dynamic process that changes from one communication setting to the next, there are certain components that are always present: people, a message, encoding, decoding, the channel, feedback, the context, and noise.

Communication functions in several ways. It can create our sense of self, help us to form relationships and communities, be used to persuade, and convey and create information.

Communication can take place when we interact with one other person, when we interact with a small group, and when we speak to an audience. In all these situations, intrapersonal communication (communication with ourselves) can be expected. Interpersonal communication is the informal exchange that occurs between two or more people; the interaction between two people is called dyadic communication, whereas an interaction involving three to eight people is called small-group communication. A final

## Communication and TECHNOLOGY

### Changing the Way We Communicate

Technology has changed the way we communicate with one another. An explosion of technological advances has made communication cheap, easy, and immediate. Mobile phones, for example, have become an integral part of our daily lives. These statistics tell the story.

- Six billion people use mobile phones in the world today (MobiThinking, 2012).
- 73 percent of American cell phone users send and receive about 40 text messages daily, according to the Pew Research Center (2011). Teens exchange more than 60 messages per day.
- The number of Americans with smartphones grows each year. In 2012, over 46 percent of all mobile phones in the United States had access to the Internet (Smith, 2012). Even

teens have smartphones, with 31 percent of 14- to 17-year-olds using one.

The advent of these technological advances has made communicating easier, but it has also created new communication problems. Nomophobia is the fear of being out of mobile phone contact, and in 2012 about 66 percent of the general public, up from 53 percent in 2008, had this fear (Netburn, 2012). Women are more fearful of losing their phones, but men tend to have two phones. People 18–24 are the most nomophobic (Netburn, 2012). Our main reason for using mobile communication devices is to stay in touch with family and friends. Are we afraid of being alone?

We can enhance our relationships and overall communication with the use of technology. We just need to be careful about how and when we decide to use our mobile phones.

because they lead to greater understanding and thus more effective communication. As we learned earlier in the chapter, our frame of reference is made up of many different variables, including our age, gender, ethnicity, race, religion, family roles, work experience, geographic location, sexual orientation, learning style, and socioeconomic status. Our frame of reference is unique and thus makes us different from others. We may look different, sound different, and think and feel differently. The variables that create our frame of reference affect the communication process. For example, when we see someone who looks or sounds different from us, we may become defensive and close ourselves off from any interaction with this person. But if we instead value the differences and strive to understand this person, then we can have a greater understanding and more effective communication. Specifically:

During the first week, students in a communication class are placed in study groups. Noelle, an 18-year-old first-year student who is African American, is grouped with Mo (short for Mohamed), also 18 years old and in his first year. Katie, who is 25, is close to graduation, white, and is a working single mother. Cathy, who is 55, is a junior, Hispanic, and a returning student who works full-time. Cathy's youngest son just left home and so she is an "empty nester." Noelle thinks to herself, "How am I going to be able to work and study with this group? I don't have

violence or shelters for runaway adolescents or serve as a vehicle for problem solving in organizations. Small-group communication is discussed in more detail in Chapters 9 and 10.

## ■ Public

**Public communication** involves having an individual share information with a large group; the usual structure has a speaker presenting ideas to an audience. Public communication is more formal than interpersonal communication; it therefore requires more preparation on the sender's part. Usually, speakers have a limited amount of time in which to share their ideas; this forces them to plan and organize what they want to say in advance. Chapters 11 to 16 treat the area of public communication in depth, addressing such subjects as topic selection and researching, organizing, and delivering a public speech.

## UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENCE, DIVERSITY, AND COMMUNICATION

For many people, the primary goal of a communication course is to broaden their understanding of the communication process and to become better at something they have been doing since birth: communicating with others. If we reflect for a moment about our communication with others, we realize that some encounters are easier for us than others. For instance, we might feel relaxed talking with a close friend or spouse, but we are self-conscious and nervous when we are introduced to someone new, especially someone who is different from us in some way. This anxiety is familiar to all of us—who among us has not been in a situation in which we have felt uncomfortable and wished that we could be more at ease?

The intent of this book is to help you become a confident, effective communicator by teaching you about the complex nature of communication and by presenting a variety of skills that can help you improve your communication. The application of these skills in both your interpersonal and public communication encounters can transform you into a competent communicator.

Humans approach communication and communication situations from diverse and unique positions. The differences we have should be understood and celebrated



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presentation at a business meeting. The following sections discuss two other types of communication: interpersonal communication and public communication.

