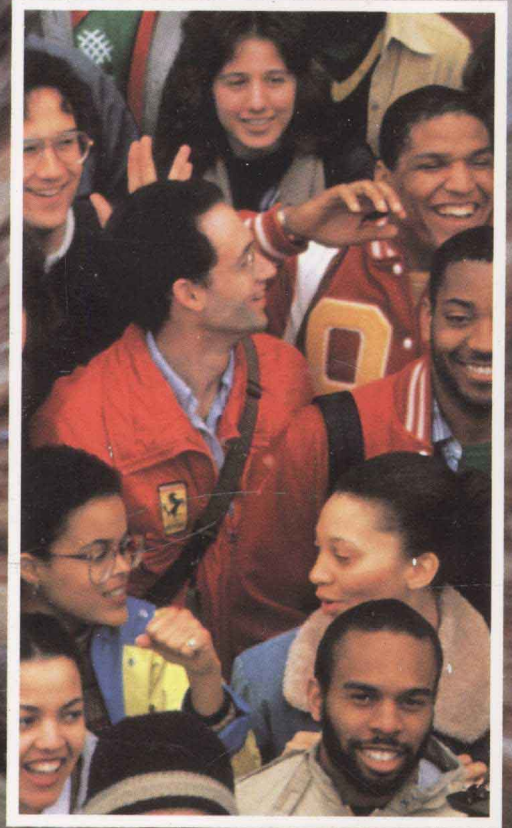


THE DYNAMICS OF HUMAN COMMUNICATION: A LABORATORY APPROACH

SIXTH EDITION

NOT FOR RESALE
DONATION
HILL-CRAW-MCG



GAIL E. MYERS
MICHELE TOLELA MYERS

THE DYNAMICS OF HUMAN COMMUNICATION

A LABORATORY APPROACH

SIXTH EDITION

Gail E. Myers

*Consultant
Applied Communication*

Michele Tolela Myers

*President
Denison University*

McGraw-Hill, Inc.

New York St. Louis San Francisco Auckland Bogotá
Caracas Lisbon London Madrid Mexico City Milan
Montreal New Delhi San Juan Singapore
Sydney Tokyo Toronto

**THE
DYNAMICS
OF
HUMAN
COMMUNICATION
A Laboratory Approach**

Copyright © 1992, 1988, 1985, 1980, 1976, 1973 by McGraw-Hill, Inc.
All rights reserved.

Printed in the United States of America.

Except as permitted under the United States Copyright Act of 1976,
no part of this publication may be reproduced
or distributed in any form or by any means,
or stored in a data base or retrieval system,
without the prior written permission of the publisher.

12 13 14 15 DOC/DOC 098765

ISBN 0-07-044231-2

This book was set in Souvenir by Ruttle, Shaw & Wetherill, Inc.
The editors were Hilary Jackson, Lyn Beamesderfer, and Scott Amerman;
the production supervisor was Janelle S. Travers.

The photo editor was Inge King.

Drawings were done by Fine Line Illustrations, Inc.
R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company was printer and binder.

Cover photos: Background, J. Whitmer/H. Armstrong Roberts; inset,
Jeff Lowenthal/Woodfin Camp & Associates.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Myers, Gail E., (date).

The dynamics of human communication: a laboratory approach / Gail
E. Myers, Michele Tolela Myers.—6th ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-07-044231-2

1. *Interpersonal communication.* 2. *Interpersonal communication—*
Problems, exercises, etc. I. Myers, Michele Tolela, (date).

II. Title.

BF637.C45M9 1992

153.6—dc20

91-17784

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Since 1972, Michele and Gail Myers have published three communication textbooks with McGraw-Hill: *Communicating When We Speak*, *Managing by Communication*, and this book, *The Dynamics of Human Communication*, now in its sixth edition.

Translated into French, *Dynamics of Human Communication* has recently been issued in its second French-language edition and is available in Europe as well as in Canada.

