Metric Mnemonic or Crawford's Crutch

The following list of equivalents is suggested to help those who have trouble remembering SI prefixes:

- 10^18: minations = 1 exam
- 10^15: coatas = 1 petac
- 10^12: hells = 1 terac
- 10^9: lowe = 1 giga
- 10^6: phones = 1 mega
- 2 x 10^3: mockingbirds = 2 kilomockingbirds
- 10^9: vivitats = 1 hectovivitat
- 10^1: cardas = 1 decacard
- 10^-1: rates = 1 decimate
- 10^-2: mentalis = 1 centimental
- 10^-3: cents = 1 millicent
- 10^-6: scopes = 1 microscopes
- 10^-9: nanettes = 1 nanonanette
- 10^-12: boos = 1 picboos
- 10^-15: fatales = 1 femtofatales
- 10^-18: boys = 1 attoboy

---Dick Crawford in Technical Communication (Fourth Quarter 1979)

Affect or Effect?

1. Outward sign, appearance —
2. Result (noun) —
3. To accomplish —
4. To result in or cause to come into being —
5. To reign —
6. To cultivate or make a display of using —
7. To influence or act upon to produce a response —

There are three kinds of people: Those who make things happen; those who just watch things happen; and those who don’t know what happens.

It’s easier to keep up than to catch up.

You can’t come back from where you haven’t been.

There’s not much sense in putting your best foot forward if you drag the other one.

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Answers

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1950

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Vol. 23, No. 1

January 1990

Ad Com Meeting

Most of the business and reports discussed by PC's AdCom on February 11, 1990, at IEEE Headquarters are the subjects of separate articles in this issue of our newsletter. Briefly, however, announcements and deliberations were made as follows:

1. Lois Thuss appointed to replace Pat Howride for the AdCom term ending 1990.
2. Dan Holsch planning a PC conference to be held in either Washington, DC, or Boston, probably October 20-22.
3. Consideration given to preparing a workshop “package” that could be offered to any IEEE Society conference.
4. Scholarship applications coming in slowly.
5. Goldsmith Award to be presented to H. G. Taylor at a meeting of the UK/NI Chapter.
6. Bert Pearlman chairing committee to nominate Division VI Director.
7. PC's Transactions issue on patents (June 1990) selling for $1.00 per copy; 1,000 sold to date. Extra copies of March 1990 issue on public networking available for $5.00. Send check to Bob Joens.
8. PC membership increased from 1745 to 1938 last year—up 19%; only the Computer Society grew faster.
9. Three PC publicity releases sent to IEEE Societies and their newsletter editors, the Society for Technical Communication, the Council of Communication Societies, and Telemasters International; subject—our home-study course, scholarship program, Transactions on public speaking.
10. Consideration given to revising PC Bylaw 6, paragraphs 1, 2, and 5, which describe procedures for electing AdCom members; old and proposed text to be published in Newsletter.
11. IEEE to pay dues to Society for Scholarly Publishing, PCS to represent the Institute, Emily Schlesinger to represent PCS.
12. Consideration given to coordinating or merging some PC activities with those of IEEE Education or Engineering Management Societies.
13. Suggestion made that non-U.S. members should ask AdCom for specific help or services.
14. Suggestion made that the Newsletter have a feature column of “worst sentences.” Send sample accruating expressions, PC-ers; the editor will print them.
Letter from the President

I am writing this letter in the comfortable position of a second-term President. The comfort comes from knowledge of the workings of the IEEE; assurance that PC's officers, committee members, and editors will remain hard-working and dedicated to the aims of the Society; and experience in representing PC at meetings of IEEE's Technical Activities Board and Public Relations Committee.

In the past year, we added to PC's accomplishments and enhanced its professional stature, as Membership, Education, and Publicity Committees increased their activities. We established a Scholarship Program and expect to make the first presentation in 1980. We ended 1979 as second in growth among IEEE Societies. Our Chapter in England continued to be active; PC's members in the Boston area formed a new Chapter. More Institute members continued to enroll in our home-study course, "Technically Write!". Our report-writing seminars were presented in many locations.

