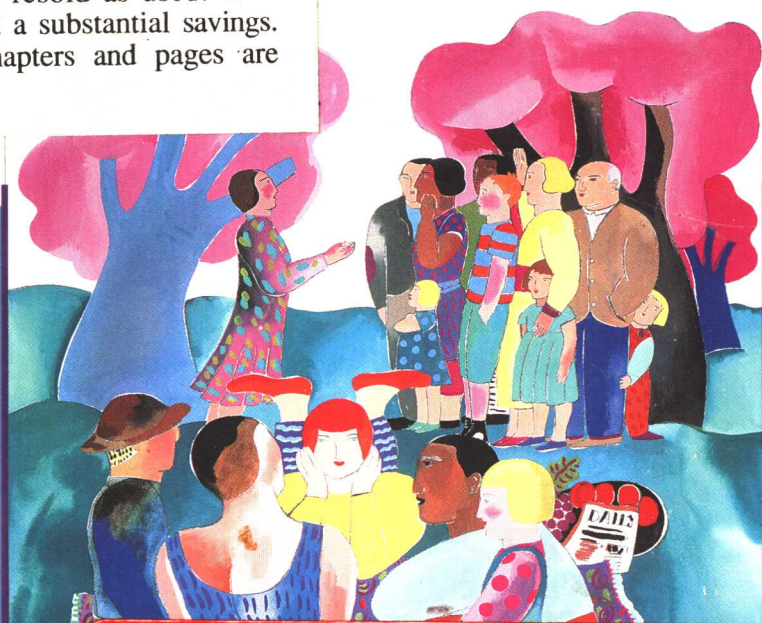


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## PREFACE

We wrote this textbook with one question continuously in mind: *How can this information be useful?* If we have learned anything from our students during our combined fifty-five years of teaching it is that **usefulness is an important goal**—perhaps the most important goal when working with students beginning their study of communication. So our goal is to provide information that directly applies to your development of communication skills and to help you develop communication skills that demonstrate the relevance of the information we present.

Knowledge without application may be useful under some circumstances, but not when the goal is to become a competent communicator. And application without knowledge assumes a robot-like view of humanity—humans as “behavior machines”—an attitude that is both incorrect and sterile.

*Communication competencies are life-necessary competencies.* If you doubt this, consider that how well you communicate determines the extent to which you achieve your personal, occupational, and relational goals. Success on and off the job depends on being able to listen effectively, express thoughts clearly and concisely, and build and maintain personal relationships—whether with one other person, in a small group, or in a public setting. Day after day, you need to communicate competently to ensure yourself the richest and fullest life possible. And that brings us to the primary objective of this textbook: **to provide you with the information, skills, and motivation to become a competent communicator.**

### Objectives

To communicate competently, you must first know what communication behaviors are likely to help you achieve success in a particular situation. This requires that you understand yourself, the situations in which you interact with others, and the communication behaviors that are available to you. This textbook will teach you to assess your strengths and weaknesses as a communicator and to analyze the situations in which you communicate with others. Then, based on your new knowledge, you will learn which behaviors are necessary to become a successful communicator.

Second, you must possess the skills to communicate successfully. *Knowing how* to communicate does not equal *being able* to communicate. You need to develop new skills and perfect those you have. This textbook gives you numerous opportunities to practice the skills that enhance your ability to communicate competently.

Third, you need to be motivated to communicate competently. We hope that this textbook—its examples, its practical orientation, and its way of presenting information and activities—will help you realize how important it is to be a competent communicator and will therefore motivate you to gain the necessary understanding and skills.

## Special Features

Many special features have been built into *Communicating with Competency* to help you increase your understanding, skills, and motivation.

First, the communication competencies presented in each chapter have been carefully selected and sequenced. They have been tested and taught by researchers and teachers interested in communication and represent our most current understanding of what it means to communicate with competency.