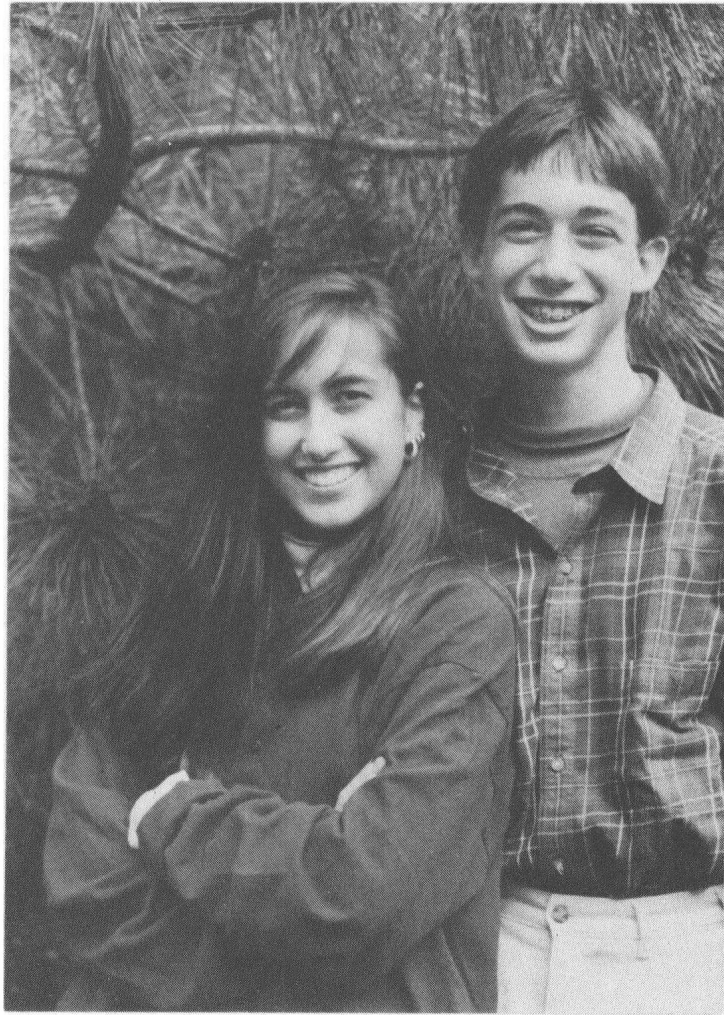
Managing by Communication has been translated into Spanish for students in Mexico and Latin America, and has been published by McGraw-Hill Tokyo in a Far East edition.

Gail E. Myers now heads up his own organizational communication consulting service, Applied Communication. While teaching recently both graduate and undergraduate courses at Temple University (including interviewing, interpersonal, and business communication) he was also the director of that Speech Department's graduate program in applied communication. He joined the Temple faculty after leaving a professorship at Trinity University (Texas) where he had earlier been Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and of Communication and the Arts. His teaching

appointment as full professor at Trinity was in both the Speech Department, teaching interpersonal, organizational, and group courses, and the Communications Department, where he taught public relations, mass media in society, and the aesthetics of sight, sound, and motion. His administrative career also includes positions as alumni and publications director at the University of Northern Iowa (Cedar Falls), technical editor at the Colorado School of Mines, vice president and then president of Monticello College (Illinois), and founding president of Lewis and Clark Community College (Illinois). In addition to part-time teaching during his administrative assignments he has taught full-time at the University of Denver and at Trinity University. He has a B.A. and an M.A. in journalism from the State University of Iowa, where he was editor of *The Daily Iowan*, and his Ph.D. is from the University of Denver in communication methodology. His dissertation involved a sociometric study of the channels of communication used by Spanish-surnamed residents of Denver.

Gail and Michele have two children, Erika, born in 1972, and David, born in 1977, and have dedicated all the editions of their books to them.

Michele Tolela Myers is the first woman president of Denison University in Granville, Ohio. A native of Paris, France, she graduated from the Institute of Political Science at the University of Paris before coming to the United States to study communication at the University of Denver. She earned an M.A. and a Ph.D. at Denver, later adding an M.A. in clinical psychology from Trinity University in Texas. Her dissertation was in the field of group dynamics and was directed by Alvin Goldberg. Before her appointment as president at Denison, she was Dean of the Undergraduate College at Bryn Mawr, and earlier was Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at Trinity. She was an American Council of Education fellow in administration at Northwestern and at Trinity; in addition she taught at the University of Denver, Manchester College (Indiana), Monticello College (Illinois), and Trinity University (Texas) before moving into academic administration. She had a private practice in family and group psychology, and helped establish networks for women in the professions. She and her husband have been very active in communication and organizational behavior consulting for many different business organizations, professional groups, health care institutions, and governmental agencies.



