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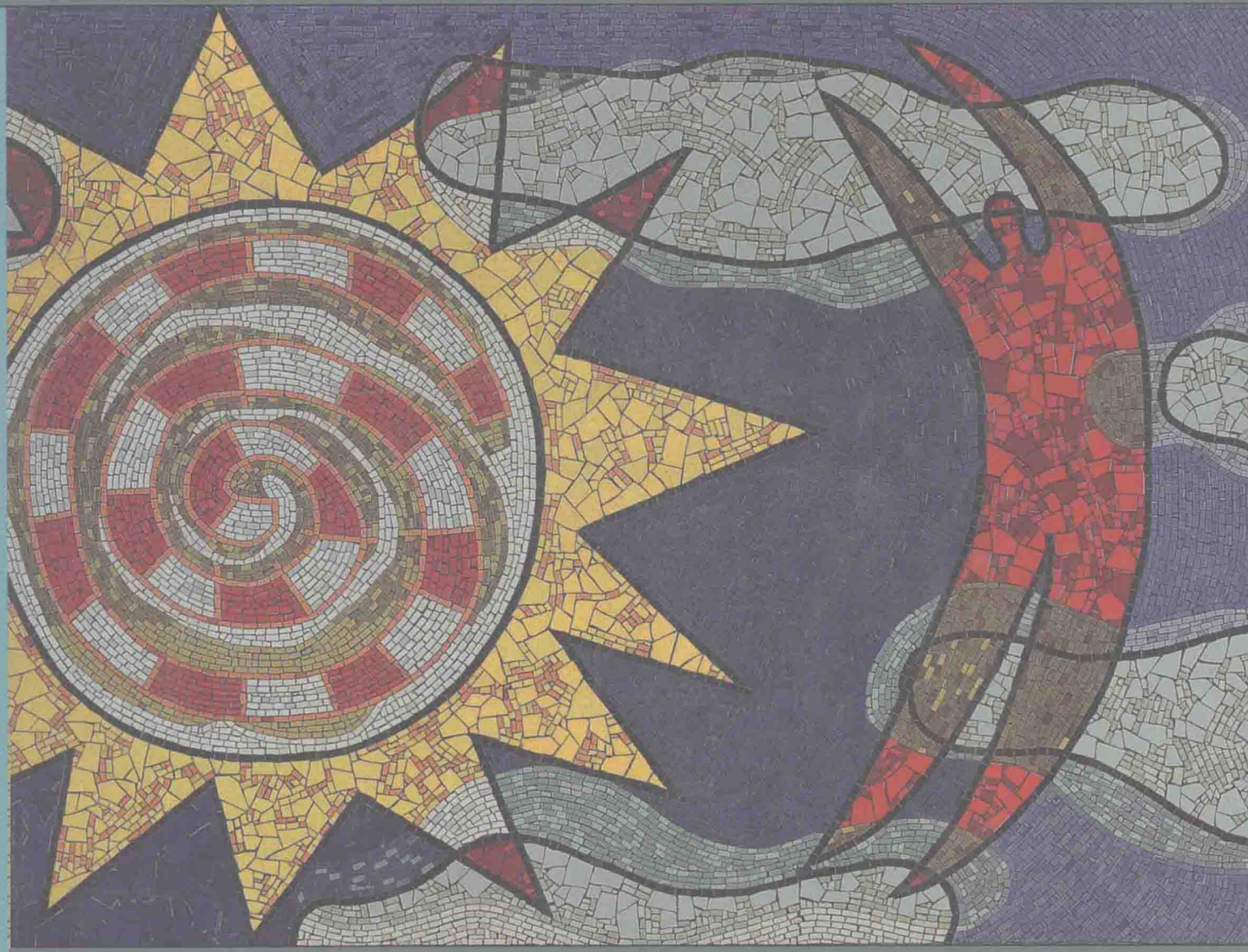
Communication Mosaics

An Introduction to the Field of Communication



Third Edition

Julia T Wood

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Communication Mosaics

An Introduction to the Field of Communication

Third Edition

Julia T Wood

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For Daniel and Harrison
and
the fantastic foolybear:
And what could she say?

Preface

I wrote *Communication Mosaics* to support introductory courses that survey the broad and exciting field of communication. Unlike other forms of the introductory course, the survey approach doesn't emphasize in-class student performances, such as giving speeches and engaging in group discussion. Instead, the survey course aims to provide a more comprehensive view of the communication field, giving attention to topics and contexts that cannot be covered in performance-oriented classes. The focus on conceptual understanding of the breadth and importance of communication in many spheres of life allows the survey course to serve a greater number of students than typically can be accommodated in introductory courses that include performance.

