



Business Communication for Success

Chapter 2

Delivering Your Message



Learning Objectives

- Describe and define “language”
- Describe the role of language in perception and the communication process
- Describe three different types of messages and their functions
- Describe five different parts of a message and their functions



Learning Objectives

- Identify and describe five key principles of verbal communication
- Explain how the rules of syntax, semantics, and context govern language
- Describe how language serves to shape our experience of reality

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate six ways in which language can be an obstacle or barrier to communication
- Explain the differences between clichés, jargon, and slang
- Explain the difference between sexist or racist language and legitimate references to gender or race in business communication

Learning Objectives

- Describe and define four strategies that can give emphasis to your message
- Demonstrate the effective use of visuals in an oral or written presentation
- Demonstrate the effective use of signposts, internal summaries and foreshadowing, and repetition in an oral or written presentation

Learning Objectives

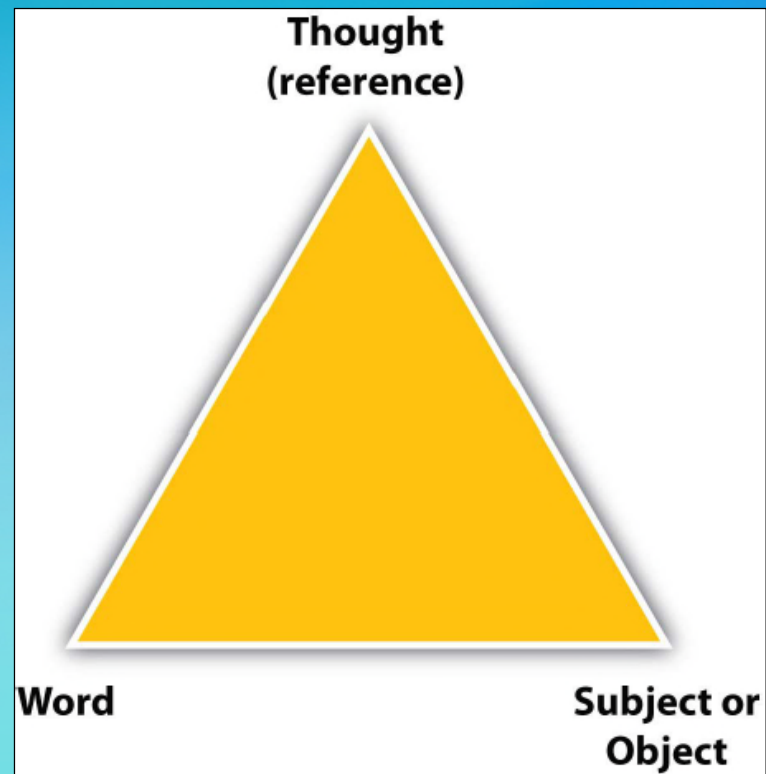
- List and explain the use of six strategies for improving verbal communication
- Demonstrate the appropriate use of definitions in an oral or written presentation
- Understand how to assess the audience, choose an appropriate tone, and check for understanding and results in an oral or written presentation

What is Language?

- A system of symbols, words, and/or gestures used to communicate meaning
 - Bound by context



Figure 2.1 - The Semantic Triangle



Types of Messages

- Primary messages
 - Intentional content, both verbal and nonverbal
- Secondary messages
 - Unintentional content, both verbal and nonverbal
- Auxiliary messages
 - Intentional and unintentional ways a primary message is communicated

Functions of Messages

Primary messages	Express yourself and communicate your message
Secondary messages	Form impressions of your intentional messages
Auxiliary messages	Influence the interpretation or perception of your message

Parts of Message

Attention statement	Captures the attention of your audience
Introduction	Establishes a relationship with your audience
Body	Presents your message in detail
Conclusion	Provides the audience with a sense of closure by summarizing your main points and relating them to the overall topic
Residual message	Stays with the audience after the communication is finished

Language has Rules

- Syntactic rules
 - Govern the order of words in a sentence
- Semantic rules
 - Govern the meaning of words and how to interpret them
- Contextual rules
 - Govern meaning and word choice according to context and social custom



