BASIC SPEECH COMMUNICATION

Principles and Practices

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Basic Speech Communication: Principles and Practices

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Preface

We have written *Basic Speech Communication: Principles and Practices* with you, the reader, in mind. Two emphases — practicality and expertise — are the guiding principles of this book. We have struggled to preserve both the academic integrity of sound communication theory and to provide pragmatic skills training that is useful for the reader.

We have also tried to maintain a balance between "behaviorist" and "humanist" approaches to communication training. The behaviorist approach — which identifies a concrete set of steps or ideas that will lead to a desired result — has been tempered with humanism — which emphasizes the importance of creative originality and individual differences.

The book is divided into four parts. The first part clarifies general principles of communication that are common to all settings. Issues covered in the first unit include "Definitions and Components of Communication" (Chapter 1), "Listening" (Chapter 2), "Verbal Communication" (Chapter 3), and "Nonverbal Communication" (Chapter 4).

The second part deals with various interpersonal settings and the communication skills of interpersonal relationships. This unit includes "Fundamentals of Interpersonal Communication" (Chapter 5), "Interpersonal Communication Skills" (Chapter 6), and "Interviewing" (Chapter 7).

Small group communication contexts are discussed in the third part. Chapter 8 focuses on the conceptual matters of "Small Group Fundamentals," and Chapter 9 explains the techniques of "Small Group Procedures."

The final and largest part focuses on the research, organization, and delivery skills for giving public speeches. These include "Reducing Apprehension and Building Credibility" (Chapter 10), "Selecting and Developing a Topic" (Chapter 11), "Organizing and Outlining a Speech" (Chapter 12), "Using Visual Aids" (Chapter 13), "Constructing an Informative Speech" (Chapter 14), "Constructing a Persua-

sive Speech'' (Chapter 15), and ''Rehearsing and Delivering a Speech'' (Chapter 16).

At the beginning of each chapter is a set of instructional objectives that specify expected learning outcomes. The Detailed Contents further specifies steps and procedures for achieving those outcomes. We encourage you to use both of these features before reading a chapter so you can get an advance idea of what to expect. Introductory summaries signpost what lies ahead. Internal summaries give you a chance to pause and assimilate what has been covered. The detailed conceptual ''Summary'' at the end of each chapter reviews major concepts and important theoretical points. All of these features will help you understand the structure of each chapter and the relationships among the ideas discussed.

The individual activities included in each chapter are designed to give you real experience in using the information and insights contained in the chapter. Take the time to consider the activities and use them to practice the skills of each section of the book.

Other features include group activities at the end of each chapter, which are designed for use in small groups. The appendices provide special help in selecting topics for speeches and outlining them. There are two sample speeches for you to consider when planning your own presentations.

While the most recent research findings have been included, many very important original works have not been cited. Notes listed in the ''References'' section of each chapter refer to major works only where they have been cited directly. Additional sources of communication research are cited in the ''Suggested Readings.'' We encourage you to deepen your appreciation of communication variables that pique your interest or are of particular help to you.

When you finish this book, you should be able to assess your existing communication skills, understand the social and psychological factors that influence effective communication, and demonstrate competence and self-confidence when communicating in interpersonal, small group, and public speaking situations.

We have a combined experience of more than 20 years in the speech classroom. We have taught in a variety of settings: rural, urban, commuter campuses, residential campuses, and Armed Forces installations, and in various corporate and business situations. These experiences have taught us that students can differ tremendously in their interests and background, their needs and goals. But students also have one major concern in common — the desire to be more effective communicators, whether at work, in personal relationships, or in classroom activities such as public speaking. Our experience has also taught us that the ability to communicate clearly and confidently is the most valued trait of an effective employee, a member of a relationship, or a successful student. Everything in life is enhanced by the ability to communicate — and students lead the way in requesting practical and expert training in communication skills.

This preface would be woefully inadequate without genuine expression of thanks to our reviewers who have commented on our work throughout the writing process. They include: Joan Aitken, The University of Southwestern Louisiana; Arlie V. Daniel, East Central Oklahoma State University; Kenneth D. Frandsen, University of New Mexico; Bena Harper, Oklahoma State University; Karl Krayer, Texas Christian University; Michael L. Lewis, Abilene Christian University; Samuel C.

Brief Contents

Detailed Contents

PART II   INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION   81