To Erika and David

PREFACE

The first edition of this textbook grew out of a need to combine the essential *practice of communication* with the rapidly growing *knowledge about communication*. The first edition of *Dynamics of Human Communication* was a pioneer in the field, as it put theories to work with the skills of applying them to human interaction.

Feedback from students and teachers who have used this book has influenced each new edition—the content, the writing style, the kinds and sources of exercises, and the organization of the manuscript material. New theoretical developments, new ways of looking at human relationships, new emphases on discourse and transactions all have meant changes in what this textbook covers. New ways of viewing the human communicative condition gave rise to new research directions, new nomenclatures, and new scholars whose work deserves inclusion in the updated texts in this discipline. To update a textbook it is necessary to review the writing and research about human communication reported in many journals both outside the discipline (for example, in publications of the social and behavioral sciences) and in the communication field in such works as *Human Communication Research*, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Journal*

of *Communication*, *Communication Education*, and *Communication Monographs*, as well as the regional journals in the field. You will still, however, find many references to classical research and theorists in human communication dating back many years; these must be included to help you gain a historical perspective on communication studies. These references also pay tribute to the earliest scholars, thinkers, and leaders in the field of interpersonal and speech communication.

Wide acceptance not only of this textbook but of the principle of “laboratory learning” has meant a significant change in the way many communication courses are taught. Invention of the Interpersonal Communication Laboratory by Elwood Murray at the University of Denver marked a new beginning in speech teaching—adopting as he did the laboratory principles from the physical sciences. Nobody up to that time seems to have questioned the need to apply chemical principles in a chemistry lab, or the idea that students develop a greater understanding of energy or motion in a physics lab. But it seemed a bit revolutionary fifty years ago when Dr. Murray took that next logical step in developing a social science laboratory where communication theory can be brought to first-person experience in a safe and controlled learning environment.

Organization of This Book

The Laboratory Manual—The feature which has consistently made *Dynamics* both student-centered and unique is the laboratory manual section, located at the end of the book. The participative function of the manual relates the student directly to the text material, chapter by chapter. This is truly “laboratory learning,” as the assignments, activities, and experiences link a world of theory with the world of communicative action. There are cases to solve or discuss or role-play. There are topics for lively discussion. There are questions about communicative behavior which stimulate both thought and interaction. There are games and problems. All are designed to give you more insights into the principles and theories introduced in the first part of the book. It is not likely you will have the opportunity in class to use all the incidents or activities, but students may want to read the items or answer for themselves some of the suggested discussion questions; or they may want to do additional assignments beyond what is covered in the course.

New to This Edition—Because *Dynamics* enjoyed such a leading and pioneering role in the teaching of interpersonal communication, we are challenged to reflect the current needs of teachers and the changing responses by students. Thanks to generously informal and rigorously formal reviews and suggestions, we can take advantage of thoughtful feedback in making this Sixth Edition a joint effort to serve yet another generation of learners and teachers. These efforts include:

- Pulling “listening” from a later and subordinated position to recognize its growing centrality of communication focus.
- Developing for the first time a “four-stage” construct for understanding listening; suggesting this exciting new taxonomy to help clarify the complexities of listening behavior.
- Adding more cross references between text and the important activities and exercises in the Lab Manual.
- Moving the “language and meaning” materials later in the book better to reflect an implicit order of problem-solution in the content.
- Deleting, adding, editing relevant communication examples and triggers for discussion to represent changing demographics and curiosities of the readers.
- Assembling fresh visual support for the text data—photos, diagrams, charts, etc.—which enrich the students’ interactions with the text.
- Expanding our discussion of feedforward (also referred to as “candidate answers” or “trial balloons”) as an adjunct to the clearly prescriptive use of feedback.
- Moving citations to a position of end-notes; continuing the balance of classic references in relation to notations of very current literature; and emphasizing new ranges of references which will be both interesting and available to further library search.

The Text—The eleven chapters in the text portion of the book progress from an overview of human communication, through the complexities of interpersonal relationships, to the specifics of managing interpersonal tensions.

Chapter 1 introduces some of the more popular, interesting, and useful theories about how people communicate with one another and with what effect. A brief historical review helps place this study in perspective.

Chapter 2 includes theories of perception, with many familiar and descriptive illustrations of how communication is affected by how you perceive. We propose a process view of the world rather than a static one.

Chapters 3 and 4 involve the development and maintenance of self-concept. We explore the ways in which people respond to others’ opinions, and focus on how a choice of communicative style (especially assertiveness) can be employed as a means of managing your self-esteem as well as interpersonal relationships.

