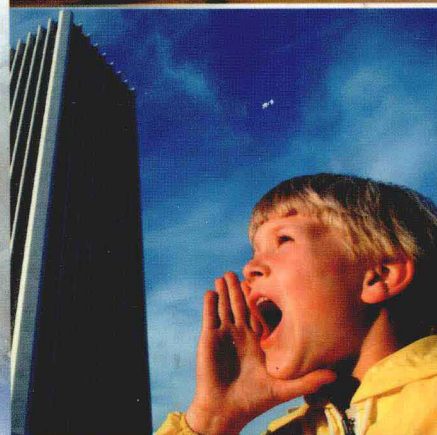


# MESSAGES

BUILDING INTERPERSONAL

FOURTH  
EDITION

COMMUNICATION SKILLS



JOSEPH A. DEVITO

# **MESSAGES**

## **Building Interpersonal Communication Skills**

**FOURTH EDITION**

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**Joseph A. DeVito**

Hunter College  
of the  
City University of New York



**LONGMAN**

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# Preface

It's a pleasure and an honor to present this fourth edition of *Messages: Building Interpersonal Communication Skills*. This book was written (and revised for this edition) in response to the need for a text that emphasizes **critical thinking** by integrating it into all aspects of interpersonal communication, emphasizes the development of **interpersonal skills** (the practical skills for personal, social, and professional success), emphasizes the influence of **culture and gender** on just about every aspect of interpersonal communication, and emphasizes **listening** as an essential (but too often neglected) part of interpersonal communication.

*Messages* answers these needs by providing thorough coverage of each of these major elements. Chapter 1 discusses critical thinking, interpersonal skills, culture and gender, and listening as integral components of interpersonal competence. Material presented throughout the book reinforces this discussion and creates a foundation for students to understand these concepts and then apply what they have learned through real-life examples and exercises.

## EXTENSIVE CRITICAL THINKING COVERAGE

*Messages* emphasizes the role of critical thinking as an essential part of effective and responsible interpersonal communication. The goals here are to explain the nature and principles of critical thinking and to provide opportunities for students to apply these principles to their own interpersonal communication. Critical thinking is integrated in this edition following a simple five-step process: (Step 1) understanding the nature and function of critical thinking, (Step 2) mastering the skills (techniques, strategies) of critical thinking, (Step 3) avoiding the barriers to critical thinking, (Step 4) engaging in careful and frequent self-appraisal, and (Step 5) applying critical thinking to a wide variety of situations. To enable students to effectively navigate through these five stages, the text contains several key features:

- **Critical thinking sidebars** explain the nature of critical thinking (Step 1 of the five-step process) and then move to Step 2 by providing a wide



variety of specific skills for thinking critically about interpersonal communication or about anything else. Sidebars in the first two chapters explain what critical thinking is and lay the foundation for understanding its nature and goals. Those in the remaining chapters offer critical thinking principles, techniques, and applications that are more closely keyed to the text content, for example, examining assumptions about culture, relationships, and conflict; examining a problem from a variety of perspectives; and distinguishing between emotional and logical reasoning, relationship and causal assertions, and hypotheses and conclusions. This material appears in the margins of the text and helps to link the critical thinking concepts to specific text discussions, but also allows them to stand apart as ideas useful beyond the world of interpersonal communication.

- **Advice on avoiding barriers to critical thinking** (Step 3), such as uncritically accepting cultural beliefs and values, overattribution, offensive listening, and the failure to check perceptions, is integrated throughout the text. This advice is identified in the text with a critical thinking question in the margin prefaced with a Caution, Barrier to Critical Thinking icon.
- **Self-appraisal tests** (Step 4) are presented throughout the text to facilitate careful and frequent self-analysis, self-appraisal, and self-assessment. Some of these tests are standard research instruments used in studying interpersonal communication (for example, the tests of communication satisfaction, love style, verbal aggressiveness, argumentativeness, and communication flexibility). Others were developed to encourage students to interact more personally with the material covered in the text (for example, the tests of cultural awareness and beliefs, listening styles, individual and collective cultural orientations, and power).
- **Critical thinking questions** are presented in the margins and coordinated with the text material to provide frequent opportunities to evaluate (Step 5) and apply the principles and theories discussed in the text. In a similar way, marginal quotations—new to this edition—present different views on the text's topics and invite students to discuss and challenge them. Critical thinking questions are also integrated into many of the pedagogical features of the text, for example, skill building exercises, self-tests, and listening boxes.

