

Fourth Edition

# FUNDAMENTALS OF HUMAN COMMUNICATION

*Social Science in Everyday Life*



Margaret H. DeFleur • Patricia Kearney • Timothy G. Plax • Melvin L. DeFleur

# Fundamentals of Human Communication

Social Science in Everyday Life

Fourth edition

Margaret H. DeFleur

*Louisiana State University*

Patricia Kearney

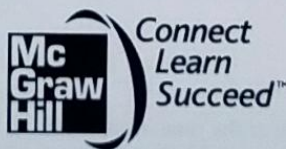
*California State University, Long Beach*

Timothy G. Plax

*California State University, Long Beach*

Melvin L. DeFleur

*Louisiana State University*





FUNDAMENTALS OF HUMAN COMMUNICATION: SOCIAL SCIENCE IN EVERYDAY LIFE,  
FOURTH EDITION

Published by McGraw-Hill, a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY, 10020. Copyright © 2014 by The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. Previous editions © 2005, 1998, and 1993. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written consent of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., including, but not limited to, in any network or other electronic storage or transmission, or broadcast for distance learning.

Some ancillaries, including electronic and print components, may not be available to customers outside the United States.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 QFR/QFR 1 0 9 8 7 6 5 4 3

ISBN 978-0-07-803689-7

MHID 0-07-803689-5

Vice President & Editor-in-Chief: *Michael Ryan*

Executive Director of Development: *Lisa Pinto*

Managing Director: *Gina Boedeker*

Marketing Specialist: *Alexandra Schultz*

Managing Development Editor: *Penina Braffman*

Editorial Coordinator: *Adina Lonn*

Senior Project Manager: *Joyce Watters*

Buyer: *Nichole Birkenholz*

Media Project Manager: *Sridevi Palani*

Cover Designer: *Studio Montage, St. Louis, MO*

Typeface: *10/12 Sabon*

Compositor: *Cenveo® Publisher Services*

Printer: *Quad/Graphics*

All credits appearing on page or at the end of the book are considered to be an extension of the copyright page.

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Fundamentals of human communication: social science in everyday life / Margaret H. DeFleur, Louisiana State University, Patricia Kearney, California State University, Long Beach, Timothy G. Plax, California State University, Long Beach, Melvin L. DeFleur, Louisiana State University.—  
Fourth edition.

pages cm.

ISBN 978-0-07-803689-7 — ISBN 0-07-803689-5

1. Communication. I. DeFleur, Margaret H. II. Kearney, Patricia, 1949- III. Plax, Timothy G. IV. DeFleur, Melvin L. (Melvin Lawrence), 1923-  
P90.D4415 2013  
302.2—dc23

2012044651

The Internet addresses listed in the text were accurate at the time of publication. The inclusion of a website does not indicate an endorsement by the authors or McGraw-Hill, and McGraw-Hill does not guarantee the accuracy of the information presented at these sites.

# Contents in Brief

Preface xiii

## part one

### Basics of Communication

- chapter 1 The Communication Process: An Overview 1
- chapter 2 Verbal Communication: Using Speech and Language 33
- chapter 3 Nonverbal Communication: Communicating Without Language 64
- chapter 4 The Importance of Listening 94

## part two

### Communicating in Distinctive Contexts

- chapter 5 Communicating Interpersonally 118
- chapter 6 Communicating in Small Groups 144
- chapter 7 Communicating in Organizations 174
- chapter 8 Communicating Between Cultures 205

## part three

### Managing Personal Communication Processes

- chapter 9 Presenting Yourself Effectively 238
- chapter 10 Overcoming Communication Apprehension 267
- chapter 11 Influencing Others 293
- chapter 12 Coping with Conflict 321

## part four

### Understanding Communication Media

- chapter 13 Using Media to Communicate Interpersonally 342
- chapter 14 Understanding Mass Communication 368
- chapter 15 Understanding Communication Research 396