Second, this textbook is written *to* you and *about* you:

- ▶ Examples are drawn from everyday life.
- ▶ Technical language is avoided, but when specialized terms must be used, they are defined simply and immediately. In addition, to ease your study, a glossary of key terms is included at the end of the book.
- ▶ References to research papers, names, and dates have been kept to a minimum to avoid distracting you as you read and apply the material in each chapter.
- ▶ Carefully devised Knowledge Checkups and Skill Checkups have been systematically placed throughout each chapter. These activities—ranging from brief tests aimed at enhancing your self-understanding to more complicated tasks involving the observation of human behavior or the direct application of specific communication skills—have been designed to be quickly accomplished, tightly focused and *doable*. They are an integral part of the learning process and should be neither skipped nor viewed as ancillary.
- ▶ Chapter-ending Communication Competency Checkups present thought-provoking problems that help you review each chapter's content and apply it to a realistic situation, such as advising a family member on how to deal with a conflict or helping a friend cope with public speaking anxiety.
- ▶ A thorough subject index is provided at the end of the book to help you locate topics quickly and easily. Plus, sources for further investigation are presented at the end of each chapter to help you find more information on particular topics.

## Organization

The material in *Communicating with Competency* is organized to enhance your understanding and development of communication competencies. The first three chapters present the background you need to begin your study on communication. You will be introduced to some basic definitions and components of communication competency, you will begin to assess your strengths and weaknesses as a communicator, and you will learn effective ways of using verbal and nonverbal communication.

Because who you are provides the foundation for how you communicate, the next two chapters focus on you as a communicator. These chapters explore how your view of yourself and your perceptions of the world affect your

communication. They are followed by an entire chapter on listening, an especially important competency that comes into play in virtually every communication situation, from one-on-one and small-group discussions to public speeches.

The remaining chapters examine communication on three different levels. Chapters 7, 8, and 9 present the knowledge and skills required to communicate competently in one-on-one settings, the first level of communication. You will learn about the goals, structures, and rules of relationships, and how competent communication can help you develop strong relationships and deal with conflict.

The next two chapters focus on communication competencies associated primarily with the second level of communication, the small group setting. How groups develop and work, obstacles to effective group interaction and methods for overcoming them, and the communication roles group members enact, such as leadership, are covered in these chapters.

The final five chapters focus on communication competencies at the third level of communication, the public setting. Beginning with an assessment of yourself, the audience, and the situation, and proceeding through the final evaluation of your speech and recommendations for improvement, these chapters provide a step-by-step system for developing and delivering an effective public speech.

## A Note to the Instructor

An instructor's manual is available to enhance the effectiveness of *Communicating with Competency*. It includes several alternative approaches to teaching your course and using this book, a bibliography of readily available supplementary media sources, discussion questions for each of the Knowledge and Skill Check-ups to enhance their application in your classroom, and a test bank with interesting and provocative questions in a variety of formats.

*Communication: 1940–1989*, a special edition of *TIME* magazine that offers a historical look at *TIME*'s coverage of major events illustrating the power of communication in 20th century society, is also shrinkwrapped with the text.

## Acknowledgments

This book is the result of a team effort—not just the team whose names are on the cover, but a much larger team. We want to thank those who provided us with critiques and suggestions:

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Cynthia Fostle, our developmental editor, did for us what we often do for others: took a red pencil and pushed and pulled a better book out of the one we wrote. We appreciate the extraordinary effort!

Finally, we dedicate this text to our families and students, who provided the context in which many of the ideas presented here were developed, tested, and honed to their present form.

Lawrence B. Rosenfeld  
Roy M. Berko



### ***Communication: 1940-1989***

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This exciting new magazine piece, shrinkwrapped into each purchased copy of *Communicating with Competency* is a joint production of *TIME* and Scott, Foresman/Little, Brown. Compiled and edited by members of the Speech Communication Association, *Communication: 1940-1989* contains articles and excerpts relating to communication topics from past issues of *TIME*. It also includes a "You Are There" feature that illustrates the power of the spoken word. Spanning almost fifty years, *Communication: 1940-1989* offers students a unique glimpse of communication in the 20th century.

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# COMMUNICATING WITH COMPETENCY

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## CHAPTER 1

# ► Foundations For Communication Competency

### COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES

*This chapter defines what communication is and explains the characteristics of competent communication. It also provides the background you need to understand and apply the material presented in the rest of this book. Subsequent chapters focus on both presenting principles of effective communication and developing your communication competencies. Specifically, in this chapter, you will learn to do the following:*

- *Define the characteristics of communication.*
- *Understand the components of communication competency.*
- *Understand the functions of competent communication.*
- *Define the qualities of a competent communicator.*