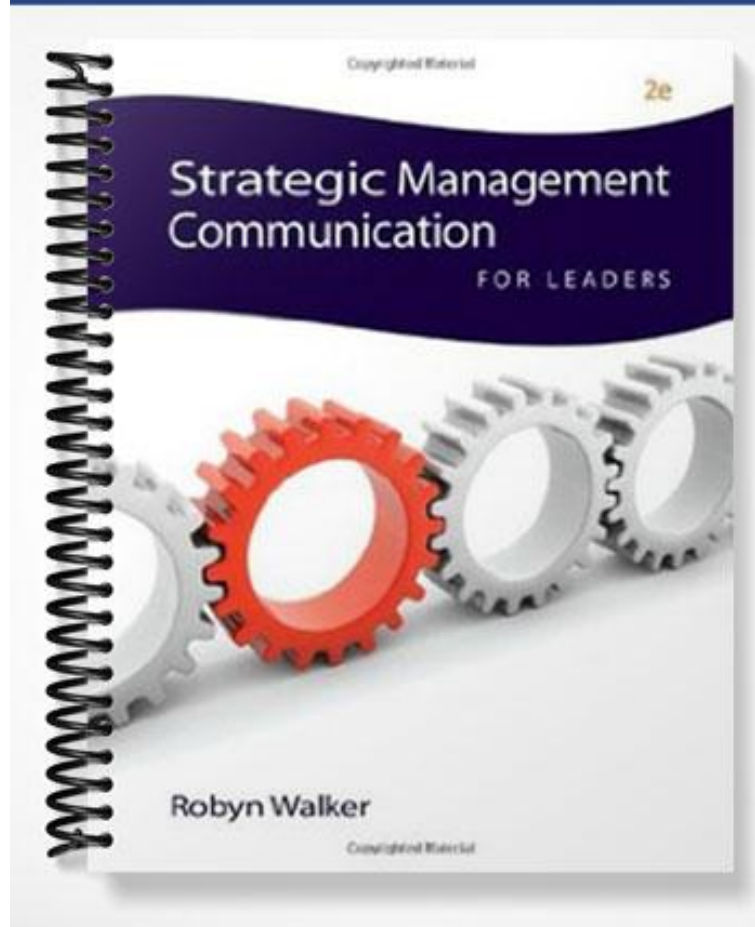


SOLUTIONS MANUAL



Chapter 2: Foundations of Communication?

Lecture Notes and Teaching Suggestions

CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

To be a strategic communicator requires a number of skills and abilities as well as certain knowledge; some might say it requires a certain mindset. These skills and abilities include understanding principles and concepts considered to be the foundation of effective communication, especially a high level of self-awareness, an ability to understand other people (who often have differing experiences, values, and interests from our own, including cultural differences), a basic knowledge of the complexity of the communication process itself, and the ability to think critically—to analyze and evaluate situations, and use that information to formulate effective communication strategies. How can you develop your analytical and critical thinking abilities so that you are better able to heighten your skills as a strategic communicator?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- I. Approach communication from a more complex perspective that embraces a strategic and ethical focus.
- II. Understand the process of perception and the way it affects the way information is interpreted.
- III. Understand the importance of self-awareness as a foundational element of effective communication and the understanding of others.
- IV. Identify obstacles to strategic and ethical communication.

LECTURE OUTLINE

I. Requirements for Strategic Communication? (p. 17)

PowerPoint slide 3

- A. Personal literacy: understanding of self-awareness and self-esteem.
- B. Social literacy: ability to understand other people (diverse) to be able to engage and challenge them.
- C. Business literacy: understanding of the organization's business environment, culture, and processes.
- D. Cultural literacy: valuing and leveraging cultural differences.

Role Play Exercise: Divide the class into four groups. Assign each of the four requirements for strategic communication to each group. Each group would be charged with the task of searching the Internet to provide examples that would best describe the requirement for strategic communication assigned.

Watch a YouTube video related to Strategic Communication:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWvi-jI6DMc

Hold a discussion about the main points discussed in the video.

II. Models of Communication (p. 17)

PowerPoint slides 4, 5, 6, and 7

- A. Communication as information transfer.
 - Assumes that communication can be achieved without distortion.
 - Flaws: interpretation and distortion are unavoidable. Nonverbal communication is ignored.
- B. Communication as transactional process.
 - Acknowledges that both senders and receivers are active and simultaneous interpreters of messages.
 - Flaws: emphasis on shared meaning. It does not emphasize the political nature of many organizations.
- C. Communication as strategic control.
 - Assumes that communication is a tool that individuals use to control their environment.
 - Flaws: it recognizes that people should not be expected to communicate in any objectively rational way, thus ignoring the goals of clarity and honesty.
- D. Communication as dialogic process.
 - Mitigates against many of the problems associated with the other three models discussed earlier.
 - Focuses on the contribution of the “receiver’s” perspective to an interpretation and course of action that are jointly formulated.
 - Audience analysis should drive strategy and message formulation.