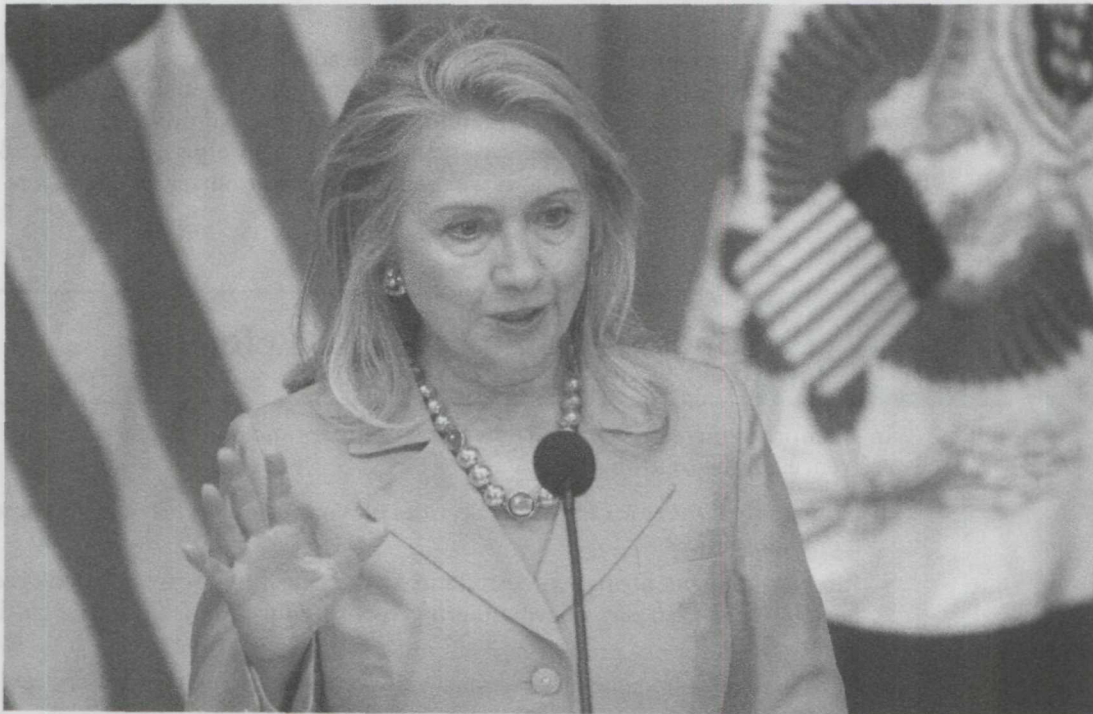
## ■ Interpersonal

**Interpersonal communication** is the informal exchange that occurs between two or more people. It usually occurs on two levels: dyads (groups of two) and small groups.

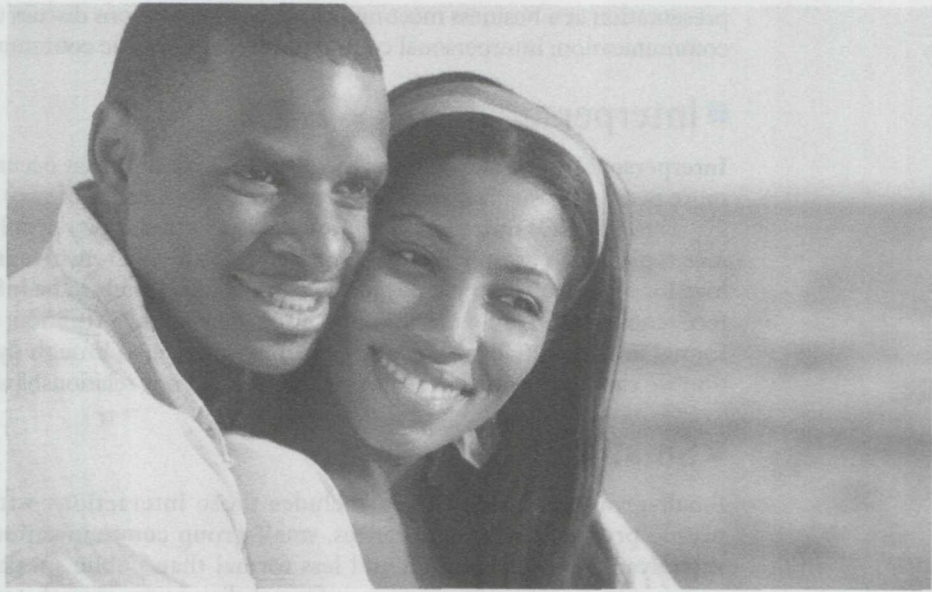
**Dyadic communication** is the interaction between two people. It can focus on safe topics, such as our day at the office, or on highly sensitive issues, such as our love for a particular person. Dyadic communication tends to be informal, and therefore requires little or no preplanning. Interviews are the exception; they are generally formal in nature. (Chapter 8 is devoted to this topic.) Through dyadic communication we can learn a great deal about ourselves and our relationships with others.

## ■ Small Group

**Small-group communication** includes those interactions with three to eight people present. In most instances, small-group communication is less intimate than dyadic communication and less formal than public speaking. Small-group communication can occur as an informal discussion of such social issues as gun

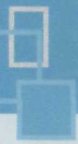


*Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton engages in public communication daily.*



*Through communication, this couple has formed a strong and lasting relationship.*

event. **Intrapersonal communication** is communication with ourselves; it is an ongoing process that includes such activities as evaluating ourselves and our relationships with others, planning for the future, and doing some internal problem solving. We engage in intrapersonal communication all the time—as we get ready for work or school, during our three-mile jog, as we prepare dinner for ourselves, and before our



## Serving Your COMMUNITY

### Understanding Frame of Reference

In an effort to increase your understanding of others and your frame of reference, do the following:

- Contact the Director of Student Services on your campus and offer to volunteer your services.
- Interact and spend time with students with special needs over a two-week period. After each day of volunteering record your feelings relating to the experience.
- Take time to share your observations with the Director of Student Services.

How did this experience help you recognize and appreciate difference? How has your frame of reference changed after your interaction with fellow students you might not have had the opportunity to know before this experience?

## ETHICS in Communication

### Different Approaches

In the beginning of the chapter, we learned about five students in a communication course. Sue, José, Alicia, Xin, and Cory have been in class together for two weeks, and their first assignment is due tonight. Each has taken a different approach to the assignment and to how each communicates about the assignment to the instructor.