Glossary G-1

Credits C-1

Index I-1

# Contents

Preface xiii

## part one

## Basics of Communication

### chapter 1 The Communication Process: An Overview 1

The Significance of Communication in Human Life 3

Defining Communication 6

Communication as Linear Process: An Analytic Model 9

Stage One: Deciding on the Message 11

Stage Two: Encoding the Intended Meanings 12

Stage Three: Transmitting the Message as Information 19

Stage Four: Perceiving the Information as a Message 19

Stage Five: Decoding and Interpreting the Message 20

Interactive Communication: A Simultaneous Transactions Model 20

Encoding and Decoding 23

Role-Taking and Feedback 23

Influences of Prior Communication 23

Influences of Physical Surroundings 23

Influences of Sociocultural Situations 23

Influences of Social Relationships 23

Accuracy in Communication 24

**BOX 1.1** A Closer Look: Distortion in Communication 26

**BOX 1.2** Ethical Concerns: Dilemmas in Communication 27

**BOX 1.3** Communication Competence Scale (CCS) 28

Brief Chapter Review 29

Key Terms 30

Notes 30

### chapter 2 Verbal Communication: Using Speech and Language 33

The Animal Kingdom: Communicating without Language 35

The Case of Clever Hans 36

Communicating with Learned Signs 37

Trying to Teach Apes to Talk 38

The Human Experience: The Development of Speech and Language 41

The Beginnings: Gaining the Ability to Talk 41

Expanding Verbal Communication: Conquering Time and Distance 41

The Basic Nature of Language 45

Language Symbols and Their Referents 45

**BOX 2.1** A Closer Look: The Principles of Symbols 46

Language as Conventions 47

How Language Serves Us Today: Individually and Collectively 50

<b>BOX 2.2</b> Ethical Concerns: What Significance Should We Put on Grammar? 51
Language and the Social Construction of Reality 52
Human Cognitive Processing 55
Language and the Accumulation of Culture 56
Symbolic Interaction: The Key to Developing Mind, Self, and Society 57
<b>BOX 2.3</b> Talkaholic Scale 60
Chapter Review 61
Key Terms 62
Notes 62

## chapter 3 Nonverbal Communication: Communicating Without Language 64

The Relationship Between Verbal and Nonverbal Communication 65
Complementing Our Verbal Meanings 66
Regulating Verbal Interaction 67
Substituting Actions for Words 67
<b>BOX 3.1</b> A Closer Look: Common “Emblems” Used in the United States 68
Contradicting Our Verbal Meanings 68
Interpreting Nonverbal Communication 69
<b>BOX 3.2</b> A Closer Look: Four Major Ways We Use Nonverbal Communication 70
“Things” That Communicate 70
Using the Body to Send Messages 70
Communication with Artifacts 72
Communicating with Clothing 73
Nonverbal Sexual Communication in the Workplace 75
Actions That Communicate 76
Body Movements and Gestures 76
Nonverbal Uses of the Voice 77
Eye Contact 78
Using Space and Distance 79
<b>BOX 3.3</b> A Closer Look: Techniques to Prevent Territorial Encroachment 81
Touch 82
Time 84

Communication as an Integrated Process 86
The Importance of Nonverbal Immediacy 86
Applying the Immediacy Principle 87
<b>BOX 3.4</b> It’s Your Turn ...: How Nonverbally Immediate Are You? 88
<b>BOX 3.5</b> Ethical Concerns: Using Nonverbal Behaviors Responsibly 89
Chapter Review 90
Key Terms 90
Notes 90

## chapter 4 The Importance of Listening 94

<b>BOX 4.1</b> Workplace Perspective: Five Ways to Really Irritate Your Employees 96
The Listening Process 97
Listening as Behavior 97
What We Gain from Effective Listening 98
<b>BOX 4.2</b> A Closer Look: The Four Primary Purposes of Listening 99
Actions Required of Effective Listeners 101
<b>BOX 4.3</b> A Closer Look: Visible Characteristics of Good and Poor Listeners 102
The Listening Encounter 103
Sender-Receiver Reciprocity 103
<b>BOX 4.4</b> Listening Strengths and Weaknesses Inventory 104
<b>BOX 4.5</b> A Closer Look: Listening Responsibilities 106
Sender-Receiver Similarity 107
Misconceptions That Impair Listening 108
Inaccurate Assumptions about Listening 108
Five Barriers to Effective Listening 109
A Seven-Feature Plan for Strategic Listening 111
Be Mindful of Your Self-Talk 111
Prepare Yourself to Listen 112
<b>BOX 4.6</b> A Closer Look: Features of a Sound Listening Plan 113