- Does not assume that meaning is shared, but instead recognizes the interplay between difference and similarity of those involved in the communication process.
- Does not assume that we are isolated individuals, but instead that we live in groups and communities and that our actions affect others.
- Requires an understanding of the socially constructed nature of reality—individuals create meaning through communication—and the possibility for a strategic approach to communication to go awry in an ethical sense.
- Perceives others as interdependent partners capable and deserving of their own voice to influence the organizational dialog.
- Is considered an index of the ethical level of communication to the degree that participants in communication display the preceding attributes.
- Supports systems theory, plurality, and intercultural communication.

Exercise: Visit <http://www.scribd.com/doc/17878315/Models-of-Communication> and play the PowerPoint presentation. Then, divide the class into groups of five students. Each group will be responsible for explaining each of the models presented in the PowerPoint file.

Exercise: Show the video found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fpkm7D4Bn6I> and ask students to present five things that stood out the most to them. Follow it by holding a meaningful discussion.

III. Perception (p. 22)

PowerPoint slides 8 and 9

- A. Because everything is interpreted through our own experiences, beliefs, and values, it is difficult to understand what is really “out there.”
- B. Because we all have different life experiences, value systems, worldviews, and beliefs, we thus may perceive reality differently.
- C. These differences can be enormous obstacles to effective communication, particularly if we are unaware of them. Today’s diverse workplace adds a more complex dimension to this problem.
- D. Perceptual differences may lead to additional problems:
 - Stereotyping
 - Attribution
 - Impression formation
 - Culture

Exercise: Ask students to view the stereotyping video found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vXzKLtgKJj0> and hold a meaningful discussion.

IV. Self-awareness and Communication (p. 24)

PowerPoint slides 10 and 11

- A. To become effective communicators, we must know ourselves, including our strengths and weaknesses, which affect the way we interact with others.
- B. Self-concept refers to how we think about ourselves and how we describe ourselves to others.
 - How we view ourselves
 - How we view the other person
 - How we believe the other person views us
 - How the other person views himself/herself/themselves
 - How the other person views us
 - How the other person believes we view him/her/them
- C. Self-awareness and communication concepts.
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy
 - Self-awareness
 - Intrapersonal communication
 - Intrapersonal intelligence
 - Reflexivity
 - Interpersonal intelligence
 - Self-esteem
 - Emotional intelligence

Exercise: Show the video found at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pfp_ti1NQZ8 and hold a meaningful discussion.

V. Obstacles to Strategic Communication (p. 28)

- A. Perceptual mindsets.
- Confirmation bias
 - False dichotomies
 - Inferential errors
 - Vividness
 - Unrepresentativeness
 - Correlation
 - Other perceptual errors
 - Oversimplifying
 - Imposing consistency
 - Focusing on the negative
 - Making a fundamental attribution error
 - Exhibiting a self-serving bias
- B. Thinking styles.
- Lack of critical thinking

Exercise: Show the false dichotomies video found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4x4nmeNlxw> and hold a meaningful discussion.

ANSWERS TO CHAPTER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Explain each of the four models of communication and what distinguishes them, including their strengths and weaknesses. Why can the dialogic model better meet the needs of today's workplace?**
- A. Communication as information transfer.
- Assumes that communication can be achieved without distortion.
 - Flaws: interpretation and distortion are unavoidable. Nonverbal communication is ignored.

- B. Communication as transactional process.
- Acknowledges that both senders and receivers are active and simultaneous interpreters of messages.
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- C. Communication as strategic control.
- Assumes that communication is a tool that individuals use to control their environment.
 - Flaws: it recognizes that people should not be expected to communicate in any objectively rational way, thus ignoring the goals of clarity and honesty.
- D. Communication as dialogic process.
- Mitigates against many of the problems associated with the other three models discussed earlier.
 - Focuses on the contribution of the “receiver’s” perspective to an interpretation and course of action that are jointly formulated.
 - Audience analysis should drive strategy and message formulation.
 - Does not assume that meaning is shared, but instead recognizes the interplay between difference and similarity of those involved in the communication process.
 - Does not assume that we are isolated individuals, but instead that we live in groups and communities and that our actions affect others.
 - Requires an understanding of the socially constructed nature of reality—individuals create meaning through communication—and the possibility for a strategic approach to communication to go awry in an ethical sense.
 - Perceives others as interdependent partners capable and deserving of their own voice to influence the organizational dialog.
 - Is considered an index of the ethical level of communication to the degree that participants in communication display the preceding attributes.
 - Supports systems theory, plurality, and intercultural communication.