Sue has been taking care of her daughter this week. Her daughter had an ear infection, and Sue spent hours in the doctor's office and then standing in line at the pharmacy. Her daughter has not slept through the night for several days, and Sue is exhausted. She did not have time to complete her journal assignment.

José has been working overtime, but he completed his journal assignment. He was somewhat confused by the assignment, so he emailed the instructor, as the syllabus suggested he do. Alicia is concerned about her first assignment. As a matter of fact, she has revised it twice and is still not sure if she has done it correctly. Alicia has created a "time management" study schedule so that she can have enough time to work and study. She thought about stopping by the instructor's office hours to clarify the assignment but decided to "just finish it" and hope it is done correctly.

Xin used the campus writing lab to make sure his journal assignment was written correctly.

He thought about emailing his instructor, but decided he should get help first from the writing lab assistants. Finally, Cory has taken a very different approach to the assignment. Feeling forced into taking college classes, Cory is not motivated to complete the assignment. He believes that the assignment requires too much work, and he would rather be doing anything else but studying.

When we communicate, we have many choices to make. Whom we talk to and what we talk about are two important considerations. Sometimes the choices are easy, and other times we must overcome our uneasiness or fear and share our feelings and thoughts. Sometimes it is better not to share information. If we intentionally do not communicate when we know we should, we may be acting unethically. Each of us communicates differently and each communication situation involves a question of ethics. As you think about Sue, José, Alicia, Xin, and Cory, answer the following questions:

1. Describe each student's dilemma.
2. What should each student do to communicate effectively and ethically?
3. Have you ever been in their situation? What did you do and why? Describe your communication behavior.

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as your discussion progressed? Through communication, we create information and knowledge. We learn from one another and use that information to develop new ideas and concepts.

## TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

### ■ Intrapersonal

Communication takes place when we interact with one other person, when we interact with a small group, and when we speak to an audience. A special type of communication, intrapersonal communication, is an integral part of any communication

frustration, and fear; and we learned how to be part of a family. Specifically, communicating with others helped us to create who we are. Our sense of self and our identity are discussed in more detail in Chapter 2, "Perception."

2. *Communication helps us create communities.* Of course, we all live in a community of some kind just by virtue of living in a house, apartment, or dorm. But communities are more than geographic locations. Communities are also created by shared meanings for symbols. These shared meanings bind people together in support or work networks. That is, someone who lives hundreds or thousands of miles from you could be part of your social community because you both share a similar language or symbol system. For example, people who text share meanings for special symbols, and if you don't know what the symbols mean, you can't communicate. Do you know what IMO means? In My Opinion. How about TMI? Too Much Information. These are examples of how shared meanings allow us to communicate and thus create communities. We will discuss this in more detail in Chapter 4, "Verbal Communication."
3. *Communication forms and strengthens relationships.* Through communication, we form human bonds that, in turn, form our friendships, families, and work relationships. We fall in love using communication. We solve problems at work by communicating with our co-workers, and we create lasting friendships by sharing stories, experiencing new things, and being supportive of one another. It is through communication that we share our emotions and feelings. Communication in relationships is the focus of Chapter 6, "Understanding Ourselves and Others."
4. *Part of being in a relationship is the ability to influence the other person.* Communication is how we do this. Communication allows us to sell products, campaign for an issue or candidate, debate a topic in class, or get the television remote from our significant other. Persuasion is an integral part of our lives because we are not only the sources of persuasive communication but are also the receivers of over thousands of persuasive messages per day. Persuasion is the focus of Chapter 16.
5. *Communication conveys and creates information.* How many times a day do you check the Internet for some form of information like the weather report, sports score, or late-breaking news? Communication allows us to find information that will help us fulfill our needs. For example:

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Alex was planning her vacation to Michigan. Alex's family will be spending a week at a cottage on Lake Michigan, and Alex wants to know several things before they go. What is the weather forecast (do I need a jacket, jeans, umbrella)? What is the fastest route to the cottage (should we take the toll road or the expressway)? What kind of restaurants are nearby (fast food or more formal)? What kind of shopping is available (grocery, clothing, sports)? These are all questions Alex needs answered before she packs her suitcase and leaves for her vacation.

Communication also helps us create information and knowledge. Have you ever worked in a group and found that you were coming up with new ideas and concepts

her professor because he walks with a cane due to a disability. Professor Anderson has multiple sclerosis. Savannah brings these negative feelings about Professor Anderson to every class meeting. She does not ask questions when material is unclear and she does not participate in class. The psychological climate during each class is very tense for Savannah.

A positive psychological climate, on the other hand, can contribute immensely to the interaction between people. Consider the following:

Beth, a student in the communication class, is terrified of public speaking. Because her instructor offers encouragement to all the students, Beth gradually feels a genuine warmth develop within the class. After several weeks Beth gains confidence and actually looks forward to coming to class. She notices changes in her classmates as well. As the semester progresses, Beth's speeches, as well as those of her classmates, show significant improvement.

Chapter 7 includes a more detailed discussion of communication climates, both supportive and defensive.

## ■ Noise and Interference

**Noise**, any intended or unintended stimulus that affects the fidelity of a sender's message, disrupts the communication process. Noise is often thought of as **interference** to the communication process. Noise can be external or internal, and it can influence our ability to process information. **External noise** includes sounds or visual stimuli that draw our attention away from the intended message. Imagine how difficult it would be to deliver a speech with construction workers drilling outside the classroom; it would be equally difficult for the audience to concentrate on the speaker's message.

