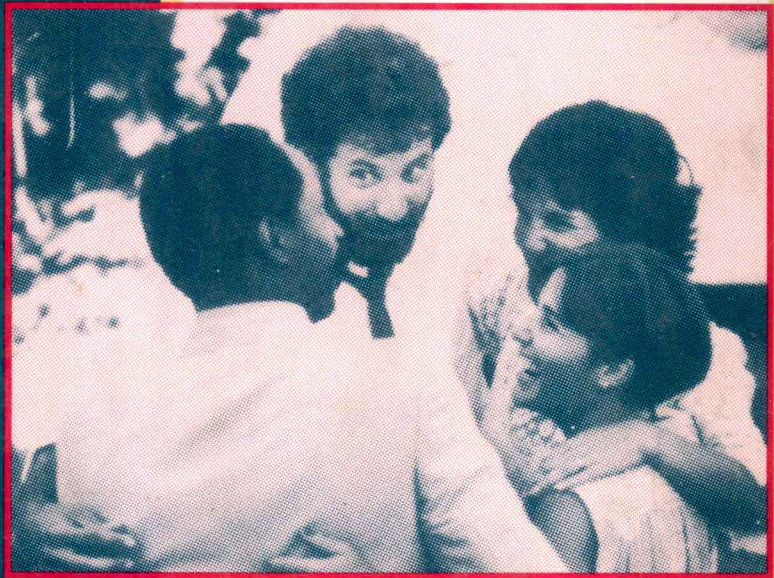


■ The
Interpersonal
Communication
Book



■ Joseph A. DeVito

6th

EDITION

The Interpersonal Communication Book

SIXTH EDITION

JOSEPH A. DeVITO

Hunter College of the City University of New York

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To my mother, for everything

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Joseph A. DeVito is Professor of Communications at Hunter College of the City University of New York. He earned his M.A. at Temple University and his Ph.D. at the University of Illinois. He has taught the interpersonal communication course for over 20 years. Dr. DeVito has written widely for major scholarly journals such as the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Communication Monographs*, the *Journal of Communication*, *Communication Education*, *Et cetera*, and many others. He is the author of a number of textbooks, including *Messages: Building Interpersonal Communication Skills*, *The Elements of Public Speaking*, *Human Communication*, and *The Communication Handbook: A Dictionary*, all published by HarperCollins.

BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR

The Psychology of Speech and Language: An Introduction to Psycholinguistics

Communication: Concepts and Processes (Third Edition)

General Semantics: Nine Lectures

General Semantics: Guide and Workbook (Revised Edition)

Language: Concepts and Processes

Psycholinguistics

Articulation and Voice: Effective Communication

The Elements of Public Speaking (Fourth Edition)

Human Communication: The Basic Course (Fifth Edition)

The Communication Handbook: A Dictionary

The Nonverbal Communication Workbook

The Nonverbal Communication Reader

Messages: Building Interpersonal Communication Skills

Preface

It is a pleasure to write a preface to a text that has proved so popular with students and teachers alike. This sixth edition builds on the most positively received aspects of past editions while also updating the text in several important ways.

The philosophical foundation of the text continues to be the notion of choice. Choice is central to interpersonal communication because the speaker, listener, and communication analyst are constantly confronted with choice points at every stage of the communication process. The text provides readers with worthwhile options in a wide variety of interpersonal situations and discusses the theory, research, and evidence bearing on these communication choices. As a result, after completing this text, the reader should be better equipped to make more reasoned, reasonable, and effective communication decisions.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE TEXT

This text is a complete learning package that provides students with the opportunity to learn about the research and theory in interpersonal communication and to practice the skills necessary for effective interpersonal interaction.

I have retained the unit divisions of the previous editions as students have found their relatively short length easier for reading and review. Since most studying is done in short blocks of time, this organization allows the reader to master a significant concept in the available time.

Each unit opens with *Objectives*, which identify the major behaviors that readers should be able to demonstrate after finishing the unit. These objectives also highlight the most pertinent principles and skills to be presented in the unit. A *Summary: Unit in Brief* chart at the end of each unit recaps the major concepts discussed, followed by *For Thought and Discussion* questions and *Experiential Vehicles*—exercises which reinforce the concepts discussed in the unit and help the student to internalize the various principles of interpersonal effectiveness.

The units are grouped into three parts: Preliminaries, Messages, and Relationships. Each part concludes with a summary of the specific skills that were covered in the previous units. These skill-development summaries may be used in a variety of ways: to help identify areas of student weakness, to help sharpen skills by applying them to more complex situations, and as discussion probes or stimuli for class discussion. They also serve as a handy summary for review and self-testing.