The dialogic model better meets the needs of today’s workplace because of its numerous advantages discussed above. In short, it mitigates against many of the problems associated with the other three models.

2. What are the challenges to applying the dialogic model of communication? How can these challenges be overcome?

An ethical problem that can be exposed by the dialogic model of communication is termed *moral exclusion*. It occurs when the application of moral values, rules, and fairness is not considered necessary for particular individuals or groups. The practice of moral exclusion results in individuals being perceived as nonentities, expendable, or undeserving. The result is that harming such individuals becomes acceptable, appropriate, or just.

3. Identify examples of the use of moral exclusion and describe the intent and effect of their use. Based on this analysis, discuss whether such practices are ethical. Support your response with evidence.

Moral exclusion occurs when the application of moral values, rules, and fairness is not considered necessary for particular individuals or groups. The practice of moral exclusion results in individuals being perceived as nonentities, expendable, or undeserving. The result is that harming such individuals becomes acceptable, appropriate, or just.

Persons who are morally excluded are thus denied their rights, dignity, and autonomy. Examples include showing the superiority of oneself or one's group by making unflattering comparisons to other individuals or groups; characterizing people as lower life forms or as inferior beings; placing the blame for any harm on the victim; justifying harmful acts by claiming that the morally condemnable acts committed by "the enemy" are worse; misrepresenting harmful behaviors by masking or conferring respectability on them through the use of neutral, positive, technical, or euphemistic terms to describe them; and justifying harmful behavior by claiming that everyone is doing it or that is an isolated case.

4. How have differing perceptions affected your communication with others? What steps will you take to avoid misunderstandings created by perceptual differences?

- A. Because everything is interpreted through our own experiences, beliefs, and values, it is difficult to understand what is really "out there."
- B. Because we all have different life experiences, value systems, worldviews, and beliefs, we thus may perceive reality differently.
- C. These differences can be enormous obstacles to effective communication, particularly if we are unaware of them. Today's diverse workplace adds a more complex dimension to this problem.
- D. Perceptual differences may lead to additional problems:
 - Stereotyping: can be a label for making sense out of what we perceive by categorizing or generalizing about it or it can be an oversimplified way of labeling people with the intention of denigrating them in some way.

- Attribution: the assignment of meaning to other people's behavior.
- Impression formation: process of integrating a variety of observations about a person into a coherent impression of that person.
- Culture: the totality of what is learned by individuals as members of a society and shared by others of that society. It is a way of life, a mode of acting, feeling, and thinking.

To avoid misunderstandings, we must recognize the contested perceptual nature of reality and our interpretation of it. It thus requires openness to others' views and opinions, if we are to communicate effectively to reach anything approaching shared meaning.

5. What are three different errors that may occur due to our perceptual mindsets? How may these be avoided?

Perceptual mindsets lead to the following errors:

- Confirmation bias
- False dichotomies
- Inferential errors
 - Vividness
 - Unrepresentativeness
 - Correlation
- Other perceptual errors
 - Oversimplifying
 - Imposing consistency
 - Focusing on the negative
 - Making a fundamental attribution error
 - Exhibiting a self-serving bias

To avoid these errors, we must become critical thinkers. Critical thinking is discussed below.

CRITICAL THINKING:

In the past, the focus on feelings went too far. The result is the neglect of thinking. We must answer that neglect. Students must be taught how to sort out their feelings, decide to what extent their feelings have been shaped by external influences, and evaluate them carefully when those feelings conflict among themselves or with the feelings of others. In short, students must be taught to think critically.

Feeling and thought are complementary. Feeling is an excellent beginning to the development of a conclusion. Thought provides a way to identify the best and most appropriate feeling. Students must acquire the intellectual skills necessary to solve the challenging problems of today and tomorrow.

THE CRITICAL THINKER STRATEGY MAY BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

1. Knows oneself and remains mindful of the ways in which own habits of mind undermine own treatment of issues.
2. Is observant and reflects on what is seen and heard.
3. When an issue is identified, clarification is sought by listing its subheadings and raising probing questions about each.
4. Conducts a thorough inquiry, obtaining all relevant facts and informed opinions.
5. Evaluates own findings, and then forms and expresses own judgment.

GENERIC GUIDE FOR FACILITATING CRITICAL THINKING:

- A. What do I think about this matter?
- B. What line of reasoning led me to that conclusion?
- C. What evidence supports my position?
- D. Can I give an example?
- E. How typical is that example?
- F. In what way does my experience support or challenge my idea?
- G. What additional information can help me reach a conclusion? Where can I find that information?
- H. What objections could be raised to my idea?
- I. Are any of these objections wholly or partially valid? Explain.
- J. What other views of this issue are possible? Which of those is most reasonable?

