

CHRIS KOSSEN
ELEANOR KIERNAN
JILL LAWRENCE

COMMUNICATING FOR SUCCESS

Third Edition

Sample pages





CONTENTS

	PREFACE	xi
	ABOUT THE AUTHORS	xiii
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xiv
	CHAPTER 1 WHY COMMUNICATION SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT TO SUCCESS	
	<i>Chris Kossen, Eleanor Kiernan, Jill Lawrence</i>	1
	Introduction	2
	Communication for success at university	2
	Communication: career and professional success	3
	Communication for success in personal life	5
	Ethics and professionalism: underpin success	6
	<i>Conclusion</i>	7
	<i>Key Points</i>	7
	<i>Bibliography</i>	8
PART 1	COMMUNICATION AT UNIVERSITY	9
	CHAPTER 2 UNIVERSITY CULTURE AND TRANSITION SKILLS	
	<i>Jill Lawrence</i>	10
	Introduction	11
	University – a new culture?	11
	Are your expectations about university realistic?	13
	Be aware of your learning approach	16
	Appreciate similarities and differences within the university culture	16
	Using problem solving skills: strategies to help you make your transition to university	21
	Employing transition skills	23
	<i>Conclusion</i>	37
	<i>Key Points</i>	37
	<i>Review Questions</i>	38
	<i>Bibliography</i>	38
	<i>Note</i>	39

CHAPTER 3 ACADEMIC WRITING <i>Jill Lawrence</i>	41
Introduction	42
Chapter themes	42
Developing a persuasive argument	45
Gaining insight into the assignment task	50
Style and tone	60
Report writing	65
Reflective writing	72
Tips for organising yourself to write well academically	77
<i>Employment implications</i>	80
<i>Conclusion</i>	80
<i>Key points</i>	81
<i>Review questions</i>	81
<i>Bibliography</i>	81
CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH AND REFERENCING <i>Jill Lawrence</i>	83
Introduction	84
Researching at university	84
Structural analysis	90
Evaluating sources	91
Finding the appropriate sources	95
Referencing	96
Paraphrasing and integrating evidence	101
Plagiarism and intellectual property	103
<i>Conclusion</i>	106
<i>Key points</i>	106
<i>Review questions</i>	106
<i>Bibliography</i>	107

PART 2 COMMUNICATION IN THEORY 109

CHAPTER 5 COMMUNICATION THEORY <i>Chris Kossen</i>	110
Introduction	111
Defining communication	111
The nature of theory	112
The gap between theory and practice	115
Applying theory: optimising balance	116
Theories of communication	117
<i>Conclusion</i>	128
<i>Key points</i>	128

<i>Review questions</i>	129
<i>Bibliography</i>	129
CHAPTER 6 PERCEPTION, AUDIENCE ANALYSIS AND TASK	
ANALYSIS <i>Chris Kossen</i>	131
Introduction	132
Perception	132
Differences in perception	138
Audience analysis: targeting communication	142
Task analysis	145
<i>Conclusion</i>	150
<i>Key points</i>	150
<i>Review questions</i>	151
<i>Bibliography</i>	151
CHAPTER 7 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION <i>Jill Lawrence</i>	153
Acknowledgement of country	154
Introduction	154
Defining culture	155
Cultural diversity	159
Responding to cultural difference	172
Developing cultural competence	179
<i>Conclusion</i>	185
<i>Key points</i>	185
<i>Review questions</i>	185
<i>Bibliography</i>	186
PART 3 COMMUNICATION IN PRACTICE	187
CHAPTER 8 SOCIAL MEDIA—UNTANGLING THE WEB <i>Eleanor Kiernan</i>	188
Introduction	189
Social media—changing the world	189
Personal use of social media	190
Professional use of social media	192
Political use of social media	199
Social media issues	203
Psychological challenges	205
Social media abuse	207
<i>Conclusion</i>	214
<i>Key points</i>	214
<i>Review questions</i>	214
<i>Bibliography</i>	215

CHAPTER 9 ORAL COMMUNICATION: PRESENTATIONS AND INTERVIEWS

<i>Eleanor Kiernan</i>	219
Introduction	220
Oral presentations	220
The audience's role	237
The interview	240
<i>Conclusion</i>	248
<i>Key points</i>	248
<i>Review questions</i>	248
<i>Bibliography</i>	249