MAJOR ADDITIONS AND REVISIONS

Among the major improvements in this sixth edition are these:

1. Interpersonal skills are emphasized to a much greater extent than in previous editions. This is seen throughout the text but especially in the discussions of listening (Unit 4), effectiveness (Unit 6), verbal and nonverbal messages (Part 2), and interpersonal relationships (Part 3). Throughout these and other units, specific skills are identified and illustrated.
2. The section on messages (Part 2) has been entirely recast to integrate verbal and nonverbal messages more effectively.
3. A new unit on “Messages and Emotions” (Unit 14) has been added, which deals with understanding and communicating feelings.
4. A new unit on “Messages and Cultures” (Unit 15) has been added, which addresses the increasingly important area of intercultural communication.
5. A new unit on “Messages and Conversation” (Unit 16) has been added, which discusses the process of conversation—initiating, managing, and closing conversations; the principles we follow in conversing; and some of the ways we deal with conversational problems.
6. A new unit on “Relationship Development” (Unit 18) has been added, which covers the major theories of relationship development and some of the practical applications that may be drawn from them.
7. The two units on relational deterioration in the previous edition have been recast as one unit (Unit 24).
8. Questions for thought and discussion now appear at the end of each of the units. They should stimulate lively and purposeful class discussions.
9. Source notes have been replaced by APA-style references so that research sources may be more easily identified and located. A complete list of references is provided in the bibliography at the end of the text.
10. There is greater use of visual display material. Tables that define major concepts and provide examples appear throughout the text. The photographs and captions continue to serve as useful probes for class discussion and as stimuli for thinking and learning about the material covered.
11. Self-tests covering a variety of issues—from listening, to conflict strategies, romantic beliefs, love, touch avoidance, time orientation, and beliefs about our relationships—have been increased in number and can be found in the text as well as in the Experiential Vehicles.

Other material has been added, expanded, or substantially revised, notably attribution in perception (Unit 3), suggestions for reducing apprehension (Unit 8), facial management techniques (Unit 12), conflict resolution (Unit 20), and social exchange and equity theories (Unit 18). The five-stage model has been expanded to incorporate the major theories of relationship development and the research findings on relationship development and deterioration (Unit 24).

Experiential vehicles now appear at the ends of the individual units. New ones have been added which focus more on analyzing interpersonal interactions and on assessing one's own communication patterns and beliefs.

In order to make room for these new materials, the glossary at the end of the

text has been moved to the Study Guide. Terms are printed in boldface in the text where they are defined and identified in the index with italics. Thus, to find a definition, refer to the index and turn to the page number printed in italics.

The entire text has been rewritten for greater clarity and economy of style. Specific examples from a variety of personal, social, and professional contexts have been integrated throughout the new edition to make the concepts and principles more relevant.

THE CONCERN FOR COMPETENCE

In this edition, there is increased emphasis on developing interpersonal competence. The major competence principles are considered in Part One: Interpersonal Communication Preliminaries. They are reinforced and supplemented in Part Two: Messages: Verbal and Nonverbal. In Part Three they are applied to Interpersonal Relationships—their development, their maintenance (in friendships, loves, and families), and their deterioration.

The skills that are drawn from the theories and research on interpersonal communication are identified more clearly and more specifically in this edition. Throughout these discussions, alternative ways of communicating are identified—not so that the student memorizes a list of possibilities but rather so that the student sees that there are various ways to behave in different interpersonal contexts. Given the evidence from theory and research and the identification of suitable choices, it is up to the reader to select those alternatives that seem most appropriate to a given interaction.

TOWARD AN INTERACTIVE COMPONENT

In this edition, I have increased efforts to make this text as interactive as a textbook can be. Some examples of this emphasis are:

- self-tests that ask students to assess their own communication behaviors or beliefs (with instructions for analyzing their own responses so that they can see how their behaviors compare with those of other groups)
- questions for thought and discussion at the end of each unit, as well as questions included in all photo captions, that prompt students to analyze their own interpersonal communication patterns and objectives
- questions interspersed with many of the text discussions that ask students to pause and consider their own assumptions about interpersonal communication
- dialogues that require student analysis (see, especially, the dialogue that opens the unit on ethics, Unit 5)
- the implications, guidelines, and “beware potential problems” features, as well as the various charts relating to such topics as compliance-gaining, romantic testing, affinity seeking, and disengagement strategies, which invite the student to consider the implications of the text discussions for his or her own interpersonal behaviors
- the experiential vehicles at the end of each unit, which invite active participation with the concepts and theories discussed in the text

ANCILLARIES

INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL/TEST BANK

The *Instructor's Manual*, by Thomas Veenendall, of Montclair State College, and Joseph A. DeVito, covers additional Experiential Vehicles, suggestions for using the vehicles, suggestions for teaching the course, additional references, transparencies masters that highlight essential terms and principles, and a test bank organized by unit. The test bank is also available on computer disks (TestMaster). Both items are available from the publisher.

STUDY GUIDE

The *Study Guide*, by Thomas Veenendall, of Montclair State College, and Joseph A. DeVito, contains matching exercises and true-false questions for each unit in the text, as well as part reviews. A Glossary of terms for the course is also provided in the guide which is available from the publisher.

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION VIDEOS

Videos cover topics that range from conflict resolution to love and relationships. Contact your HarperCollins representative for details.

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As must be true with any textbook, my students contributed greatly by providing open and honest feedback and they helped me clarify many of the ideas discussed here.

Joseph A. DeVito

P a r t



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