Control Your Concentration	113
Show Alertness and Interest	113
Search Actively for Meaning	114
Keep Active while Listening	114
Suspend Judgment about Message and Source	115

<b>BOX 4.7</b> Ethical Concerns: Effective Listening	115
Chapter Review	115
Key Terms	116
Notes	116

## part two

## Communicating in Distinctive Contexts

### chapter 5 Communicating Interpersonally 118

Communicating in an Interpersonal Context	119
Characteristics of Interpersonal Communication	120
Reasons for Initiating and Maintaining Relationships	123

#### **BOX 5.1** A Closer Look: Characteristics of Interpersonal Communication 124

Engagement: The Initial Encounter	127
The Critical First Moments	127
The Skills of Small Talk	129

#### Management: Moving Toward and Maintaining Intimacy 132

#### **BOX 5.2** A Closer Look: Guidelines for Successful Small Talk 132

#### **BOX 5.3** Assessing Your Small Talk 133

Assessing Costs and Benefits	134
Revealing Core Information about Self	135
Communicating with an Intimate Other	136

#### **BOX 5.4** Ethical Concerns: Is “Being Intimate” A Code Phrase for “Having Sex”? 137

Disengagement: Communicating When Relationships Erode	138
Explaining the Reasons for Disengagement	138
Saying Goodbye	139

#### Chapter Review 140

#### Key Terms 141

#### Notes 141

### chapter 6 Communicating in Small Groups 144

The Nature of Human Groups	146
Groups versus Social Categories	146
The Basics of Social Organization	147

#### **BOX 6.1** A Closer Look: Social Organization 149

Informal versus Formal Communication	149
The Consequences of Group Size	150

#### Stages in Group Development 151

Forming: The Stage of Initial Orientation	151
---	-----

#### **BOX 6.2** A Closer Look: Tuckman’s Four Stages in Group Development 152

Storming: The Stage of Emerging Conflict	152
Norming: The Stage of Stabilization	153
Performing: The Stage of Task Achievement	153

#### Informal Communication in Small, Intimate Groups 153

Communicating within the Family	153
Communicating with Peers	156
Patterns of Communication in Small, Intimate Groups	156

#### Communicating in Task-Oriented Discussion Groups 158

Informal versus Formal Discussion Groups	158
Small, Task-Oriented Discussion Groups with Specific Objectives	159
Patterns of Communication in Task-Oriented Groups	161