**Internal noise** includes our own thoughts or feelings that prevent us from processing a sender's message—such thoughts as our plans for the upcoming weekend, bills that need to be paid and mailed, the fact that we have not had anything to eat since we woke up this morning, the fact that we really dislike the campus newspaper, and so on. When we find ourselves concentrating on such stimuli instead of devoting our full attention to the sender's message, we say that noise is *interfering with the communication process*. In Chapter 3 we will tackle the subject of listening interference in greater detail.

## FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNICATION

Why do we communicate? By nature, we are social beings who need others to survive and thrive in our society. Communication allows us to form societies, create our identities, and accomplish a variety of tasks. Most importantly, we use communication to bridge the gap between people and to form common ground. Communication functions in five specific ways.

1. *Communication creates and maintains our sense of self or our identity.* From the moment we were born, we were engaged in the communication process. Our parents talked to us, read books to us, and played games with us. It is through communication that we learned our name and gender; we learned about love,



## SKILL BUILDING

### Understanding the Communication Process

1. Try to explain your last difficult encounter with someone by using the following terms:
  - a. Source
  - b. Frame of reference
  - c. Receiver
  - d. Message
  - e. Channel
  - f. Feedback
  - g. Context
  - h. Encoding
  - i. Decoding
  - j. Noise
2. How do the source's and receiver's different approaches to communication affect the outcome of the interaction?
3. How can your understanding of frame of reference enhance your confidence as a communicator?

If, for example, James interprets Tameka's lack of eye contact as disapproval of his presentation, then his future interactions with Tameka might be less than friendly. The importance of interpreting is stressed throughout this book.

### Context

The conditions surrounding communication with others are referred to as the **context** of the interaction. What types of conditions are there? The **physical setting** in which the communication occurs can have a substantial impact on communication. Consider the difference between interviewing for a job at the local deli at a table next to customers eating lunch or interviewing in the manager's office. The location influences the degree of formality in the interaction. Such factors as seating arrangements, time of day, degree of privacy, room size, temperature, and lighting affect how people communicate with each other.

A second aspect of context is the **psychological climate** of the interaction. This refers to the attitudes and feelings we have about ourselves and the other people involved in the communication. These feelings can affect how we respond to others. For example:

Savannah is an engineering major and has a difficult time in Professor Anderson's course. Savannah feels very uncomfortable interacting with

After reading Karen's reply, Tom's confidence in his gift choice is strengthened and he purchases the toaster oven. Obviously, Tom and Karen have decoded each other's messages differently than they intended.

## ■ Channel

The **channel** is the vehicle by which the message is communicated from the source to the receiver. Familiar channels include the various types of media—television, radio, movies, newspapers, magazines, instant messaging, video chatting, and social networking sites like Facebook—as well as letters, reports, email, and our voices.

Sight and sound are the primary channels we use to communicate with others. We can see people's facial expressions and read the written word. The sound of our voices can travel thousands of miles by telephone, can be digitally recorded, or can be broadcast via radio or television. Another one of our senses, touch, also can act as the channel. We might place our hand on a friend's shoulder to communicate our concern for the loss of a loved one. At such times the use of touch can communicate much more than words.

## ■ Feedback

Another important component in the communication process is feedback. **Feedback** is the receiver's response to the sender's message; it provides information about the way the message is being interpreted. For example:

Tameka is working with several of her colleagues on a new procedure to order office supplies. There have been several instances of over ordering, and it has cost the company thousands of dollars. Tameka and her team have been asked to determine the best way to control office supply ordering. After many weeks of discussion, each team member presents his or her idea to the group. The group discusses each idea and then decides on the best procedure to recommend to their supervisor.

The group's discussion of each idea is an example of feedback.

Often we are unaware of the feedback we send to others. For instance, in one of the team meetings, Tameka keeps looking at her phone. James, who is giving a report on the cost of using another contractor for copier supplies, is very annoyed at Tameka because he thinks she is not paying attention to his report. Tameka is checking her phone for a text message from her daughter and doesn't realize she is sending negative feedback to James.

As senders we sometimes have difficulty interpreting the feedback we get from a receiver. For instance, we might interpret the feedback from an audience as being negative, when in reality it is positive.

The preceding examples illustrate the difficulty we can face when attempting to interpret the feedback given by receivers. Because we use feedback to alter our subsequent messages, problems can arise when our interpretations are incorrect. Remember, we are using our unique frame of reference to encode a message, and the receiver is using his or her different frame of reference to decode the message.

## GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

Stanford Jones is a top sales associate for Embassy Electronics, an American-based firm that is attempting to expand to an international market. The firm has identified a potential client located in Guatemala. Juan, representing the potential client, picks up Stanford at the airport. Stanford's sales experience has been with American clients, with whom he is accustomed to discussing business over dinner. While waiting for Juan to pick him up at his hotel, Stanford reviews a few key points that he plans to present at dinner, hoping to get a jump start on a potential contract. However, during dinner the discussion focuses on personal issues. Juan and the other associates ask Stanford questions about his family, his educational background, and his years with the company. Within the Latin culture it is important for potential business partners to develop a personal relationship in order to develop trust. Consequently, the negotiations are much slower than Stanford had expected.