Ruggiero, V. (1998). Beyond feelings. A guide to critical thinking. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company.

6. What are some examples of black-and-white, or dichotomous, thinking from recent news reports or opinion columns you have seen or read? What other possibilities may exist to broaden the views or options presented in these reports?

Student responses should discuss how dichotomous thinking is basically the tendency to see the world in terms of “either-or.” Such thinking is typically false because there are almost always more than two possibilities in our complex world. This tendency creates a false dichotomy, which blinds people to other possibilities.

To avoid the pitfalls of false dichotomies, individuals should:

- A. Be suspicious of absolutes. Look for alternatives to the one or two suggestions recommended.
- B. Employ the language of qualifications. Speak in terms of degrees by using such terms as *sometimes*, *rarely*, *occasionally*, *mostly*, *usually*, and *moderately*.

APPLICATIONS

1. **Use a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis to determine your career goals. This is an exercise in analysis, evaluation, and ultimately, strategic thinking. First, identify the opportunities available to you and the possible risks; second, identify your strengths and weaknesses; third, identify the resources available to you to attain these opportunities; and fourth, match the opportunities available to you with those that are attainable. From this analysis should emerge an attainable career goal. It should also help you identify personal characteristics that you may leverage in a career search as well as those liabilities that you may set goals to eliminate or reduce.**

Student responses should include a thorough SWOT analysis to identify the opportunities available to them and the possible risks; identify their strengths and weaknesses; identify the resources available to them to attain these opportunities; and match the opportunities available to them with those that are attainable. The end result should be the establishment of an attainable career goal and a better understanding of themselves.

2. **Using the Internet, search for free online self-assessments of emotional intelligence, locus of control, leadership traits, and self-monitoring. One place to start is at www.queendom.com. After completing the assessments and reading the results, summarize them and then write three goals for self-improvement for each personality measure, including your plan for achieving each of them.**

Student responses should include a summary of the results of completing the assessments and a statement related to three goals for self-improvement, including their plan for achieving such goals.

3. **Using YouTube, identify examples of persons who you think exemplify a leader. Make a list of your observations: What does the person do that exemplifies leadership? You may look at the way he or she speaks, looks, or behaves. From this list, what traits of a leader did you infer from your observations? What did you notice about the way this person communicated? Set some personal goals for yourself to help you to begin to personify the traits you identified through your own communication practices.**

Student responses should discuss how an effective leader is an effective strategic communicator. This leader requires a number of skills and abilities as well as certain

knowledge; some might say it requires a certain mindset. These skills and abilities include understanding principles and concepts considered to be the foundation of effective communication, especially a high level of self-awareness, an ability to understand other people (who often have differing experiences, values, and interests from our own, including cultural differences), a basic knowledge of the complexity of the communication process itself, and the ability to think critically—to analyze and evaluate situations, and use that information to formulate effective communication strategies.

4. **Choose a culture that differs from your own and then describe your benefits and attitudes about and perceptions of this culture. Now conduct research to find out as much about the culture and its values, beliefs, and practices as you can. You may also wish to interview someone from this culture, if this opportunity is available. After learning more about the culture, what perceptions did you hold about it? Has your research changed your attitudes and beliefs about the culture?**

Student responses should include that, most likely, after conducting a research about the chosen culture, their perceptions changed about that culture. In other words, ethnocentric behavior is our natural tendency. Upon gaining of a better understanding of a given culture, we begin to move from ethnocentrism to cultural relativism. Cultural relativism refers to seeing a particular culture through the eyes of that culture, as opposed to the eyes of our own culture.

CASE ANALYSIS

- A. **Focus on Leadership: Google Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Eric Schmidt**

Answers to Discussion Questions:

1. Student responses may argue that a coach could be very effective in developing their leadership and communication skills.
2. Student responses may include that a coach requires a number of skills and abilities as well as certain knowledge and mindset. These skills and abilities include understanding principles and concepts considered to be the foundation of effective communication, especially a high level of self-awareness, an ability to understand other people (who often have differing experiences, values, and interests from our own, including cultural differences), a basic knowledge of the complexity of the communication process itself, and the ability to think critically—to analyze and evaluate situations, and use that information to formulate effective communication strategies.
3. Student responses may include some of the areas discussed in answer number 2 above.

B. Case Study: Challenge for Startup Winepod**Answers to Discussion Questions:**

1. Snell will have to form meaningful relationships with customers, colleagues, suppliers, banks, the community, and so on, in order to become a successful entrepreneur.
2. Snell has effective strategic communication, innovation, and initiative as tools to develop those relationships.
3. The key message would be that this new winemaking product is excellent for those budget-conscious consumers.