

# Preface

## APPROACH

*Communicating Effectively, Seventh Edition*, has been written for the student who is taking a speech communication class for the first time. The book covers the theories of intercultural, interpersonal, group, public, and mass communication and shows how they apply to real-life situations at school, work, and home. The approach of the books is pragmatic, so that students can see and appreciate the practical application of the ideas, concepts, and theories in their own lives. The approach of the book also is problem-solution oriented, reflecting how I teach this material in the classroom. I not only post perplexing questions that ask for settlement, such as “How does this translate into the real-world?” but I offer realistic, applied, and worthwhile solutions. In this way, students can integrate what they are reading and learning directly into their lives.

There are numerous examples of this applied, problem-solution approach throughout the book. For instance, in the new intercultural communication chapter I ask, “How do you study culture?” In response, the six dimensions or frameworks for studying cultural differences are explained as solutions, and followed by corresponding, student-oriented examples of each dimension or framework. In this way students always will see the theory in use.

Another example of this applied, problem-solution approach occurs in Chapter 7, *Interpersonal Relationships*, the first of the two interpersonal relationships chapters. The perplexing problem is, “What is the glue that holds relationships together?” Old theories included similar interests, values, beliefs, and attitudes. But as it turns out, the key seems to be “bids and responses to bids,” an approach championed by John Gottman and his team of relationship researchers. To apply Gottman’s theory, I pose questions such as what determine your ability to bid, how common is it to bid, how important is it to bid, and what are some ways to encourage bidding. A similar approach can be framed for the new section on Baxter and Montgomery’s relational dialectics: How can the “problem of” chaos that characterizes many relationships be explained and analyzed? The solution avails itself in their theory, and the examples I offer make their theory practical, realistic, and worthwhile.

This applied, problem-solving approach has four outcomes. It makes the book readable, interesting and challenging. Most important of all, it brings communication into the day-to-day lives of students. That is not just where it should be, but that is where these ideas can make the most difference.

## ORGANIZATION AND COVERAGE.

Part One is devoted to the principles of communication. Chapters 1 through 6 present a model of communication, relate communication both to the self and culture, and show how communication works, both verbally and nonverbally, in our encounters with others. Chapter 3, *Intercultural Communication*, is new in this edition and explains different frameworks for studying cultural differences, barriers to intercultural communication, and ways to improve it.

The second part of the book focuses on interpersonal and small-group communication as well as communication at work. Chapters 7 and 8 cover interpersonal relationships, their dynamics, and how they can be evaluated and improved. Chapter 9, *Communicating at Work*, discusses informational interviews, informational interviews as precursors to job interviews, employment interviews, and presentations. Chapters 10 and 11 look at problem solving in small groups as well as leadership, participation, and conflict management in those groups.

The third part of the book examines public communication. Chapters 12 to 17, about public speaking, teach how to develop, organize, and deliver a speech. The Appendix, *Mass Communication and Media Literacy*, comprises a full chapter and focuses on mass communication, specifically on the Internet and the World Wide Web (WWW). It examines the relation of the media to the communication model, the reasons for studying media literacy, and how to assess information in general—information found on television and in newspapers and on the Internet. There is an additional section on the importance of ethics.

We continue to use many examples of key concepts in this book because this is the best way to bring theories to life. We draw these examples from familiar experiences of work, interactions with others, and campus life.

One of the goals for the text is to present the world beyond our local communities. Although this is true throughout the book, it is especially true in Chapter 3, *Intercultural Communication*.

A continuing goal of this edition is to connect readers to the Internet and WWW. Woven into the fabric of every chapter, we interlace specific *On the Web* boxes that ask readers to respond to Web information, access specific websites, evaluate Web material, or view related information carried on the Web. Web readings, too, are included in the *Further Reading* sections of each chapter. Chapter 13, *Finding Speech Material*, is oriented to using the Internet to discover and narrow speech topics as well as to learn about and research those topics. The Appendix is designed to underscore the need to study the effects of the Internet and WWW.

## ■ NEW TO THIS EDITION

### Intercultural Communication

Chapter 3 examines culture and the reader's role as a cultural being. It discusses the importance of intercultural communication, relates intercultural communication to the model of communication, provides six dimensions or frameworks for studying cultural differences, discusses barriers to intercultural communication, offers ways to deal with barriers that include discussion of dominant and nondominant cultures, and provides practical suggestions for improving intercultural communication.

### Assess Yourself

Within each chapter, a new chapter-relevant questionnaire, survey, or evaluation form challenges students to assess themselves. These boxes are designed to challenge knowledge foundations, examine assumptions, discover attitudes, look at feelings, question knowledge, assess ability, high-