## SKILL DEVELOPMENT FOCUS

- *Messages* emphasizes the development of practical interpersonal communication skills such as increasing accuracy in interpersonal perception, expressing emotions effectively, and dealing constructively with interpersonal conflict. Interpersonal skills are presented throughout the text in the context of the concepts and principles of interpersonal communication.
- Interpersonal power and empowerment skills are emphasized throughout the text and show students how building these skills can be useful at home and at work. Chapter 12, "Interpersonal Communication and Power," discusses such issues as increasing power through self-esteem, managing



power plays, speaking with power, and assertiveness. Empowering apprehensives and empowering through listening are also discussed in Chapters 2 and 12 respectively, further highlighting these important skills.

- Also, new to this edition, each chapter contains a **How to . . .** box that focuses on a specific skill and explains how it can be used to communicate more effectively. How To . . . boxes consider skills such as facilitating self-disclosure, communicating power nonverbally, communicating with the grief stricken, interacting effectively in intercultural situations, and dealing with relationship breakups.
- **Skill-building exercises** are also presented three times in each chapter. These exercises cover a wide variety of skills such as the appropriateness of self-disclosure, taking the perspective of another person, reducing barriers to listening, paraphrasing to ensure understanding, and applying theories to relationship problems.
- **Chapter opening grids** identify the skills covered within each chapter.
- **Skills checklists** in the chapter summary immediately reinforce the skills covered.
- The **glossary of concepts and skills** at the end of the book provides an easy way to find definitions of technical terms.
- Finally, each chapter contains a **skills-oriented reading** which provides an additional perspective on the skills covered in each of the chapters.

## ATTENTION TO CULTURE AND GENDER

Comprehensive and fully integrated coverage of cultural diversity and gender in interpersonal communication is highlighted throughout the text.

**Chapter 9, "Interpersonal Communication and Culture,"** covers cultural issues in interpersonal communication in depth, focusing on the nature of culture and of intercultural communication, cultural differences, such as individualism and collectivism, high and low context, and masculine and feminine, as well as ways to improve intercultural communication.

**Integrated discussions of culture and gender** are expanded from the previous edition throughout the text, including:

The role of culture in interpersonal communication—cultural awareness, the relevance of culture, and the aim of a cultural perspective—is presented in Chapter 1, "Interpersonal Communication," and establishes culture as a fundamental concept in all forms of interpersonal communication.

Cultural teachings as a source of self-concept, culture's influence on self-disclosure, and cultural influences on apprehension are integrated into Chapter 2, "The Self."

Chapter 3, "Perception," includes discussions of the role of stereotypes in perception and the importance of cultural sensitivity in perceptual accuracy.

Cultural and gender differences in listening are now discussed in a major section in Chapter 4, "Listening."

Gender and cultural differences in directness; language as a cultural institution and cultural maxims; sexism, heterosexism, and racism in language; and cultural identifiers (ways to talk to and about people from different cultures) are now included in Chapter 5, "Verbal Messages."

Chapter 6, “Nonverbal Messages,” now includes a major section on culture and nonverbal communication, covering nonverbal taboos, cultural significance of color, monochronic and polychronic time orientations, the social clock, and nonverbal differences between men and women.

The role that culture and gender play in emotions and the varied societal rules and customs that influence emotional communication are covered in Chapter 7, “Emotional Messages.”

Chapter 8, “Conversation Messages,” covers the conversational taboos in different cultures, cultural sensitivity as a metaskill, suggestions for communicating with the deaf, and conversational maxims and their cultural and gender differences.

Chapter 9, “Interpersonal Communication and Culture,” as noted above, is devoted entirely to interpersonal communication and culture.

The numerous culture and gender differences in friendship and love relationships are discussed in Chapter 10, “Interpersonal Communication and Relationships.”