**BOX 6.3** Assessing Your Leadership Style 162

Communicating in Formal Decision-Making Groups 164

Goals Pursued in Formal Decision-Making Groups 164

Patterns of Communication in Formal Decision-Making Groups 166

Group Cohesion and Disorganization 167

Distinct Bases of Cohesion 167

Communication Breakdown and Group Disorganization 168

**BOX 6.4** Ethical Concerns: Groupthink as Group Breakdown 169

Chapter Review 169

Key Terms 170

Notes 170

## chapter 7 Communicating in Organizations 174

The Nature and Functions of Organizations 175

Society's Need for Organizations 176

Bureaucracy as a Theory of Formal Social Organization 177

**BOX 7.1** What's Your Office Politics IQ? 178

**BOX 7.2** A Closer Look: Basic Social Institutions 180

Max Weber's Classical Theory of Bureaucracy 180

**BOX 7.3** A Closer Look: Weber's Four Principles of Bureaucracy 180

The Emergence of "Rational" Society 181

Weber's Principles 181

Management's Designs for Organizational Communication 182

Human Use Perspectives 183

Human Relations Perspectives 186

Human Resources Perspectives 188

Contemporary Perspectives 190

The Flow of Messages in Large Organizations 190

**BOX 7.4** Workplace Perspective: Ten Easy Rules for Managing Your Manager 191

Formal Communication through Official Channels 191

**BOX 7.5** A Closer Look: Messages Can Be Distorted as They Move Up the Line 194

**BOX 7.6** A Closer Look: Messages Can Be Distorted as They Move Down the Line 195

Informal Communication in Organizational Contexts 196

Distortion of Messages in the "Grapevine" 197

Implications for Managers 199

Consequences of Organizational Communication 200

Chapter Review 201

Key Terms 202

Notes 202

## chapter 8 Communicating Between Cultures 205

**BOX 8.1** A Closer Look: The Meaning of the Term *Culture* 207

The Nature of Culture 207

General Culture 208

Specialized Cultures 208

Dealing with Diversity 210

Excessive Ethnocentrism 211

**BOX 8.2** Are You Ethnocentric? 212

Cultural Relativity 213

The Influence of Culture on Communication 214

Intercultural Communication Defined 214

Principles of Intercultural Communication 215

Features of Culture That Make a Difference 216

Individualism and Collectivism 217

High and Low Context 217

High and Low Power Distance 219

Masculinity and Femininity 220

Unique Styles of Communication Common in Specialized Cultures 221



<b>BOX 8.3</b> A Closer Look: Cultural Features Affecting Communication	222
European Americans	222
Latinos and Latinas	224
African Americans	225
Asian Americans	226
Native Americans	227
Middle Eastern Americans	229
Females and Males	230

Communicating Successfully in Intercultural Contexts	232
--	-----

<b>BOX 8.4</b> A Closer Look: Tips for Successful Intercultural Communication	233
---	-----

Chapter Review	233
----------------	-----

Key Terms	234
-----------	-----

Notes	234
-------	-----

## part three

## Managing Personal Communication Processes

### chapter 9 Presenting Yourself Effectively 238

The Impressions You Make in Initial Encounters	239
What Research Tells Us about Initial Impressions	239
Problems in Initial Encounters	244

#### Presenting Yourself in Encounters That Really Matter 247

Goals in Initial Encounters	247
Preselecting the Impressions You Want to Make	248

<b>BOX 9.1</b> A Closer Look: Principles for Preselecting Initial Impressions	251
Assessing the People You Meet	251

<b>BOX 9.2</b> A Closer Look: The Attribution Process	252
---	-----

Getting People to Like You	254
----------------------------	-----

Deciding What to Say	255
Self-Disclosure in Initial Encounters	255

<b>BOX 9.3</b> A Closer Look: Affinity-Seeking Strategies	256
---	-----

<b>BOX 9.4</b> Self-Disclosure Test: Psychology Today's "Self-Disclosure Test"	258
--	-----

<b>BOX 9.5</b> A Closer Look: Why Does Dexter Morgan Seem So Likable?	259
Talking with People You Have Just Met	259

Changing Negative Impressions	261
The Inflexible Nature of Preexisting Impressions	261
Overcoming Resistance to Change	262
Constructing New Realities	263

Chapter Review	264
----------------	-----

Key Terms	264
-----------	-----

Notes	265
-------	-----

### chapter 10 Overcoming Communication Apprehension 267

#### Communication Apprehension as a Common Reaction 268

Individuals High and Low in Apprehension	269
Experiencing Communication Apprehension	271

Causes of Communication Apprehension	271
Contextual Sources of Anxiety	271

<b>BOX 10.1</b> A Closer Look: Contextual Causes of Communication Apprehension	272
Learning to Be Apprehensive	274

<b>BOX 10.2</b> A Closer Look: Social Learning Theory versus Reinforcement Theory	277
---	-----

#### Consequences of High and Low Communication Apprehension 278

In the Classroom	279
In Social Encounters	279

<b>BOX 10.3</b> Personal Report of Communication Apprehension-24 (CA)	280
---	-----

At Work	280
In Lifelong Careers	281

Dealing with Stage Fright	283
The Contributions of the Context	283
The Contributions of the Speaker	283

## Reducing Communication

Apprehension 284

Systematic Desensitization 284

Cognitive Restructuring 286

**BOX 10.4** A Closer Look: Cognitive Restructuring 287

Skills Training 288

**BOX 10.5** Ethical Concerns: Implications of Communication Apprehension 288

Chapter Review 289

Key Terms 290

Notes 290

## chapter 11 Influencing Others 293

The Importance of Persuasion in Everyday Life 294

Person-to-Person Persuasion 294

Linear versus Transactional Views of Persuasion 296

A Formal Definition of Persuasion 297

Alternative Methods for Achieving Influence 297

**BOX 11.1** A Closer Look: Why People Comply with Persuasive Messages 298  
Coercion 298  
Social Expectations 298  
Cognitive Reorganization 299

**BOX 11.2** A Closer Look: The Process of Cognitive Reorganization 302

**BOX 11.3** A Closer Look: Three Issues in the Relationship between Attitudes and Actions 306

Understanding Resistance and Yielding 307

Resistance as Reaction to Persuasion Attempts 307

**BOX 11.4** A Closer Look: Brehm's Theory of Psychological Reactance 308  
Types of Resistance 308  
Types of Yielding 310