Responses to the first and second editions of this book indicate that many faculty want a textbook that is specifically designed to support a survey approach to the introductory course. Student feedback to previous editions indicates that students, too, find it useful to take a course that gives them an expansive introduction to the communication discipline. In addition to welcoming the approach of this book, faculty and students have been generous in offering feedback that I have used to improve the third edition.

In the pages that follow I explain my vision of this book and the features I weave into it. As I discuss the book, I'll note changes I made in preparing the current edition.

COMMUNICATION AS A MOSAIC

As the title of the book suggests, communication is an intricate mosaic that is made up of many parts. The parts are distinct, yet they are also interrelated: All of them work together to create the whole of communication. This book increases students' awareness of the importance of basic communication skills and processes and shows students how those common elements surface in specific settings where people communicate. Part I of *Communication Mosaics* introduces students to the discipline of communication and then explains basic processes and skills that are common to a range of communication situations and goals. In response to faculty feedback on previous editions of this book, I have increased coverage of the history of the communication field and emerging lines of research and teaching. The basic communication skills and processes are:

- Perceiving and understanding
- Creating communication climates
- Engaging in verbal communication

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- Engaging in nonverbal communication
- Listening and responding
- Adapting communication to people and contexts

These basic skills and processes shape the character and effectiveness of communication in a wide range of settings, although how each one functions differs from context to context. For example, we may use different listening skills when talking with a close friend and when listening to television news. Feedback from faculty persuaded me to remove the chapter on interviewing (Chapter 12 in the previous edition) and include that as an appendix. Part II of the book shows how basic communication processes and skills covered in Part I function in seven specific contexts:

- Communication with ourselves
- Communication in personal relationships
- Communication in groups and teams
- Communication in organizations
- Public speaking
- Mass communication
- Technologies of communication

FEATURES OF *COMMUNICATION MOSAICS*

Accenting this book are five features that enhance students' learning and ensure the scholarly integrity of content.

Accessible, Conversational Style

To prepare myself to revise *Communication Mosaics*, I read reviews prepared by faculty and more than 1,000 students. Nearly all students said that the personal writing style motivated them to read chapters and made the book more accessible and applicable to their lives. For this reason, in the current edition, I retain the conversational style that invites students to think with me and that lets them know a real person is behind the words they are reading. I refer to myself as "I," rather than "the author," and I address students as "you," rather than "the student." I also use informal language, such as contractions, just as people do in everyday conversations. In the opening chapter of the book, I introduce myself to students so that they know something about my view of communication and my motivations for writing this book. Another way in which I've personalized my writing style is including examples and reflections from my own life.

Foundation in Research and Theory

A textbook is only as good as the research and theory on which it is built. *Communication Mosaics* draws on the impressive research and theory developed by scholars of communication. Although I include important work from scholars in other fields, I draw most heavily on the published research of communication scholars because it is most directly relevant. Instructors who are familiar with the second edition of this book will notice that the current edition includes more than 100 new references to studies that were published since the second edition went to press.

Integrated Attention to Social Diversity

Social diversity is one of the most basic facts of life in the twenty-first century. The United States and the world include people of different ages, sexual orientations, races and ethnicities, sexes, abilities, and economic circumstances. These differences directly affect communication. Thus, the idea of universal communication goals and principles must be replaced with understandings of how goals and principles are used differently by diverse people and how communication is adapted to contexts.

Communication Mosaics emphasizes social diversity in three specific ways. First, Chapter 7 offers in-depth coverage of the relationships between communication and culture: how cultural factors influence communication style, how communication shapes culture, and how we adapt our ways of communicating to particular people and contexts. Second, I weave research on social diversity into all chapters of the book. For example, Chapter 9 explains differences in how women and men typically communicate in personal relationships. Third, examples in the chapters, as well as photographs, feature a wide range of people.

Integrated Attention to Technologies of Communication

Technology increasingly infuses our lives, and this is reflected in *Communication Mosaics.* Every chapter includes examples and research related to technologies of communication. Chapters also include special features that inform students about Web sites where they may learn more about particular forms and contexts of communication. The questions that follow each chapter also direct students to Web sites that extend the chapter's coverage by highlighting technology resources. Another way in which I emphasize communication technologies is with a full chapter on the topic. Chapter 14 deals exclusively with various technologies of communication that have changed, or will soon change, how we live and work. In response to feedback from faculty and students I revised this chapter substantially. The chapter now focuses less on describing communication technologies and more on exploring their impact on how we think, relate, and act in personal, professional, and social contexts. Students who use this book new automatically receive a 4-month free subscription to InfoTrac® College Edition: a world-class, online

library that gives students access to articles from hundreds of academic journals and magazines and to texts of speeches.