Chapter 5 relates to needs, attitudes, values, and beliefs and explains how they support or inhibit your interpersonal communication. Again, an historical perspective traces the origin of today’s theories and demonstrates how their current implications affect communication.

Chapter 6 provides an original treatment of listening as a special case of communicative behavior. It addresses the limits of our listening habits

and the consequences, as well as some suggestions which have been made about assessing and overcoming listening problems. Unique to this book is the classification of four listening types, which make a significant argument for taking a fresh look at listening behaviors.

Chapters 7, 8, and 9 explore how communication relates to language, meaning, and the fascinating nonlanguage systems we refer to as non-verbal and silences. Recognizing the powers of language to build or destroy, we propose several ways of looking at the use of language. This analysis will help us detect the unhealthy use of language when it occurs, and, in turn, help us make our own use of language more effective.

Relationships, trust, and the roles we play in their development and maintenance are treated in Chapter 10. While our most personal relationships are important, the study of relations goes much further because “interpersonal” is not a synonym for “intimate.” For this reason we will study relations in the family, in friendships, in work and study contacts, and in intercultural and international affairs, as well as in our casual everyday associations with strangers.

Chapter 11 offers new ways of looking at conflict, and at negotiation as one means of managing various types of conflict. Use of feedback and feedforward and self-disclosure are related to management of the tensions that inevitably arise during your communication transactions.

Learning Aids in the Chapters—Each chapter has End Notes that refer to the sources from which material in this book has been derived and offers further reading opportunity. In addition, there are figures and “boxes” of related items to trigger critical thinking and discussion about the text material. Objectives at the start of each chapter indicate what can be expected, while the summary at the end gives a brief review of the data contained in the chapter.

Acknowledgments

Previous editions of this textbook, as well as our own personal and professional lives, were deeply influenced by Dr. Elwood Murray, a creative scholar and an innovative teacher. In this preface we have already mentioned that Dr. Murray pioneered the interpersonal laboratory, and that is simply one of his accomplishments which has actually changed the way speech communication is taught today. At least three decades before the rest of the discipline had accepted the human transactional view of communication, Dr. Murray was writing, campaigning, arguing, and probing this set of then-revolutionary formulations. His students, and *their* students in turn, have had a continuing effect on the field of interpersonal communication. In her excellent book on interpersonal communication, Kathleen Reardon credits Dr. Murray with substantial contributions to this field, including founding the International Communication Association (founded as the National Society for the Study of Communication) and

positing the “important connection between personality and interpersonal relationships.”¹ In this new edition of a textbook which comes directly from Dr. Murray’s life and work, we want to simply add our most sincere and public acknowledgment to those many other accolades he has received, most recently Dr. Reardon’s insightful recognition of Elwood Murray’s significant place in the communication discipline.

This sixth edition is very substantially changed from previous editions, both in the text matter and in the arrangement of the chapters. Critical and highly qualified reviewers have provided excellent advice on how to make the book more effective. All have used or are presently using this text, and their comments come from experience with previous editions of *Dynamics* as well as knowledge about other textbooks. We also seek and use student reactions to help us make crucial improvements in the text and the lab manual. We especially made grateful use of the careful and thoughtful comments from Anita Pomerantz and her graduate assistants at Temple University. Collegial encouragement from former Temple U. associates Joe Folger, Bob Craig, Karen Tracy, Tom Rosteck, Herb Simon, et al., has helped broaden our approach and clarify the presentation of this book.

For the following seven reviewers selected by McGraw-Hill, we are appreciative, as their comments meant much in the revision of the order and content of this sixth edition: John Anglin, East Central College; Nelson da Costa, University of Kansas; Allan Frank, SUNY–Brockport; Colan T. Hanson, North Dakota State University; Anita Pomerantz, Temple University; Linda Reese, College of Staten Island; and Dick Stine, Johnson County Community College.

To the McGraw-Hill team of publishers, editors, artists, and production people we want to express our appreciation for their work as well as their confidence in this new revised edition. Specifically we are grateful to Hilary Jackson, Lyn Beamesderfer, Scott Amerman, Janelle Travers, and Chuck Carson as professionals in the difficult role of bringing ideas from an author into a classroom.

Gail E. Myers
Michele Tolela Myers

¹ Kathleen K. Reardon, *Interpersonal Communication: Where Minds Meet*, Belmont, Calif., Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1987, p. 33.