Chapter 11, “Interpersonal Communication and Conflict,” discusses how different cultures view and deal with interpersonal conflict, the cultural aspects of face-enhancing and face-detracting strategies of conflict, and gender differences in conflict strategies.

The cultural dimension of power and especially the vast differences between high power and low power distance cultures are considered at length in Chapter 12, “Interpersonal Communication and Power.”

## EMPHASIS ON LISTENING

Listening—too often neglected or given only minor importance in most interpersonal communication texts—is emphasized in the fourth edition of *Messages* in two major ways. First, a separate chapter on listening (Chapter 4) covers the listening process from receiving to responding, the role of culture and gender in listening, and guidelines for increasing listening effectiveness. Second, and new to this edition, each of the chapters contains a **Listening** box. These boxes discuss specific listening skills as they relate to the other topics in the text, for example, listening to other perspectives is presented in “Perception” (Chapter 3), listening to the emotions of others in “Emotional Messages” (Chapter 7), the ways to listen in conflict situations in “Interpersonal Communications and Relationships” (Chapter 10), and listening to empower in “Interpersonal Communication and Power” (Chapter 12). With the separate chapter on listening that provides the fundamentals of effective listening and the Listening boxes in each chapter that relate to specific interpersonal contexts, *Messages* offers effective and comprehensive coverage of listening.

## EXTENSIVE PEDAGOGICAL APPARATUS

*Messages* also contains a variety of interactive pedagogical features that help students better understand and more effectively master the skills of interpersonal communication by asking them to respond and relate their experiences to the material presented in the text.

**Chapter opening grids** present the major topics of the chapter with their corresponding goals and skills. The grids link the main concepts covered in

each chapter with the corresponding goals (cognitive learning objectives) and skills (behavioral learning objectives) students should master after reading the chapter.

**13 Listening boxes**—new to this edition—highlight listening as an integral part of the interpersonal communication process. A complete listing of these boxes is presented in the Specialized Contents on page x.

**12 How to . . . boxes**—also new to this edition—focus on specific skills and present practical ways of mastering them in interpersonal situations. A complete listing of these boxes is presented in the Specialized Contents on page x.

**26 Self-tests** encourage students to assess themselves on such issues as self-disclosure, people perception, self-monitoring, relationship beliefs, and assertiveness. New to this edition are Self-tests dealing with cultural awareness in Chapter 1, rights to information about another person in Chapter 2, cultural beliefs and values in Chapter 9, individual and collectivist cultures in Chapter 9, personal power in Chapter 12, and Machiavellian tendencies in Chapter 12. A complete listing of Self-tests appears in the Specialized Contents on page xvi.

**Critical Thinking Sidebars** explain the nature and principles of critical thinking and are presented in the text's margins. A complete listing of the critical thinking sidebars—approximately half of which are new to this edition—appears in the Specialized Contents on page xii.

**Critical Thinking Questions**, also in the margins, ask students to apply what they have learned to specific situations.

**Thinking Critically About . . .** questions in the Self-tests, exercises, and featured boxes require critical analysis and application and ask for students' active involvement.

A variety of **quotations** appears in the margins and offers different perspectives on topics covered in the text inviting comment and discussion.

**36 Skill building exercises** are positioned after each major heading in the text. Many are new to this edition:

Cultural Beliefs (1.3)

Using Performance Visualization to Reduce Apprehension (2.3)

Perceiving My Selves (3.1)

Typical Man, Typical Woman (4.2)

Thinking in E-Prime (5.3)

Integrating Verbal and Nonverbal Messages (6.1)

Artifacts and Culture (6.3)

Gender and the Topics of Conversation (8.1)

How Do You Talk? As a Woman? As a Man? (9.1)

From Culture to Gender (10.3)

Generating Win-Win Solutions (11.2)

Rewriting Unrealistic Beliefs (12.1)

A listing of all Skill Building Exercises appears in the Specialized Contents on page xi.