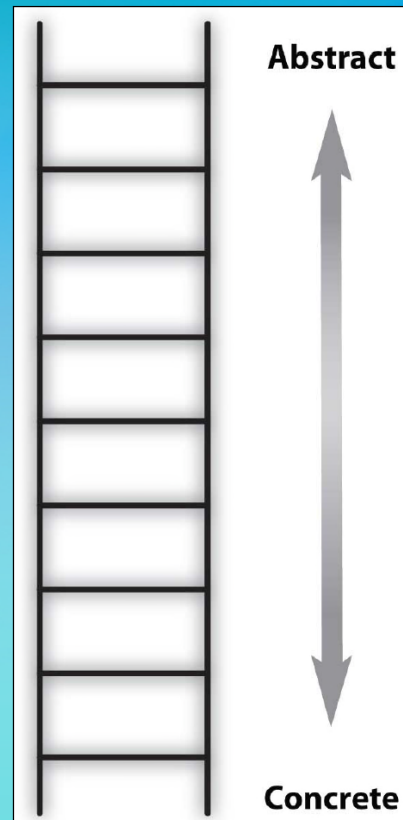
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- A cartoon illustration of a person with curly hair, wearing a dress and glasses, pointing with a stick at a flip chart. The flip chart is titled 'TABLE OF CONTENTS' and lists the following items: Chemistry, Biology, Earth, Mathematics, and Physics. The flip chart is on a stand with two legs.

Language is Arbitrary and Symbolic

- Words have two types of meanings:
 - Denotative
 - Connotative



Figure 2.2 - Car Abstraction Ladder



Language Organizes and Classifies Reality

- We often group words, according to:
 - Their physical proximity or similarity to one another
- Categories become problematic when used to uphold biases and invalid assumptions

Language can be an Obstacle to Communication

Cliché	A once-clever word/phrase that has lost its impact through overuse
Jargon	An occupation-specific language used by people in a given profession
Slang	Use of existing or newly invented words to take the place of traditional words with the intent of adding an unconventional, non-standard, humorous/rebellious effect
Sexist language	Uses gender as a discriminating factor
Racist language	Discriminates against members of a given race or ethnic group
Euphemism	Involves substituting an acceptable word for an offensive, controversial/unacceptable one that conveys the same/similar meaning
Doublespeak	Deliberate use of words to disguise, obscure, or change meaning

Emphasis Strategies

- Visual communication
- Signposts
- Internal summaries and foreshadowing
- Repetition

Visual Communication

- Visuals should support your presentation, not take the place of it
 - Should be clearly associated with verbal content
 - Should repeat, reinforce, and extend the scope of your message



Signposts

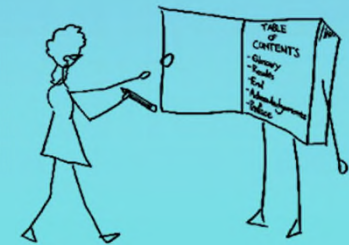
- Signposts/ indicators
 - Key words that alert the audience to a(n):
 - Change in topic
 - Tangential explanation
 - Example
 - Conclusion

Internal Summaries and Foreshadowing

- Help the audience to keep track of where they are in the message
 - Reviews what has been covered
 - Highlights what is coming next
- Reinforces relationships between points, examples, and ideas in the message

Use of Repetition

- To help your audience retain the key points of the message in their memory





Strategies for Improving Verbal Communication

- Define your terms
- Choose precise words
- Consider your audience
- Take control of your tone
- Check for understanding
- Be results oriented

Define Your Terms

- Do not define each and every term in the presentation
- Try defining terms by giving examples



Choose Precise Words

- Choose precise words that paint as vivid and accurate a mental picture as possible for your audience, to increase their understanding

Consider Your Audience

- Give careful attention to contextual clues



Take Control of Your Tone

- Read your document out loud before you deliver it
- Listen or watch others' presentations that have been described with terms associated with tone
- Seek out and be receptive to feedback

Check for Understanding

- If the audience doesn't understand, you can see, ask questions, and clarify right away



Be Results Oriented

- Tasks can be completed if:
 - You have done your preparation
 - You know your assignment goals and desired results
 - You have learned about your audience and tailored the message to their expectations

Key Terms

- Language
- Semantic triangle
- Primary messages
- Secondary messages
- Auxiliary messages
- Attention statement
- Introduction

Key Terms

- Body
- Conclusion
- Residual message
- Syntactic rules
- Semantic rules
- Contextual rules
- Paradigm

Key Terms

- Denotative meaning
- Connotative meaning
- Cliché
- Jargon
- Slang
- Sexist language
- Racist language

Key Terms

- Euphemism
- Doublespeak
- Signposts, or indicators
- Precise words

Exercises

- Using a dictionary that gives word origins, such as the *American Heritage College Dictionary*, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, or the *New Oxford American Dictionary*, find at least ten English words borrowed from other languages. Share your findings with your classmates.