CONTENTS

Preface	xix
Chapter 1—You and Your Communication	3
Objectives	3
Introduction	4
Why Communicate?	4
Scope of Communication Study	6
<i>Intrapersonal Communication</i> <i>Interpersonal Communication</i>	
<i>Group Communication</i> <i>Mass Communication</i>	
Models and Definitions	10
<i>Models and Definitions Focus Attention</i> <i>Models and</i>	
<i>Definitions Simplify the Complex</i> <i>Models and</i>	
<i>Definitions Represent Your Point of View</i>	
A Definition of Interpersonal Communication	15
	ix

A Set of Transactional Principles	16
<i>First Principle: You Cannot Not Communicate</i>	
<i>Second Principle: Communication Is Predictable</i>	
<i>Third Principle: Communication Is a "Chicken and Egg" Process</i>	
<i>Fourth Principle: Communication Occurs at Two Levels</i>	
<i>Fifth Principle: Transactions Are between Equals or Up-and-Down</i>	
<i>Sixth Principle: Communication Is a Sharing of Meaning</i>	
Summary	28
End Notes	30
 Chapter 2—Perception: The Eye of the Beholder	 33
Objectives	33
Introduction	33
What You Perceive	34
<i>You and Your Senses</i>	
<i>Who Is in Charge of Your Perceptions?</i>	
<i>Do You and I See Alike?</i>	
<i>Perceptions Lead to Behaviors</i>	
How You Perceive	40
<i>You Select</i>	
<i>You Organize</i>	
<i>You Interpret</i>	
<i>You Create Your World</i>	
A Process View of the World	53
<i>Checking Perceptions</i>	
<i>Perception and Diversity</i>	
<i>What Does This Have to Do with You?</i>	
Summary	57
End Notes	58
 Chapter 3—Self-Concept: Who Am I?	 61
Objectives	61
Introduction	62
An Introduction to Yourself	62
How Your Self-Concept Develops	63
<i>You Learn Your Self-Concept through Interpersonal Communication</i>	
<i>The Self-Concept is Maintained or Changed through Interpersonal Communication</i>	
Why Study Self-Concept?	72
Self-Acceptance and Self-Esteem	74
<i>Building Self-Esteem</i>	
<i>Maintaining Self-Esteem</i>	
Verbal Patterns and Self-Concept	75
<i>Low Self-Concept</i>	
<i>High Self-Concept</i>	

Range of Self-Concept	77
<i>Physical Range</i> <i>Role Range</i> <i>Introspective Range</i>	
<i>Range Behaviors</i>	
Behaviors and Self-Concept	80
<i>Behaviors and You</i> <i>Changing Behaviors</i>	
Summary	82
End Notes	82
 Chapter 4—Assertion: Who Can I Be?	 85
Objectives	85
Introduction	86
Managing Your Self-Esteem	86
Assertiveness as Behavior	88
<i>Assertiveness Is for Anyone</i> <i>Consequences of Assertiveness</i>	
Communication Styles	93
<i>The Blaming or Aggressive Style</i> <i>The Placating or</i>	
<i>Nonassertive Style</i> <i>The Computing or Intellectual Style</i>	
<i>The Distracting or Manipulative Style</i> <i>The Leveling or</i>	
<i>Assertive Style</i> <i>Summary of Styles</i>	
Changing Behaviors	97
Defending Yourself	98
<i>The Reduction of Defensive Climates</i>	
Summary	107
End Notes	108
 Chapter 5—Needs, Attitudes, Beliefs, Values: How Did I Get This Way?	 111
Objectives	111
Introduction	111
Motivation	112
<i>Maslow and the Hierarchy of Needs</i> <i>Needs as Motivators</i>	
<i>Needs as Transactions</i> <i>Schutz and the Theory of</i>	
<i>Interpersonal Needs</i> <i>Dimensions of Interpersonal Needs</i>	
<i>In Summary: Why Study Needs?</i>	
Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values	119
<i>A Few Definitions</i> <i>Formation of Beliefs, Attitudes, and</i>	
<i>Values</i> <i>Related Theories</i> <i>Implications for</i>	
<i>Communication</i>	
Summary	131
End Notes	132