1. How did Stanford fail to appreciate difference?
2. How can Stanford's and Juan's appreciation of each other's frame of reference enhance their communication?

for the objects around us, explanations for behaviors, and so on. We are most familiar with the concept of words (language) as our primary symbol system (more about this in Chapter 4). When we want to send a message, we rely on our frame of reference to choose the appropriate symbol. For example, the words chosen for this message would be easily understood by the receiver: "I'm really glad to see you. I've missed you so much these past two weeks." Nonverbal symbols also convey our messages effectively. A hug, for example, symbolizes an expression of warmth toward another person. In both these examples, the symbols used to convey the message (verbal expression using words, nonverbal expression using a hug) are easily discerned by the receiver.

### ■ Decoding

**Decoding** is the process of interpreting or attaching meaning to another person's message. Communication often stops because people decode messages differently based on their frame of reference. Because of diverse attitudes, knowledge, and past experiences, receivers often interpret messages differently from the way they were intended by the senders. Take the example of Tom and Shelly:

Tom and Shelly are a newly married couple. For their first anniversary, Tom wants to surprise Shelly with a thoughtful gift. After a week of searching for ideas, Tom decides that a new toaster oven would be a great idea because Shelly loves bagels. He sends a text to Karen, Shelly's mother, to get her feedback. Karen knows that Shelly hates cooking. In fact, she thinks that the idea of buying Shelly a toaster oven as a gift is so ridiculous that she assumes Tom is being sarcastic and replies to the text message with her own sarcastic message, "Yeah. That would be perfect 😊."



## EMBRACING DIFFERENCE

### Frame of Reference

Alice was severely injured in an automobile accident in her teens and has been confined to a wheelchair since that time. In her political science course, she is constantly advocating for disability reform to ensure that disabled citizens are accorded their full constitutional rights. Several times during class discussions Paul expresses his impatience with Alice by rolling his eyes when she speaks about disability rights. Jennifer, on the other hand, is more supportive of Alice and her cause. After the first few class sessions, Jennifer decides that she wants to get to know Alice better and asks if they can form a study group. She talks with Alice and they decide to share their class notes to make the class load easier for both of them. Jennifer realizes that even though Alice is different from her, she has a position that Jennifer can learn from and gain a new perspective.

1. Describe the differences between Jennifer's and Paul's frames of reference. How do their frames of reference affect how they interact with Alice?
2. How can Jennifer's appreciation of difference contribute to her effectiveness as a communicator? How can we use Jennifer's approach to communication as a model for our own communication?

### ■ Message

The **message** is the thought, feeling, or action that is sent from the source to the receiver with the use of symbols. When we create messages, we have a choice of code systems, such as verbal or nonverbal and oral or nonoral (see Chapters 4 and 5). Thus, messages can be communicated either verbally or nonverbally, intentionally or unintentionally. Verbal messages are composed of words: "I was so offended by Larry's comments that I thought I was going to scream at him!" Nonverbal messages are composed of gestures, facial expressions, vocal inflection, touch, and so on. Nonverbally, we might communicate our anger at Larry's comments by glaring at him or turning red. The content of our messages can reflect a great deal of preparation or structure (as in public speeches), a casualness (as in a conversation with a good friend), or no forethought at all (as in many of our nonverbal messages).

We can also strategically alter our message to be better understood by the receiver. For example, a speaker will want to do extensive research about his or her audience before giving a public speech to ensure that the audience understands the message. We can alter our message through language choice, delivery style, and many other variables we will discuss in later chapters.

### ■ Encoding

**Encoding** is the process of putting thoughts, ideas, or feelings into meaningful symbols that another person can understand. Symbols represent things—our feelings, names

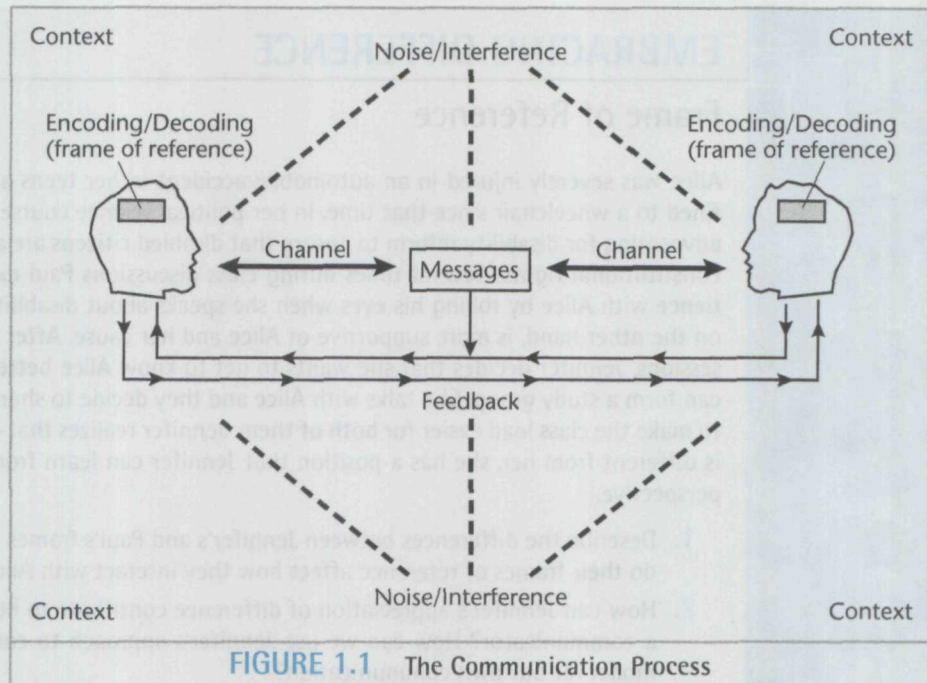


FIGURE 1.1 The Communication Process

individuals, public speeches delivered to an audience, employee interviews, small-group discussions, knowing glances between friends or partners, and so on. None of these situations is possible without the involvement of people.