CHAPTER 10 THE POWER OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

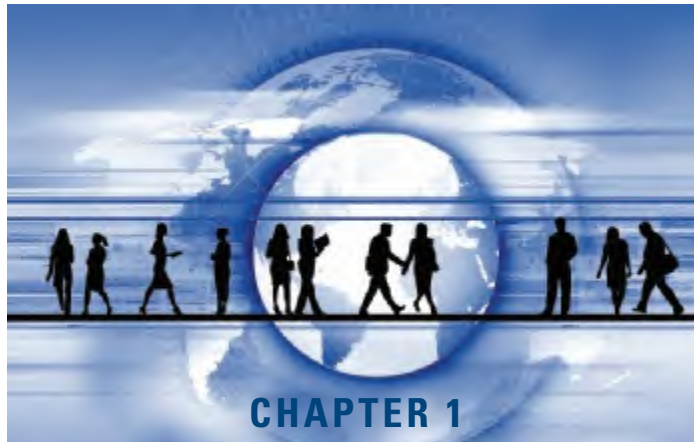
<i>Eleanor Kiernan</i>	251
Introduction	252
The importance of nonverbal communication	253
Defining nonverbal communication	254
More than body language	256
Kinesics	257
Oculesics	261
Proxemics	264
Chronemics (time)	269
Paralinguistics	271
Olfactics (smell)	274
Haptics (touch)	279
<i>Conclusion</i>	285
<i>Key points</i>	285
<i>Review questions</i>	286
<i>Bibliography</i>	286

CHAPTER 11 THINK SMARTER: CRITICAL THINKING AND ARGUMENT

<i>Eleanor Kiernan</i>	289
Introduction	290
What is critical thinking?	291
Why is critical thinking important?	293
What is an argument?	295
Cue words	296
Hidden premises	297
Deductive and inductive reasoning	298
Truth and validity	302

The quality of the argument	303
Scattergun and chain arguments	304
Conspiracy theories	308
Creative thinking versus logical thinking	310
<i>Conclusion</i>	312
<i>Key points</i>	312
<i>Review questions</i>	313
<i>Bibliography</i>	313
PART 4 COMMUNICATION IN THE WORKPLACE	315
CHAPTER 12 INTERPERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION <i>Chris Kossen</i>	316
Introduction	317
Interpersonal communication	318
Intrapersonal communication	319
Self-awareness and self-concept	319
Emotional intelligence and positive psychology	323
Interpersonal and relationship communication	330
Interpersonal styles of relating	335
Conflict	342
Conflict resolution and negotiation	344
High-level conflict	349
<i>Conclusion</i>	350
<i>Key points</i>	351
<i>Review questions</i>	351
<i>Bibliography</i>	352
CHAPTER 13 GROUP AND TEAM COMMUNICATION <i>Chris Kossen</i>	355
Introduction	356
Groups and teams	356
Benefits and strengths	357
Group dynamics	359
Social loafing	364
Leadership	369
<i>Conclusion</i>	374
<i>Key points</i>	374
<i>Review questions</i>	375
<i>Bibliography</i>	375

CHAPTER 14 ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION <i>Chris Kossen</i>	377
Introduction	378
Scientific management	378
Human relations and resource development	380
Communication flow and climate	382
Organisational culture	387
Organisations: societal pressures and influences	389
Establishing and maintaining cultural integrity	393
Social capital: cohesion and trust in society	395
Workplace bullying and harassment	395
Preparing for employment and jobseeking	402
<i>Conclusion</i>	404
<i>Key points</i>	405
<i>Review questions</i>	405
<i>Bibliography</i>	406
CHAPTER 15 COMMUNICATION BARRIERS <i>Chris Kossen</i>	409
Introduction	410
Physical barriers	410
Intrapersonal barriers	411
Psychological, cognitive barriers	412
Maintaining productive attitudes and beliefs	416
Managing learning and motivation	418
Addressing interpersonal barriers	422
Intercultural barriers	424
Task and communication planning	429
<i>Conclusion</i>	432
<i>Key points</i>	432
<i>Review questions</i>	433
<i>Bibliography</i>	433
INDEX	435



WHY COMMUNICATION SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT TO SUCCESS

Chris Kossen, Eleanor Kiernan, Jill Lawrence

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this chapter you should be able to:

- recognise the benefits of studying communication in relation to your personal, university (academic) and professional (work and career) life
- demonstrate the value of your interpersonal skills to employers across a range of work type situations including people skills, problem-solving and conflict management
- understand the transferable nature of communication-related skills and their centrality as employability skills identified as essential by employers
- recognise lifelong-learning as a higher-level employability skill of being able to adapt to changing work demands and environments
- understand the importance of ethical communication and behaviour and their relevance to professional reputation.