Traditional Communication Strategies for Influencing People 311

Understanding Characteristics of Receivers 312

Features of Effective Messages 312

Credibility of the Source 314

The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion 314

**BOX 11.5** Assessing Source Credibility 315

Chapter Review 317

Key Terms 318

Notes 318

## chapter 12 Coping with Conflict 321

The Major Characteristics of Conflict 323

Formulating a More Precise Definition 324

Consequences of Conflict 325

**BOX 12.1** A Closer Look: Observable Indicators of Unproductive and Productive Conflict 327

Common Causes of Conflict 328

Misunderstood Meanings as a Primary Cause 328

Contextual Factors That Can Generate Conflict 329

Personal Styles of Coping with Conflict 331

**BOX 12.2** A Closer Look: Kilmann and Thomas's Coping Strategies for Conflict 332  
The Competitive Style 332  
The Collaborative Style 332  
The Compromising Style 333  
The Avoidance Style 333  
The Accommodating Style 334

Successful Conflict Negotiation 334

Understanding Negotiation 334

Guidelines for Negotiation 335

**BOX 12.3** Argumentativeness Scale (ARG) 336

**BOX 12.4** A Closer Look: Eight Recommendations for Principled Negotiation 338

**BOX 12.5** Ethical Concerns: Dirty Tricks 340

Chapter Review 340

Key Terms 341

Notes 341

## chapter 13 Using Media to Communicate Interpersonally 342

- Face-to-Face versus Mediated Communication 343
- Why Media Matter 344
- How Communication Technologies Change Our Lives 347

### Communicating Using Traditional Written Media 348

- Letters 348

#### **BOX 13.1** A Closer Look: The Advantages and Disadvantages of Letters 349

- Memoranda 350

### Communicating by Telephone and Related Media 352

- Telephone 352

#### **BOX 13.2** A Closer Look: Do's and Don'ts for Cell Phone Users 354

### Communicating by Computer 355

- Background 355

- E-Mail 357

#### **BOX 13.3** Workplace Perspective: E-Mail Norms or Netiquette 358

### Teleconferencing 359

- Audioconferencing 359

- Videoconferencing 360

### Social Media 361

#### **BOX 13.4** Communication Technology Avoidance 364

### Chapter Review 366

### Key Terms 366

### Notes 366

## chapter 14 Understanding Mass Communication 368

### Social and Cultural Factors That Have Shaped Our Media 370

- The Influences of New Communication Technologies 370

- The Development of Media in the United States 372

### Mass Communication as a Process 383

#### The Great Debate over the Influence of Mass Communication 384

- Early Research and the Magic Bullet Theory 385

- A Theory of Selective and Minimal Influences 386

#### The Power of the Media: Alternative Interpretations 389

- Long-Term Influences on Society and Culture 389

- The Adoption Process as Long-Term Influence on Change 391

- Socialization Theories 391

### Chapter Review 392

### Key Terms 393

### Notes 393

## chapter 15 Understanding Communication Research 396

### The Postulates of the Scientific Research Perspective 399

#### **BOX 15.1** A Closer Look: Research Postulates about Communication 399

- The Assumption of an Orderly Universe 400

- The Assumption of Cause-Effect Relationships 400

- The Assumption of Scientific Integrity 400

### Steps in the Research Process 401

- Specifying the Goals of the Research 401

#### **BOX 15.2** A Closer Look: Steps in the Research Process 402

- Reviewing Prior Research Reports 403

- Making the Necessary Observations 404

- Analyzing the Data 405

- Reaching Conclusions 406

- Reporting the Results 407

### Research Designs as Strategies for Controlled Observation 407

- Experiments 407

- Surveys 410

- Field Observational Studies 413

- Content Analysis 414

Focus Groups 415

Observing by Measuring Variables 415

- Levels of Measurement 416
- Judging the Quality of Measurement 416

Ethical Issues in Communication

- Research 419
- Truth in Findings 419

**BOX 15.3** Ethical Concerns: Informed

- Consent and Deception in Research 420
- Protection of Subjects 420

Chapter Review 421

Key Terms 422

Notes 422

Glossary G-1

Credits C-1

Index I-1