Chapter 6—Listening: Is Anybody Out There?	135
Objectives	135
Introduction	136
The Challenge	136
Limits of Listening	137
<i>How Bad Are We? Some Causes of Poor Listening</i>	
Defining and Studying Listening	141
<i>Some Background on Listening Study Developing a Definition</i>	
How We Do It: Listening Types	143
<i>Some Listening Classification Options Four Interpersonal Types of Listening</i>	
Listening Assessment and Training	150
<i>Assessment and Evaluation Training and Improvement of Listening More Effective Listening</i>	
Summary	153
End Notes	153
 Chapter 7—Symbol Systems: Looking at Your Language	 157
Objectives	157
Introduction	158
Everybody Loves Language	159
Language as Thought	160
Language as Symbols	161
<i>Your Real World and Your Symbol World</i>	
Language as Classification	164
<i>Similarities and Differences Using Stereotypes</i>	
<i>Polarization: Real and False Opposites Language Guides Your Observing</i>	
Language as Political and Social Power	170
<i>International Language Power Dialects and Varieties</i>	
Summary: Language Makes Us Human	174
End Notes	174
 Chapter 8—Living with Your Language	 177
Objectives	177
Introduction	178

Myths about Meaning	178
<i>Myth 1: Words Have Meaning</i> <i>Myth 2: A Word Has Only One Meaning</i> <i>Myth 3: Ambiguous Meanings Are Always Bad</i>	
Using Language Effectively	185
<i>Language Relations in Three Parts</i> <i>Jargon in a Specialized and High-Tech World</i> <i>Embellishment for Effect</i> <i>A Continuum of Polluted Language</i>	
Inference, Observation, and Judgment	191
<i>Statements about Facts and Statements about Inferences</i> <i>Statements about Judgments</i>	
Summary	196
End Notes	197
 Chapter 9—Nonverbal and Silences: Communicating without Words	 199
Objectives	199
Introduction	200
Silences	200
<i>Silences Occur in Interpersonal Communication</i> <i>Silences Are Not Random</i> <i>Using Your Silences Appropriately</i>	
Sending and Receiving Nonverbal Communication	205
<i>Nonverbal as Popular Culture</i>	
Nonverbal Systems	208
<i>Classifying Nonverbal</i> <i>Paralanguage</i> <i>Facial Expression</i> <i>Eye Contact: Gaze Behavior</i> <i>Gestures</i> <i>Body Language</i> <i>Communication by Touch</i> <i>Object Language</i>	
Contextual Patterns for Nonverbal Messages	227
<i>Time</i> <i>Space</i>	
Summary: Characteristics of Nonverbal Communication	233
<i>The Impossibility of Not Communicating</i> <i>The Expression of Feelings and Emotions</i> <i>Information about Context and Relationship</i> <i>Reliability of Nonverbal Messages</i>	
End Notes	236
 Chapter 10—Relationships, Roles, and Trust: Living with Others	 239
Objectives	239
Introduction	240
Relationships	240

Relationships Defined	241
<i>Where Relationships Occur</i>	
Stages of Relationships	243
Stage 1: Contacting	Stage 2: Evaluating
Stage 3: Committing	Stage 4: Doubting
Stage 5: Disengaging	
Roles	248
<i>Negotiating Your Roles</i>	<i>Consequences of Defining Roles</i>
<i>A Story of One Man's Roles: Jackson, a Man in the Middle</i>	
<i>Behind Your Relationships</i>	
The Art of Trusting	259
<i>The Situation Context of Trust</i>	<i>The Belief Basis for Trust</i>
<i>How Do You Develop Trusting Relationships?</i>	<i>Deciding to Trust</i>
Summary	263
End Notes	264
Chapter 11—Managing Interpersonal Tensions	267
Objectives	267
Introduction	268
Conflict and Negotiation	268
<i>A Traditional View of Conflict</i>	<i>A Contemporary View of Conflict</i>
<i>Positive and Negative Outcomes of Conflict</i>	
<i>Types of Conflict</i>	<i>Conflict Management Strategies</i>
<i>Conflict Management and Negotiation</i>	
Interpersonal Exchange	284
<i>The Johari Window</i>	
Feedback, Feedforward, and Self-Disclosure	287
<i>Learning to Give and Receive Feedback</i>	<i>Feedforward</i>
<i>Self-Disclosure</i>	
Summary	288
End Notes	289
LABORATORY MANUAL	303
Introduction to the Laboratory Manual	303
General Comments	303
Why a Communication Laboratory?	304
Self-Pacing Laboratory Exercises	304
Discussion Questions	304
Class Activities and Exercises	305
Feedback Blanks	Cases for Discussion
	Forum