Introduction

Communication is vitally important and it pervades every facet of our lives, we spend virtually all of our time communicating either verbally or nonverbally. Because communication comes so naturally to us, we can easily assume that we know how to do it and therefore don't need to spend time on learning it.

There has been some shift in students' attitude to studying communication. Traditionally students have tended to be interested only in subjects in their discipline believing they were already good communicators. However, students, as upcoming professionals, are increasingly beginning to realise the importance of strong communication skills to employers, and this is very apparent in job selection criteria where communication skills now feature prominently. Communication skills are highly transferable skills and work performance and career success depend on a graduate's ability to transfer the knowledge and skills gained at university to the workplace. As you read on you will notice that what employers call 'employability' skills, i.e. skills identified by employers themselves as the skills they desire most and rate most highly are actually communication-related skills. These communication-related skills include analytical and critical thinking, problem-solving, cultural literacy, and interpersonal and teamwork skills (e.g. the ability to cooperate, negotiate, coordinate, lead, motivate).

In addition to these, lifelong-learning is also now regarded as a core high-level employability skill and is often described and referred to by employers with terms such as 'initiative', 'proactivity' and 'self-directedness'. Importantly, lifelong-learning, as an employability skill, refers to a person's ability to engage in lifelong-learning as a process for continually updating and adapting to changing environments and work demands (Bridgstock 2009). In this sense employability is about future proofing our employment security.

COMMUNICATION FOR SUCCESS AT UNIVERSITY

The first chapters of this book introduce you to different aspects of university, particularly academic protocols and study strategies. You will be challenged to think about the experiences that have made you the person you are and how this affects your success at university. Different aspects of university culture are examined to show you that many of the challenges you face can be met with an array of skills you already possess as you go on to develop and refine these further. These skills are broken down into chunk-sized bites so that you can find practical ways to overcome problems in acclimatising to the university culture, both personally and academically.

Some of the specific skills you will learn in transitioning to university are transferable; that is, you can use them in different professional contexts. You will learn how to deal with the seemingly perplexing administrative requirements at university, and develop the skills needed for research and written work. The skills and knowledge you will acquire are essential ingredients for lifelong-learning.

One of the key aspects of communicating well is to present logical arguments. Understanding and evaluating arguments is not just a useful tool in your academic studies; it extends into your personal and professional communication. Once you can evaluate arguments, you will be better equipped to think critically about information you encounter, whether it is from a television commercial, a politician's speech or a friend trying to convince you to join a team or a social club.

Obvious areas of communication at university are written and oral presentations: extended writing, including essays and reports, make up much of the assessment. However, presenting ideas orally and in writing are also of great importance and transferable to professional and work life. Indeed, the logic and the skills required for academic work provide a strong grounding for your professional life.

Writing effective essays requires the ability to research effectively, to think critically, to apply (content) knowledge to address a specific task and to communicate clearly while using the standards and format that have been set. This starts with the developing of a thesis (position, point of view) and then going about the steps needed for constructing a logical and coherent argument to support that thesis.

Presenting your ideas orally involves the same skills of critical thinking, analysis and logical development of argument used for essays or reports. But it also requires the ability to adapt often complex material to match the constraints of an oral presentation format, which is much shorter than written formats. Presenting information in this way also requires confidence and competence with spoken language. Research shows that these skills can be learned by almost anyone.

Success at university and in professional life also depends on how well you can solve problems; how self-motivated and self-directed you are; how effective you are at thinking and learning independently; as well as your mental flexibility and adaptability to cope with the career changes that will occur in our working lives.

COMMUNICATION: CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS

There is a common perception that communication is important in people-oriented professions like human resources and public relations and less important in technical professions such as science and engineering. This is not really the case: being able to express ourselves fluently (orally and in writing), being competent in interviews and being able to work effectively with other people are skills that have become increasingly important and in high demand across all professions and occupations.

Good communication skills help us to get the job in the first instance; you can test this out for yourself by looking through job advertisements. Virtually all employers specify the need to have good communication skills, both written and interpersonal. Critical thinking is also becoming increasingly important in selection criteria. You will notice that selection criteria typically contain two levels of skills: essential and desirable.