Student Commentaries

Woven into each chapter are commentaries from students' journals and papers. Although students at my university wrote most of the commentaries, there are also ones sent to me by students at other universities. I hope that students who use this third edition will send me commentaries to enhance the next edition. I include student commentaries because in my 27 years of teaching I've learned that students have much to teach each other and me. The student commentaries show how different people relate communication principles and research to their own lives.

Pedagogical Features

In this book I include seven features to maximize student learning.

For Your Information Featured in each chapter are "For Your Information" boxes that highlight communication research and the role of communication in everyday life. I use these to call students' attention to particularly interesting and important aspects of communication in a variety of settings.

Sharpen Your Skill Each chapter also includes "Sharpen Your Skill" exercises that invite students to apply skills and principles discussed in the text. Some of these exercises encourage students to practice a particular skill. Others invite students to observe how communication concepts and principles discussed in the text show up in everyday interactions. Still others ask students to reflect on the ways in which particular skills, theories, or concepts have shaped who they are and how they communicate.

End of Chapter Questions Following each chapter are questions that encourage students to reflect on what they have read and to extend and apply the material presented in the chapter. Questions at the end of each chapter include one or more that guide students to Web sites that can enlarge their understanding.

Focus Questions Opening each chapter are focus questions that orient students to the chapter that follows and help them organize how they read and study the material.

Highlighting of Key Terms Within each chapter I boldface key concepts and terms that students should learn. All boldfaced terms are repeated in a list at the end of each chapter to encourage students to check their retention after they have read the chapter. Boldface terms are also defined in the glossary at the end of the book.

Experience Communication

New to this edition is a dynamic feature that invites students to apply communication theories, concepts, and research to everyday interactions. At the end of each chapter I present a short case study or news clip that shows how ideas covered in the chapter show up in actual communication. To make the cases and clips engaging and realistic, they are included on a CD-ROM that students receive free with their new textbooks. The CD-ROM features videos in which professional actors enact the case studies or in the case of Chapters 13 and 14, a CNN News piece relates an applicable story. Both at the end of each chapter and after each video presentation I have written questions to encourage students to apply chapter theories and principles to analysis of the case study or news clip.

Communication Mosaics CD-ROM

New to this edition is the *Communication Mosaics* CD-ROM. This CD-ROM is free in the back of every new copy of the text and offers students one-stop access to all of the digital resources available with the text, including InfoTrac College Edition, access to chapter-by-chapter resources and activities on the *Communication Mosaics* Web site, access to Speech Builder Express speech outlining program, and under Experience Communication the highly interactive video communication scenarios. The Experience Communication case studies described above can now be viewed in action. What may otherwise be abstract can now be watched, heard, and critiqued.

Resources for Students and Instructors

Accompanying this book is an integrated suite of resources that support both students and instructors.

Instructor Resources

Instructors who adopt this book may request a number of resources to support their teaching.

- The ***Instructor's Resource Manual*** by adopter Robert Cole of the State University of New York at Oswego offers guidelines for setting up your course, sample syllabi, chapter-by-chapter outlines of content, suggested topics for lectures and discussion, and a wealth of class-tested exercises and assignments. It also includes a test bank.
- ***ExamView*** for Windows and Macintosh is a fully integrated resource for creating and using test items. This resource includes all of the test items found in the *Instructor's Resource Manual.*
- ***Multimedia Manager Presentation Tool for* Communication Mosaics** is an instructor CD-ROM with pre-designed, chapter-specific PowerPoint® presentations, containing hundreds of images, text, and all of the videos included on the *Communication Mosaics*

CD-ROM to invigorate your lecture presentation and support teaching. The Multimedia Manager also offers the ability to import information from previously created lectures or classroom activities.