**Vocabulary quizzes** at the end of each chapter highlight key terms and make learning them easier and more enjoyable.

**Chapter summaries** contain both content and skills summaries. The skills summaries are presented as checklists.



An appendix, **Writing About Interpersonal Communication**, is new to this edition and offers a variety of writing experiences that may be integrated into the course such as personal experience, explanation of a concept or principle, review, and research (pages 343-347). Suggestions for paper topics are provided in this appendix as well as in many of the critical thinking questions in the margins; the writing suggestions in the text's margins appear in italics.

A combined **glossary of concepts and skills**, also new to this edition, offers brief definitions of significant terms in interpersonal communication and identifies the related skills when appropriate (pages 348-362).

A **complementary reading** appears in each chapter, providing a different perspective from that given in the text. Five of these articles are new to this edition. A complete listing of these readings appears in the Specialized Contents on page xii.

### Some Chapter-by-Chapter Changes

Numerous improvements were made in each of the chapters. Here is a brief summary of the major changes.

Chapter 1, "Interpersonal Communication." A graduated presentation of the communication model—from linear, through interactional, to transactional—has been added. A new table on the areas of interpersonal communication and relationships provides an overview of this rapidly growing area. The process of adjustment, including communication accommodation, has been added to the section on principles of interpersonal communication. A new diagram incorporating the purposes, motives, and results of interpersonal communication is included with the discussion of interpersonal purposes. A new section, Culture and Interpersonal Communication, establishes culture as a major focus of the text and explains the relevance and aim of a cultural perspective. This section includes a new self-test allowing for the exploration of cultural awareness.

Chapter 2, "The Self." New sections on cultural teachings as a source of self-concept, apprehension, and culture and ways to empower apprehensives have been added. A new self-test explores what people feel they have a right to know about friends or lovers.

Chapter 3, "Perception." The discussion of attribution errors has been expanded and now includes the fundamental attribution error (as well as self-serving biases and overattribution). The entire section on accuracy in perception has been expanded and revised and now includes becoming aware of perceptions, perception checking, reducing uncertainty (along with its cultural variations), and cultural sensitivity.

Chapter 4, "Listening." A major new section on the relevance of culture and gender to listening has been added. Also new is a discussion of difficult listeners and how to avoid becoming one of them.

Chapter 5, "Verbal Messages." This entire chapter has been completely revised to include a more general introduction to language and the principles for increasing verbal effectiveness. New and expanded topics include directness and its cultural and gender variations, politeness, language variations in abstraction, and the rules of netiquette. A new section on cultural identifiers offers useful advice on talking to and about members of different cultural groups.

Chapter 6, “Nonverbal Messages.” The discussion of body communication has been expanded and now includes body appearance as well as body movements. Facial management techniques and the facial feedback hypothesis have been added to the discussion of facial communication. Smell as a form of nonverbal communication has also been integrated. A greatly expanded treatment of culture and nonverbal communication is now provided and includes such topics as nonverbal gestures that can create intercultural misunderstanding, cultural variations in the meanings of colors, monochronic and polychronic time orientations, and the social clock.

Chapter 7, “Emotional Messages.” A table illustrating commonly used emoticons and a new section on the principles of emotional communication, such as emotional contagion and cultural variations on emotional expression, have been added as well as new sections on cultural and gender differences in emotional expression.

Chapter 8, “Conversation Messages.” New sections include conversational taboos around the world, good and bad excuses, communicating with the deaf, cultural and gender differences in conversation, and a discussion of computer communication skills.

Chapter 9, “Interpersonal Communication and Culture.” Two new self-tests—on cultural beliefs and individual/collectivist cultures—have been added as well as a discussion of cultural masculinity and femininity. A new section, Improving Intercultural Communication, streamlines and brings together the principles and the barriers to intercultural communication.

Chapter 10, “Interpersonal Communication and Relationships.” New material on the advantages and disadvantages of interpersonal relationships, including online relationships, and the role of culture and gender on relationships has been added.

Chapter 11, “Interpersonal Communication Conflict.” An expanded discussion of win-win conflict resolution and sections on face-enhancing and face-detracting conflict strategies, the role of listening in conflict, the nature of online conflicts, and gender differences in conflict are now included.

Chapter 12, “Interpersonal Communication and Power.” A new discussion of Machiavellianism has been added to the section on principles of power. Two new Self-tests, on power and on Machiavellianism, have been included. The cultural dimension of power distance has been added. Sexual harassment and power plays are both presented as ways of exercising power unfairly.