Each of us is unique in many ways. Our ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, gender, socioeconomic status, age, values, and many other characteristics make up who we are, how we feel, and, more importantly, how we approach communication. These aspects together create our frame of reference. **Frame of reference** allows us to create and interpret messages. It is our unique view of the world and everything in it. What characteristics make you unique? For example, what is your family like? Do you have brothers or sisters? What is your religious background? How old are you? Where do you call home? Now think about the other students in your class. What characteristics do you share with them? Are you all the same age? How many men and women are in the class? How about ethnicity and race? Paying close attention to the frames of reference of your classmates will help you become a more effective communicator this semester.

Human interaction places the individual in two roles: the source and the receiver. The **source** is the person who creates and sends a message, whereas the **receiver** is the individual to whom the message is sent. The receiver also sends messages back to the source, so the entire process bounces back and forth. For example, Joan (the receiver) listens to Karl (the source) explain how his overtime on the job is affecting his grades at school. She remarks, "I understand, and let's try to work something out with your schedule for next week." What she has done, momentarily, is send a message of her own. For that instant, Karl becomes the receiver. When people communicate with each other, messages are sent and received simultaneously.



*Each of these friends has a very unique approach to communication.*

supervisor's reaction to what we are saying—we simultaneously send a message *and* receive the supervisor's message (that is, his or her concern, or surprise, or apparent lack of concentration on what we are saying).

Even though we may not deliberately or directly communicate with another person, we constantly send out information about ourselves. Our clothing, our behavior toward others (children, spouses, lovers, colleagues, and so on), and the amount of eye contact we establish all communicate information about ourselves. People make inferences about our behavior, just as we interpret what we observe about others.

As you will discover, communication is a dynamic process, a process that changes from one communication setting to the next. Although it is difficult to predict the ways your ideas will be interpreted by others, certain components are always present in the communication process: people, a message, encoding, decoding, the channel, feedback, the context, and noise (Figure 1.1). Understanding these components will give you both an awareness of the communication process and a working vocabulary to help you formulate and analyze messages.

## ■ People

People are an integral part of the communication process. Today's technology offers sophisticated means of sending and receiving messages. Yet this technology simply facilitates human communication, which includes conversations between

Xin, and Cory will send and receive messages differently. This chapter discusses how diversity in age, gender, ethnicity, family roles, learning styles, religion, and approach affect the communication process.

## THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

It takes a significant amount of work and energy to communicate effectively with others. One measure of our effectiveness stems from our understanding of ourselves and of others, a subject that is treated at length in the following chapter. Several factors contribute to our effectiveness as communicators, namely, our ability to listen, our verbal communication skills, our nonverbal communication skills, our understanding of our relationships with others, our ability to analyze an audience, and our knowledge of the way to research, prepare, and deliver a public speech. All these topics (and more) are covered in subsequent chapters. **Communicating effectively, more broadly, stems from an overall understanding that people are simultaneously different and similar.** We approach communication and each communication situation from diverse perspectives. In the beginning of the chapter we see five different people who have diverse expectations about their communication course experience. Sue, for example, is anxious to meet new people and wants to learn new ideas. Cory, on the other hand, is shy and not at all excited at the prospect of having to meet his fellow students. Yet these two seemingly different people share some things in common. They are in the same communication class and live in the same geographic area. These two things alone can form the basis for common ground and the foundation for effective communication. The theme of “difference” will be explored throughout the text. First, however, to pave the way for these discussions, we must understand the nature of the communication process.

We used to think of communication as a one-way process. This was called the **linear model** of communication. The linear model argued that communication can move in only one direction, from the sender to the receiver. The receiver played a passive role in the overall process. Over the years, scholars have added to and revised the linear model. We now describe communication as an ongoing, dynamic process. The **transactional model** describes communication as an interdependent process whereby the speaker and receiver are simultaneously sending and receiving messages. With this in mind, let's turn to a more detailed definition of communication.

**Communication** is the interdependent process of sending, receiving, and understanding messages. This definition implies that the components of the communication process (discussed later in this section) cannot be examined separately. Rather, the relationship that exists between the sender and the receiver, as well as the environment of the communication event, must be viewed as a whole. According to this perspective, if any of the components or circumstances change (that is, the number of individuals involved in the interaction, the seating arrangements, or the time of day), the communication event is altered.

Communication is an ongoing process; we never stop sending and receiving messages. In fact, we do both simultaneously. For example, when we tell our supervisor about how all our overtime is hurting our grades, we also observe the

that allow them to enhance their communication with each other when they use technology.

- We have strengthened the public speaking chapters by adding examples of rhetoric from the 2012 presidential election. To support our effort to embrace difference and strengthen relevance for students, we highlighted politically diverse examples of communication for students to read and dissect. Examples of speeches delivered from politically diverse perspectives give students the opportunity to reflect upon the messages generated from different political positions, which in turn helps them to understand multiple political perspectives.
- We have used the same speech topic, Habitat for Humanity, to construct both the informative and persuasive speeches in order to emphasize the differences between these speech types.
- We have carefully reviewed and streamlined the key concepts list at the end of each chapter. We hope students will review the list, reread the chapter, and highlight the themes identified as critical to their learning.