- Also available to instructors adopting the book are **video resources**. All of the video scenarios included on the *Communication Mosaics* CD-ROM or cued within the PowerPoint® presentations on the Multimedia Manager are available on one of the volumes included in Wadsworth's video series. Wadsworth's video series for Speech Communication includes: **Communication Scenarios for Critique and Analysis (Volumes I–IV), Student Speeches for Critique and Analysis (Volumes I–VIII), and CNN Today videos for Human Communication, Public Speaking, Interpersonal Communication, and Mass Communication**. Consult your local Wadsworth/Thomson Learning representative for a table of contents of each video volume or check out the Web site at http://www.wadsworth.com/speechcomm_d/index.html and look for the icon Video Resources for Instructors.
- ***The Teaching Assistant's Guide to the Basic Course*** is available to instructors who adopt this textbook. Katherine G. Hendrix, who is on the faculty at the University of Memphis, prepared this resource specifically for new instructors. Based on leading communication teacher training programs, this guide discusses some of the general issues that accompany a teaching role and offers specific strategies for managing the first week of classes, leading productive discussions, managing sensitive topics in the classroom, and grading students' written and oral work.

Available to qualified adopters. Please consult your local sales representative for details.

Student Resources Students who purchase *Communication Mosaics* will find a rich array of resources to enhance and extend their learning.

- The ***Student Companion*** to this edition provides students with interactive summaries of chapter content, vocabulary lists, self-tests, and practical activities that help them to develop skills in communicating and apply those skills in their everyday interactions. The *Companion* also integrates Web and InfoTrac College Edition activities into its coverage.
- With this new text, students automatically receive a free 4-month subscription to **InfoTrac College Edition**, an online library with extensive holdings in communication.
- Numerous ***InfoTrac College Edition Student Activities Workbooks*** are available bundled with the text. These workbooks extend the text by providing numerous, additional individual and group activities that encourage students to utilize the InfoTrac College Edition database of periodicals and journals. Different workbooks

are available for Human Communication, Public Speaking, Interpersonal Communication, and Intercultural Communication.

- ***Service Learning in Communication Studies: A Handbook*** was prepared by Rick Isaacson, who directs service learning at San Francisco State University. The handbook describes ways to integrate service learning into the basic communication course and prepares students to work effectively with agencies and organizations.
- ***A Guide to the Basic Course for ESL Students*** is available bundled with the book. It features FAQs, helpful URLs, and strategies for managing communication anxiety specifically for communicators whose first language is not English.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Although only my name appears as the author of this book, I could not have written it without the help of many people. I want to take a moment to acknowledge the support and assistance of a number of people who have influenced how I think and write.

I am deeply indebted to the Wadsworth team. Everyone on that team has been extraordinarily professional and helpful throughout the evolution of this book. Leading that team is Deirdre Anderson, executive editor of communication. I consider myself blessed to have Deirdre as my editor. She routinely exceeds the formal requirements of her position by offering substantive suggestions and creative insights that enhance the quality of books we publish. She is also a friend whose warmth and generous spirit add much to my life and work. In addition to Deirdre, I am grateful to other members of the team at Wadsworth: Holly Allen, publisher; Eric Carlson, senior development editor; Amber Fawson, assistant editor; Breanna Gilbert, editorial assistant; Cathy Linberg, senior production manager; Jeanette Wiseman, senior technology product manager; Kimberly Russell, marketing manager; and Lisa Delgado of Delgado Design, Inc., who designed the text and cover. This book is truly a collaborative effort that involved and reflects the contributions of everyone on the team.

I am also grateful to scholars and teachers of communication who reviewed the first edition. Reviewers were Rebecca Parker, Western Illinois University; Joy L. Hart, University of Louisville; Belle A. Edson, Arizona State University; Joseph B. Zubrick, University of Maine–Presque Isle; Mark A. Schlesinger, University of Massachusetts–Boston; Matt McAllister, Virginia Tech; Stephanie J. Coopman, San Jose State University; David W. Worley, Indiana State University; Marjukka Ollilainen, Virginia Tech; Jess K. Alberts, Arizona State University; Guy Warner, Augusta State University; Jodee Hobbs, Northeast Louisiana University; Marcia Dixson, Indiana–Purdue at Fort Wayne; Carol Dostal, Indiana–Purdue at Fort Wayne; Patrick Herbert, Northeast Louisiana University; Susan Cain Giusto, Augusta State University; Scott Vitz, Indiana–Purdue at Fort Wayne; Mary Allen, Valencia Community College; Diane O. Casagrande, West Chester University; Bobbie R.