## SUPPLEMENTS

*Messages* comes with a variety of useful supplements.

### The Exchange Web Site

(<http://longman.awl.com/exchange/>)

The Exchange is Longman’s online guide to interpersonal communication providing additional resources to students and instructors including: online interpersonal communication scenarios asking students to choose responses, an Internet Relay Chat tutorial that guides students through the process of real-time discussions, an assignment bank for instructors wishing to incorporate

the World Wide Web into their classes, and reference links for students and instructors for over 30 Web sites related to interpersonal communication.

### **Interpersonal Communication Video**

Prepared by Jean Civikly and Tom Jewell of the University of New Mexico, the video covers concepts such as perception, ethics, self-disclosure, sexual harassment, and dysfunctional relationships. It includes segments written and performed by students from the University of New Mexico. An extensive 120-page Instructor's Guide accompanies the video and provides the complete script, a list of related concepts, questions for class discussion, exercises, and additional resources and references for each of the eight episodes.

### **Instructor's Manual and Test Bank with Transparency Masters**

Prepared by Harriet B. Harral of Texas Christian University, the Instructor's Manual provides chapter overviews and learning and skill objectives for each chapter. The manual provides ideas to activate class discussions and contains exercises to illustrate the concepts, principles and skills of interpersonal communication. In addition, the test bank portion of the manual contains numerous multiple choice, true-false, short answer, and essay test questions. The Instructor's Manual includes more than 100 transparency masters that frame key concepts and skills.

### **PowerPoint CD-ROM**

New to this edition, the transparency masters will now be available as PowerPoint presentation slides on CD-ROM. The Instructor's Manual includes handouts so students can follow along and take notes as the slides are being discussed.

### **Interpersonal Communication TestGen-EQ**

The test bank portion of the Instructor's Manual is available on our computerized testing system, TestGen-EQ. This fully networkable testing software is available in Windows and Macintosh. TestGen-EQ's friendly graphical interface enables instructors to easily view, edit, and add questions, transfer questions to tests, and print tests in a variety of fonts and forms. Search and sort features let the instructor quickly locate questions and arrange them in preferred order.

### **The Interpersonal Challenge 3**

This highly interactive game has been expanded and streamlined. The game now contains 200 questions covering such topics as perception, interpersonal relationships, ethical dilemmas, and intercultural communication. Instructions for playing the game have been completely revised; as a result the game will play faster and more smoothly with small groups in and out of the classroom.

### **Transparencies**

In addition to the transparency masters included in the Instructor's Manual, Longman is pleased to offer a package of color transparencies. These transparencies reproduce many of the figures and tables from the text. Included in this transparency package is a convenient grid which offers suggestions for

using the transparencies in the classroom and how to best integrate them with the text material.

### The Longman Communication Video Library

Numerous videos are available for use with this text. Current videos cover such topics as effective listening, fear of communication, interpersonal relationships, interviewing, small group communication, and public speaking. Since new titles are being added regularly, consult your local Longman sales representative for the latest information.

### Study Guide and Activity Manual

Prepared by Marilyn Kelly of McLennan Community College, the Study Guide provides for a broad spectrum of abilities, from teaching basic level college skills to challenging the advanced student. The guide contains objectives, study methods, chapter outlines, expanded vocabulary tests, sample test items, and chapter summary charts. The guide also includes activities for reinforcing learning, demonstrating skills, and a selection of readings from popular magazines and books that address topics of interpersonal communication.

### Brainstorms

This booklet, subtitled “How to Think More Creatively About Communication or Anything Else,” integrates critical thinking into the interpersonal communication course. **Brainstorms** introduces the creative thinking process (its nature, values, characteristics, and stages) and its relationship to communication, and it provides 19 specific tools for thinking more creatively about communication (or anything else). The discussion of each tool includes its purposes, the specific techniques to follow in using the tool, and at least one exercise or application to get started using the tool. Creative thinking sidebars and relevant quotations add to the interactive pedagogy. Guides for coordinating the creative thinking tools with the topic of the textbook are provided as well.

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