Communication-related skills are usually essential. As well as helping in obtaining a job, communication skills can help us succeed in the job and, importantly, move up and advance in our career. Look at the skills required for employment as a teacher in Queensland (Department of Education, Queensland Government 2020):

- Staff are required to actively participate in consultation and communication with supervisors and management regarding health, safety and wellbeing issues and comply with all provisions of the relevant workplace health and safety legislation and related health, safety and wellbeing responsibilities and procedures developed by the department.
- You will work for an organisation that values its people and promotes leadership and innovation. We respect professionalism, embrace diversity and encourage a balance between work and life commitments.

Collectively employers are placing the most emphasis on the following skills (which happen to be communication-related) as the most essential and desired:

- articulate communication: written and spoken
- interpersonal: 'people skills', cooperate
- teamwork: coordinate, negotiate
- leadership: lead, persuade, motivate
- critical and creative thinking
- problem solving
- conflict resolution
- accountability: ethical
- organised, task focused
- initiative, proactive: self-directed, independent learning, and
- responsiveness, and adaptability

(Drummond & Rosenbluth 2015; Naughtin et.al., 2017; OECD 2019, Pennington & Stanford 2019; Quacquarelli Symonds 2018; 2020; World Economic Forum 2018).

Research and evidence on employability skills, i.e. the skills employers are interested in, over and above professional technical skills and knowledge, reveal that they are communication related. It is clear we can no longer assume that the degree alone is a ticket to a job. Employers want to see further evidence of what you can contribute to a position, and they are interested in communication related capacities which they say are needed for graduates to be 'job ready'.

There is good news, in that graduates do accumulate and advance these 'transferable' skills during the course of their degree studies. Where attention is needed, though, is in learning how to better identify and articulate these communication-based skills to

employers. This is a communication skill in itself and one of the major themes in this book. Accordingly, we focus on the transferability of communication skills to professional workplaces and also on how to articulate these ‘job ready’ skills to employers. For example, interpersonal skills required for managing conflict effectively and for teamwork for collaborating and problem-solving.

Leading career and employment expert and researcher, Professor Peter McIlveen (University of Southern Queensland) adds the following insights and advice which highlight the importance of knowing how to effectively communicate your employability skills to help ensure career and employment success.

DEEPEN YOUR UNDERSTANDING

When it comes to getting a job, people sometimes express beliefs out of frustration at just how difficult it can be to get a break: “It’s who you know” or “You have to have a piece of paper”. Of course, having a qualification, the piece of paper, for a profession is usually necessary, but so is building and maintaining a professional network of peers, mentors, and potential employers. Employability is not so much about “who you know” or “what you know”. Employability is more about “who knows what you can do”. This implies that, not only having the requisite knowledge and skills of your chosen occupation, and the qualification, but also having the ability to effectively communicate the specific skills and knowledge you can bring to employment positions. Both in job applications and through professional networks where you create and communicate your professional identity. To do this well requires you knowing yourself, that is, having a clear idea of what your skills, knowledge and abilities are. If you don’t have a clear idea about what you have to offer to an employer, then how can you communicate your worth to them?

Online networking platforms are important, like your LinkedIn profile, as an open public forum for your communication and, moreover, building and maintaining your professional identity and network. Attending industry functions is a personal and direct approach to communicating your knowledge and skills to publicise your professional identity and employability. But once again, you need to know yourself, to communicate about yourself.

Professor Peter McIlveen

COMMUNICATION FOR SUCCESS IN PERSONAL LIFE

Communication is not only what we write or say; it is *how* we write or say it, how we stand, how we use time, how we interact with others, even how we feel about ourselves. We also cover areas of positive psychology and emotional intelligence

(Chapter 12) to see how emotional and psychological factors can influence our abilities to learn and function well. Learning to manage our personal lives well is of critical importance to our happiness, but also for our academic learning performance, and our professional and working life. Hence, it is of high, not marginal importance.

Do you ever have difficulty saying ‘no’ to unfair or unreasonable requests and end up resenting that you seemed to have been forced to do something you do not want to? How do you cope with conflict? Are you passive and avoid it, or are you aggressive and lose your temper easily? Chapter 12: Interpersonal and Professional Communication examines the importance of managing relationships and includes assertive behaviour principles and techniques.

Skills and knowledge for negotiating in areas of organisational communication and group and teamwork are important to both personal success and career success. Issues we are likely to confront at some point include bullying and corruption. The issue of bullying shows once again the interrelated nature of communication: on the one hand, bullying is a personal matter (for those involved); on the other hand, when it occurs often within the workplace it also becomes an organisational and professional life matter.

To be an effective communicator means learning more about the principles and techniques that make up communication competency. This book is aimed at helping you add to and fine tune your skills to improve communication competency and performance. We will see that communication skills are critical to success in most areas. Well-developed communication skills provide a major advantage for those motivated to excel in their personal, academic and professional pursuits.

ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM: UNDERPIN SUCCESS

What do we mean when we speak of ‘ethics’? Ethics forms an entire branch of philosophy and philosophical definitions of ethics can be quite detailed, but ethics is always linked to morality and professionalism. When we speak of ethics, we speak not of what is legal or permissible, but of what is morally right: what is ‘good’.

If we think, then, of the styles of communication mentioned earlier, we can see that failure to respect the rights of all communicating parties, whether by denying the receiver’s rights as the aggressive communicator does, or by denying ourselves rights as the non-assertive communicator does, is not communicating ethically. Persuasive communication and misuse of logic and argumentation are also areas where unethical communication can often be found.

There are many variations on what constitutes ethical communication, but we can think of it as involving:

- honesty
- respect for individual rights

- concern for others
- open-mindedness in terms of differing views, cultures, religious beliefs, gender
- tolerance
- ethical clarity—tailoring messages to audiences and tasks so that the meaning and intent are transparent and unambiguous
- avoiding manipulation and coercion.

As ethics is often concerned with what we could call ‘grey areas’, there may be times when we compromise one ethical principle in order to meet other more pressing ethical principles. For example, where does the ‘little white lie’ fit in? Should we always be honest, even if it is hurtful, or should we try to cheer a friend by being less than strictly honest? Should our concern for our friend’s psychological welfare override our concern for honesty?

Ethics underpins our reputation as people and importantly as professionals. Our professional reputation and credibility is an important asset and one that we work hard to build over time, and it can easily and quickly be damaged. At a wider social level, ethical practices determine the nature of our society, for example, fairness and justice in our societies and institutions, which hinge on ethics, especially, the kinds of ethical standards we have in place and the way they are upheld. Accordingly, we examine ethical issues and challenges we need to consider and deal with as we navigate our way through our academic, personal, and professional lives.

CONCLUSION

Communication is important in all areas of our lives: academic, professional (work and career) and personal. Because communication is an everyday activity, we can assume that we communicate adequately, and so there is no need to study communication. This is not the case. Communication is critical to success. The chapters of this book deal with understanding and developing communication competency by examining and demonstrating how communication-related skills and techniques can guide you to success in your personal life, in your learning and in your professional life.

KEY POINTS

- Communication impacts all aspects of our lives and our ability to understand and apply communication skills and techniques effectively is central to our future success: academic, professional and personal lives.
- Communication-related skills are highly transferable and are identified by employers as essential employability skills.
- Employers today expect graduates to be able to demonstrate the value of their interpersonal skills to work-type situations: e.g. people skills, problem-solving skills, when applying for positions.

- Lifelong-learning is a high-level employability skill which involves being able to adapt to changing work demands and environments.
- Ethical communication and behaviour underpin professional reputation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bridgstock, R. 2009, 'The graduate attributes we've overlooked: enhancing graduate employability through career management skills', *Higher Education Research & Development*, vol.28, no.1, pp. 31-44.
- Drummond, D. and Rosenbluth, E.K. 2015, 'Competencies can bridge the interests of business and universities', *Working Paper No. 2015-02*, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, September.
- Naughtin, C, Reeson, A, Mason, C, Sanderson, T, Bratanova, A, Singh, J, McLaughlin, J, Hajkowicz, S. 2017, *Employment data ecosystem: Equipping Australians with the information they need to navigate the future labour market*. Brisbane, Australia: CSIRO.
- Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD) 2019, *Skills for Jobs*. Retrieved, July 2020: <https://www.oecdskillsforjobsdatabase.org>
- Pennington, A. & Stanford, J. 2019, *The future of work for Australian Graduates: The changing landscape of university -employment transitions in Australia*, The Centre for Future Work, Australia Institute, Canberra.
- Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) 2018, *Global Employer Survey*. Retrieved, July 2020: <https://www.qs.com/qs-industry-reports/>
- Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) 2020, *Graduate Employability in Australia: Bridging the Graduate Skills Gap*. Retrieved, July 2020: <https://www.qs.com/portfolio-items/graduate-employability-in-australia-bridging-the-graduate-skills-gap/>
- Queensland Government, Department of Education 2020, Retrieved, July 2020: <https://qed.qld.gov.au/working-with-us/current-vacancies/example-role-descriptions>
- World Economic Forum 2018, *The future of jobs report 2018*, Retrieved, July 2020: www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs-report-2018.

Sample pages