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Other scholars and teachers were generous in reviewing the second edition and my proposal for revision and offered valuable feedback that shaped this edition of *Communication Mosaics*. Those individuals are Patrick J. Herbert, University of Louisiana–Monroe; Robert A. Cole, State University of New York Oswego; Mary Carpenter, New York University; Jonathan M. Gray, Southern Illinois University–Carbondale; John T. Warren, Bowling Green State University; Teresa A. Nance, Villanova University; Sharlene R. Thompson, The University of Oklahoma; and Laura Wheeler Poms, George Mason University.

The ideas in this book were also influenced by students in my classes, as well as students around the country, who provided insightful feedback and suggestions for ways to improve *Communication Mosaics*. In class discussions, conferences, email notes, and written comments students push me to do more and tell me what communication issues are prominent in their lives. Invariably, students teach me at least as much as I teach them. Because students are so thoughtful, I include many of their thoughts as *Student Voices* in this book.

Finally, I thank those who are my intimates. For more than 28 years Robert Cox has been my partner in love, life, and work. Robbie is my greatest fan and my most rigorous critic, and both his support and his criticism shape all that I write. Special friends LindaBecker, Shelly, Todd, and Nancy, sharpen my thinking and writing by testing my ideas against their experiences communicating with others. My sister, Carolyn, remains one of the most positive, perceptive, and delightful presences in my life, as do my youngest friends, Cam who is 20, Michelle who is 12, Daniel who is 9, and Harrison who is 4. These young people continuously remind me of the magic and wonder in human relationships. And of course I must express my appreciation to the four-legged members of my family: Madhi the wonder dog, Sadie Ladie, and Ms. Wicca. When Robbie and my two-footed friends are asleep and I am writing, it's Madhi, Sadie, and Wicca who keep me company and who occasionally offer their feedback on my work.

Julia T. Wood
Spring 2003

Brief Contents

Contents vii

Preface xvii

Part I

Introduction to *Communication Mosaics* 2

1 The Field of Communication 14

2 Perceiving and Understanding 50

3 Creating Communication Climates 72

4 Engaging in Verbal Communication 96

5 Engaging in Nonverbal Communication 124

6 Listening and Responding to Others 150

7 Adapting Communication to People and Contexts 176

Part II

8 Communication and Personal Identity 202

9 Communication in Personal Relationships 228

10 Communication in Groups and Teams 254

11 Communication in Organizations 278

12 Public Communication 300

13 Mass Communication 328

14 Technologies of Communication 350

Closing 373

Appendix: Communication in Interviews 374

Glossary 390

References 397

Credits 415

Index 417

Contents

Preface xvii

Introduction to *Communication Mosaics* 2
- Introduction to the Author 4
- Introduction to *Communication Mosaics* 6
  - Coverage 7
  - Students 7
  - Theory and Practice 8
- Features 8
  - Technology Emphasis 8
  - Integrated Attention to Cultural Diversity 9
  - Student Commentaries 10
  - For Your Information 10
  - Sharpen Your Skill 10
  - Case Studies 11
  - Aids to Learning 11
- Learning About Multiculturalism 11
- U.S. Demographics in the Twenty-First Century 12
  - For Further Reflection and Discussion 12

PART I

Chapter 1 The Field of Communication 14
- Importance of Communication 16
- **SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: YOUR COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES** 17
  - Personal Life 17
  - Personal Relationships 18
- **f·y·i Ghadya Ka Bacha** 18
- **f·y·i Communication and Marriage** 19
  - Professional Life 19
  - Civic Life 20
- History of the Communication Field 21
  - Classical Roots: Rhetoric and Democratic Life 21
- **f·y·i Wisdom from Ancient Teachers** 22
  - Liberal Education 22
  - Broadening the Field 24
  - Communication, Power, and Empowerment 25
- Conducting Research in Communication 26
  - Quantitative Research 26
  - Qualitative Research 27
  - Critical Research 28

Defining Communication 28
Features of Communication 28
Models of Communication 30
Breadth of the Communication Field 33
Intrapersonal Communication 33
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: ANALYZING YOUR SELF-TALK 34
Interpersonal Communication 34
Performance Studies 35
Group and Team Communication 35
Public Communication 36
Organizational Communication 37
Mass Communication 38
Technologies of Communication 38
Intercultural Communication 39
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: YOUR MEDIATED WORLD 40
f-y-i Learning About Intercultural Communication 41
Ethics and Communication 41
Blurring the Lines 41
Unifying Themes and Processes in the Communication Field 42
Unifying Themes 42
Basic Processes of Communication 43
Careers in Communication 44
Research 44
Education 44
Mass Communication 45
Training and Consulting 46
Human Relations and Management 46
f-y-i Careers in Communication 46
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: SPEECH OF SELF-INTRODUCTION 47
Summary 47
Communication Mosaics Online 47
Key Terms 48
For Further Reflection and Discussion 48
Experience Communication Case Study: Speech of Self Introduction 48