## PERSPECTIVE OF THE BOOK

Humans approach communication from diverse and unique positions. Because communication is an interdependent process that involves at least two people, multiple approaches to communication situations exist. Understanding the diversity of communication approaches can lead to a greater overall understanding of others.

In our view, valuing diversity goes beyond simply focusing on race, gender, or ethnicity. Embracing difference is a way of viewing the world in which differences among people are valued. When we embrace difference we learn to appreciate multiple approaches to communicating with others. This worldview provides us with diverse approaches to learning, problem solving, and working with people.

Embracing difference promotes learning from diverse perspectives and increases our ability to successfully respond to a wider variety of communication solutions. Thus the theme of embracing difference is integrated throughout the entire text.

Once students have been exposed to a wide variety of communication options, it is the practical application of communication skills that helps them formulate appropriate responses to new situations. Practicing these skills in a variety of settings, including interpersonal, small-group, and public communication, helps students become more confident and successful communicators.

One of the objectives for the fourth edition is to expand students' cultural and gender awareness. While ever mindful that people are unique, we sought to create workplace scenarios that require students to reflect on cultural practices from around the world. We wanted, for example, to use these scenarios to place women in senior organizational positions. This reflects the changes occurring in our global economy. It is our hope that these new scenarios will enhance students' ability to appreciate difference. Finally, we emphasize the role of technology and its impact



# Preface

We teach a very diverse population of students. Our students range widely in age, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, social role, and socioeconomic status. Many are first-generation college students and often attend our colleges or universities part-time while holding a full-time job. They are mothers, fathers, grandparents, and teens. *Communication: Embracing Difference* is written for them. It is also written for you, teachers of all different types of students. It reflects the full lives of our students in their work, family life, community, and here at school. This text is a tool that will help you provide students with opportunities to explore and celebrate the richness of difference and diversity in society.

## NEW TO THE FOURTH EDITION

In this new fourth edition we are committed to strengthening the theme of embracing difference throughout the book. We have added cross-cultural examples in every chapter to help illustrate the importance of understanding the different cultures in the book. We also expanded students' opportunities to reflect, practice, and therefore learn the importance of embracing difference. As reinforced throughout the book, students become more effective communicators when they understand and appreciate difference, because they can more appropriately respond to complex communication situations.

- A NEW Global Connections activity is included in every chapter. The composition of American colleges and universities is changing. Not only do our campuses reflect a more diverse American population; universities are attempting to attract students from all over the world. Many American campuses are seeing an upturn in enrollment of international students. When we embrace difference, we celebrate the diversity on our campuses. The Global Connections activity in each chapter addresses both international and gender diversity. We use this activity to increase awareness of gender by placing more women in positions of authority within our examples of international organizations.
- We have expanded our commitment to service and experiential learning by including three student-written activities that touch on community service. One is an outline that focuses on the Humane Society, and the other two are speeches on Habitat for Humanity. These new features reinforce the importance of serving your community.
- We have upgraded the Communication and Technology section in each chapter. We want students to understand the role that technology plays when communicating with others. Also, we want to expose students to the most current technology as well as make them sensitive to the principles of communication etiquette

## ■ Global Connections

New Global Connections activities help students to embrace international and gender diversity and recognize their place in a global society.

## STUDENT-ORIENTED PEDAGOGY

Generously sprinkled throughout each chapter are activities designed to help students think about and practice effective communication. These include:

**“Embracing Difference,”** a feature that provides students with the opportunity to reflect on the importance of diversity. Each chapter contains an application activity that demonstrates how embracing difference can enhance communication and strengthen confidence.

**“Serving Your Community,”** a feature that provides students with an opportunity to engage in service learning. In addition to the intrinsic value of serving others, this activity can lead to internships that can provide students with employment opportunities when they graduate.

**“Skill Building,”** another feature that provides opportunities for students to develop and practice the skills taught in the text and apply them to real-life or hypothetical situations by themselves or with others.

**Learning Objectives** that help students focus on the overall concepts, theories, and skills discussed in the different chapters. To help students understand the relationship between concepts and skills, the objectives are divided into two lists: (1) concepts students should know at the end of the chapter, and (2) skills students should practice at the end of the chapter.

**Chapter Summaries** for students to review the main themes of each chapter.

**Review Questions** that help students reflect on the chapter material and that can also be used for study guides, quizzes, or exams.

**Key Concepts** at the end of each chapter that help students focus on major concepts covered in the book.

**A Glossary of Terms** that serves as a helpful reference tool at the end of the text.

## AVAILABLE SUPPLEMENTS

Key instructor resources include an Instructor’s Manual and Test Bank (ISBN 0205896812) and PowerPoint Presentation Package (ISBN 0205946046). These supplements are available at [www.pearsonhighered.com/irc](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/irc) (instructor login required). MyTest online test generating software (ISBN 0205896790) is available at [www.pearsonmytest.com](http://www.pearsonmytest.com) (instructor login required).

For a complete listing of the instructor and student resources available with this text, please search for *Communication: Embracing Difference 4/e* at <http://www.pearsonhighered.com/>.

on our daily communication. We discuss, for example, the role of social media, presentational software, and tablet and smartphone applications.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

*Communication: Embracing Difference* is comprised of three units containing sixteen chapters. Unit One, The Process of Communication, includes chapters on perception, language, nonverbal communication, and listening. Unit Two, Interpersonal Communication, emphasizes theories and skills of interpersonal communication, including self-disclosure, conflict, and an entire chapter on communication climate. A chapter on interviewing covers the principles and practices of interviewing with special attention to informative and employment interviewing. The unit also includes an overview of small-group communication, small-group decision making, and leadership. Unit Three, Public Communication, discusses the process and practice of public speaking in six chapters. Subjects such as speech topic selection, research, audience analysis, delivery, presentational aids, informative speaking, and persuasive speaking are covered in depth.