Exercises

- Visit several English-language websites from different countries—for example, Australia, Canada, and the United States. What differences in spelling and word usage do you find? Discuss your results with your classmates.

Exercises

- From your viewpoint, how do you think thought influences the use of language? Write a 1-2 page explanation.

Exercises

- What is meant by *conditioned* in this statement: “people in Western cultures do not realize the extent to which their racial attitudes have been conditioned since early childhood by the power of words to ennoble or condemn, augment or detract, glorify or demean?” Discuss your thoughts with a classmate.

Exercises

- Translations gone wrong can teach us much about words and meaning. Can you think of a word or phrase that just doesn't sound right when it was translated from English into another language, or vice versa? Share it with the class and discuss what a better translation would be.

Exercises

- Choose three examples of communication and identify the primary message. Share and compare with classmates.

Exercises

- Choose three examples of communication and identify the auxiliary message(s). Share and compare with classmates.

Exercises

- Think of a time where someone said something like “please take a seat” and you correctly or incorrectly interpreted the message as indicating that you were in trouble and about to be reprimanded. Share and compare with classmates.

Exercises

- How does language affect self-concept? Explore and research your answer, finding examples which serve can as case studies.



Exercises

- Choose an article or opinion piece from a major newspaper or news website. Analyze the piece according to the five-part structure described here. Does the headline serve as a good attention statement? Does the piece conclude with a sense of closure? How are the main points presented and supported? Share your analysis with your classmates. For a further challenge, watch a television commercial and do the same analysis.

Exercises

- Write at least five examples of English sentences with correct syntax. Then rewrite each sentence, using the same words in an order that displays incorrect syntax. Compare your results with those of your classmates.

Exercises

- Think of at least five words whose denotative meaning differs from their connotative meaning. Use each word in two sentences, one employing the denotative meaning and the other employing the connotative. Compare your results with those of your classmates.

Exercises

- Do you associate meaning with the car someone drives? Does it say something about them? List five cars you observe people you know driving and discuss each one, noting whether you perceive that the car says something about them or not. Share and compare with classmates.

Exercises

- Identify at least five common clichés and look up their origins. Try to understand how and when each phrase became a cliché. Share your findings with your classmates.



Exercises

- Using your library's microfilm files or an online database, look through newspaper articles from the 1950s or earlier. Find at least one article that uses sexist or racist language. What makes it racist or sexist? How would a journalist convey the same information today? Share your findings with your class.

Exercises

- Identify one slang term and one euphemism you know is used in your community, among your friends, or where you work. Share and compare with classmates.

Exercises

- How does language change over time? Interview someone older than you, and younger than you, and identify words that have changed. Pay special attention to jargon and slang words.

Exercises

- Is there ever a justifiable use for doublespeak? Why or why not? Explain your response and give some examples.

Exercises

- Can people readily identify the barriers to communication? Survey ten individuals and see if they accurately identify at least one barrier, even if they use a different term or word.

Exercises

- Find a news article online or in a newspaper or magazine that uses several visuals. What do the visuals illustrate? Would the article be equally effective without them? Why or why not? Share your findings with your class.

Exercises

- Find an article or listen to a presentation that uses signposts. Identify the signposts and explain how they help the audience follow the article or presentation. Share your findings with your class.

Exercises

- Find the legend on a map. Pick one symbol and describe its use. Share and compare with the class.

Exercises

- Choose a piece of writing from a profession you are unfamiliar with. For example, if you are studying biology, choose an excerpt from a book on fashion design. Identify several terms you are unfamiliar with, terms that may be considered jargon. How does the writer help you understand the meaning of these terms? Could the writer make them easier to understand? Share your findings with your class.

Exercises

- In your chosen career field or your college major, identify ten jargon words, define them, and share them with the class.

Exercises

- Describe a simple process, from brushing your teeth to opening the top of a bottle, in as precise terms as possible. Present to the class.