Chapter 2 Perceiving and Understanding 50
The Perception Process 51
Selection 52
Organization 53
f-y-i The Census Bureau's Dilemma 55
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: SIZING UP OTHERS 56
Interpretation 56
f-y-i It's Never Our Fault! 57
Influences on Perception 58
Physiological Factors 58
Expectations 59
Cognitive Abilities 60

SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: VISUALIZING POSITIVE COMMUNICATION 61
Social Roles 63
Cultural Factors 64
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: NOTICING INDIVIDUALISM 64
Guidelines for Improving Skill in Perceiving 65
Avoid Mind Reading 65
Check Perceptions with Others 65
Distinguish Facts from Inferences 66
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: PERCEPTION CHECKING 66
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: DISTINGUISHING FACTS FROM INFERENCES 67
Monitor the Self-Serving Bias 67
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: USING TENTATIVE LANGUAGE 67
f·y·i Attribution Patterns and Relationship Satsifaction 68
f·y·i The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing But the Truth 68
Summary 69
Communication Mosaics Online 69
Key Terms 70
For Further Reflection and Discussion 70
Experience Communication Case Study: College Success 70

Chapter 3 Creating Communication Climates 72
Levels of Confirmation and Disconfirmation 73
Recognition 74
Acknowledgment 74
Endorsement 75
f·y·i Guidelines for Communicating with People with Disabilities 76
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: CONFIRMATION AND DISCONFIRMATION IN ONLINE COMMUNICATION 76
Defensive and Supportive Climates 77
Evaluation Versus Description 78
Certainty Versus Provisionalism 78
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: USING DESCRIPTIVE LANGUAGE 78
Strategy Versus Spontaneity 79
Control Versus Problem Orientation 80
Neutrality Versus Empathy 81
Superiority Versus Equality 81
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: ASSESSING COMMUNICATION CLIMATES 82
Conflict and Communication 82
f·y·i Crisis and Opportunity 83
Conflict May Be Overt or Covert 83
Conflict May Be Managed Well or Poorly 83
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: YOUR VIEW OF CONFLICT 87
Guidelines for Creating and Sustaining Healthy Communication Climates 88
Accept and Confirm Others 88
Affirm and Assert Yourself 88
Respect Diversity Among People 90
Time Conflict Effectively 90
Show Grace When Appropriate 91

Summary 92
Communication Mosaics Online 93
Key Terms 93
For Further Reflection and Discussion 93
Experience Communication Case Study: Cloudy Climate 94

Chapter 4 Engaging in Verbal Communication 96
f·y·i Language Creates Reality 98
Language and Meaning 98
Features of Language 98
f·y·i Our Multicultural Language 100
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: COMMUNICATING CLEARLY 101
f·y·i The Languages of Race and Ethnicity 103
Principles of Communication 104
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: COMMUNICATION RULES 106
Symbolic Abilities 108
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: PUNCTUATING INTERACTION 108
Language Defines Phenomena 109
f·y·i The Whorf–Sapir View of Language 110
Language Evaluates Phenomena 110
f·y·i Reappropriating Language 111
Language Organizes Experiences 112
Language Allows Hypothetical Thought 113
Language Allows Self-Reflection 114
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: *I–ME* DIALOGUES 115
Language Defines Relationships and Interaction 116
f·y·i Japanese and American Styles of Negotiation 117
Guidelines for Effective Verbal Communication 117
Engage in Person-Centered Communication 117
Be Conscious of Levels of Abstraction 117
Qualify Language 118
f·y·i General Semantics 118
Own Your Feelings and Thoughts 119
SHARPEN YOUR SKILL: USING *I* LANGUAGE 120
Summary 121
Communication Mosaics Online 121
Key Terms 121
For Further Reflection and Discussion 122
Experience Communication Case Study: The Roommates 122

Chapter 5 Engaging in Nonverbal Communication 124
Principles of Nonverbal Communication 126
Nonverbal Communication Is Ambiguous 126
Nonverbal Behaviors Interact with Verbal Communication 127
Nonverbal Communication Can Regulate Interaction 127
Nonverbal Communication Can Establish Relationship-Level Meanings 128
Nonverbal Communication Reflects Cultural Values 130

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