## PEDAGOGICAL FEATURES

The theme of embracing difference is integrated into every aspect of the text. The following pedagogical features will help students to reflect on, apply, and critically think about communication.

### ■ Chapter Opening Scenarios

Each chapter begins with a scenario that describes a real-life communication situation faced by our students. These stories not only resonate with our students' lives at work, home, and school, they also highlight the increasing diversity of student populations across the country.

### ■ Ethics in Communication

This feature brings students back to the situation presented at the beginning of the chapter, following up on the ethical dilemmas suggested there. It helps students to see and understand the ethical choices people make in a variety of real-life circumstances. The feature may be used as a starting point for class discussion or for a reflection assignment such as a journal.

### ■ Communication and Technology

This feature discusses how technological advances have changed the way we communicate. Topics such as email and social media, blogs, iPods and iPads, the use of the Internet for research, the role of presentational software in public speaking, and working in virtual teams are discussed.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are indebted to many people for their help with this fourth edition. First, we thank the Purdue University Calumet community for its support for this project, especially our colleagues in the Department of Communication and Creative Arts. We also want to thank our students for providing us with the inspiration for writing this book and for sharing their real-life experiences with us. We thank our colleague Rebecca House Stankowski for her assistance with Chapter 12 and our colleague Shelly Robinson for her assistance with Chapter 8. A special thanks goes to all the past and present graduate teaching assistants in Communication and Creative Arts at Purdue University Calumet for their ideas, inspiration, and assistance. We are especially grateful to our research assistants on this edition, Rhonda Nemri, Caitlin Ryder, and Robert Virgin. They worked tirelessly to help us improve this text.

We also thank the reviewers for the fourth edition, who provided many helpful ideas and suggestions:

Nancy Henschel, Lakeshore Technical College

Timothy Molchany, Northampton Community College

Julia Shade, Northampton Community College

Rebecca Strongbow, St. Petersburg College

Of course, this fourth edition would not have been completed without the editors and support staff at Pearson Allyn & Bacon. We are indebted to Karon Bowers, Publisher of Communication, for her support and encouragement. We thank Melissa Mashburn, Senior Acquisitions Editor, for understanding the mission of the book and helping to make it stronger, and Megan Hermida, Editorial Assistant, for all her work in preparing the manuscript. Finally, we thank our families. Their overall support and encouragement inspired us as we completed this fourth edition. Linda and Laura Dunn, Lee and Hannah Rademacher, and Nancy and Joseph Goodnight, this book is dedicated to you.

Sue, José, Alicia, Xin, and Cory are sitting in a classroom waiting for class to begin. They have been in their communication class together for two weeks, and tonight the first journal assignment is due.

Sue is a mother of two small children and can come to campus only two nights a week. Her husband does shift work in the steel mill, so Sue must schedule her classes around his work schedule. She has enjoyed interacting with her fellow classmates and is excited about learning new ideas. Sue's younger daughter had an ear infection this week, so Sue was not able to finish the assignment.

José is an older returning student. He works all day as a construction worker and is taking classes with the hopes of getting a promotion to supervisor. By the time he gets to campus, he is tired and would rather not interact with other students. He likes the class sessions when he can just listen and take notes. José completed his assignment, but fears he has not done it correctly.

Alicia just graduated from high school and is excited about attending the local university. She and her parents have been saving for her education for several years, and she will be the first one in her family to attend college. Alicia was an honor student in high school and hopes to major in biology and eventually go to medical school. She is working part-time on campus in the financial aid office and has already joined several student organizations. She is a bit anxious about giving speeches but is looking forward to learning about communication. Her journal assignment has been done since the day after it was assigned. She has revised it twice but is still nervous about turning it in.

Xin has been in the United States for only a few months. While he loves the challenges of being a college student, he is sometimes lonely for his family and friends. Xin uses Skype to talk to his parents every weekend, and that helps. His calculus and chemistry courses are going very well as these are his strongest subjects. Xin's English skills are progressing, but he still struggles in this communication class. He wrote his journal assignment and took it to the campus writing lab for help. After revising the essay based upon the feedback from the lab assistant, he is pretty confident that he will earn a high score. Like Alicia, Xin is very anxious about giving speeches and worries that his audience will not be able to understand him.

Cory also just graduated from high school and doesn't know what he wants to do. He has been unable to find a well-paying job, so his parents are forcing him to take classes. He works part-time for a computer company repairing hardware. Cory is shy and does not want to interact with others. He would rather be at home surfing the Internet or texting with friends. So far the class hasn't been too boring, but Cory thinks the assignments require too much work. He did not do the journal assignment due tonight.

All of these students are looking for something different from this communication course, and each has approached the first assignment differently. Each will approach learning in a unique and different way. Obviously, Sue, José, Alicia,

## CHAPTER

# 1



# An Overview of Communication

## **AFTER STUDYING THIS CHAPTER, YOU SHOULD**

### ***understand***

- the definition of communication.
- the functions of communication.
- the significance of intrapersonal communication to both interpersonal and public communication.

### ***be able to***

- explain the various components of the communication process.
- describe the difference between dyadic communication and small-group communication.