For the first time, PC membership ads and news releases appeared in the Newsletters of other IEEE Societies, and one IEEE Society has expressed interest in having PC participate in some way in one of its conferences. Ad hoc members represented PC in the Society for Technical Communication's annual conference in 1979, and we are planning to have a PC-sponsored conference/symposium in 1980.

Our Transactions and Newsletter continue on the highest level to exert influence and provide information. The Annual Transactions issue on patents (June 1979) has received wide acclaim, with requests for reprints from many non-IEEE organizations and individuals. The index in our December Newsletter shows the broad range of subjects discussed during the year.

In 1979 PC became an Affiliate Member in the International Council for Technical Communication and continued to be represented on the administrative boards of the Societies for Technical Communication and the Council of Communication Societies.

As PC's President, I am proud of our achievements and confident that many members have been responsible for the Society's growth, to allow members for their dedication and productive efforts, and to all of you for your confidence in us.

I look forward to the continued growth and usefulness of the Professional Communication Society and will take part in its activities wherever they can—by working on a committee, contributing technical papers, or giving our Newsletter or papers for our Transactions by telling AC members what we do right and what we do wrong, and by suggesting what additional services the Society can offer.

Please look in our Transactions and find the name of PC's officers and committee chairmen. Call or write to any one of them with questions, suggestions, and offers of assistance.

Let us move forward together to strengthen and expand our work in the field of technical communication as we enter into the 1980's.

Bertrand B. Pearlman
President IEEE/PCB

Shorter is Better

Hir Ono, a senior editor for The Reader's Digest, talked about "Effective Editing" at a recent national meeting of Agricultural Communicators in Athens, Ohio. He submitted a report to the ACB committee on "Shorter is Better" (September, 1979). In particular, he described seven steps which follow the EP approach to condensing articles:

1. Editing is the art of improving an article by making it more readable, enhancing its essence. To make writing better, material that is unessential, unnecessary, or uninteresting should be modified or eliminated-paragraphs, sentences, and single words.

An edited article or publication is better than the original because it requires less reading time, is easier to understand, has more impact, is more enjoyable-the reader isn't distracted and bored by repetitions, uninteresting, or irrelevant material.

The first step in editing is to read and re-read an article as if you were to thoroughly understand its purpose and construction. Your challenge as an editor is to find or create, if necessary, the objective or structure of the article without unduly changing it. Sometimes outlining the material is helpful. Once you understand the pieces and are satisfied with its structure, delete the dull and insignificant material. That leaves you with the focus of the piece, giving it greater unity.

Next, provide smooth transitions to fill the gaps left by eliminating sentences or paragraphs. Good transitions are logical and are worth the time it takes to write them.

Work on individual sentences, phrases and words to make the material as concise and proficient for the Humanities (IEEE) as possible, then correct for grammar and style.

The ACB Newsletter, September, 1979.

LOIS K. THUSS

Lois Thuss, recently appointed to PC's AdCom, is a graduate of Fisher College (Boston) and has over twenty years' experience in the publications field—writing, editing, and the production of technical documents for government, military, and commercial applications. She is now a Technical Writer and Editor with the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, serving as managing editor of documentation for the Systems Evaluation Branch. Previously, she worked for Trans-Union, Inc., Technical Operations, Inc., XGA, and IBM.

A member of the Society for Technical Communication, Lois will chair the Writing/Editing section of that organization's 1980 International Technical Communication Conference. She is PC's new Chairman of Newsletter and papers for our Transactions by

ACB Newsletter, September, 1979.

Signs of the Times


Symbol Sourcebook, by the industrial designer Henry Dreyfuss, is a dictionary of graphic symbols. The book is derived from a "survey" of 20,000 representations obtained from all over the world. Alphabetics, numerals, trade marks, and logos are not included-only "signs" used to give indication, instruction, or warning.

Dreyfuss' symbols do not constitute a language, nor can they be easily used as elements of conversational speech. Rather, the book was compiled to show what standardized forms exist as universally understandable representations, and to define these forms for the communication professions—designers and teachers, engineers, and manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers, farmers and technicians, and anyone concerned with safety, shipping, standards, and regulations.

Graph symbols may be classified as representational (silhouettes of men on bicycle), abstract (signs of the zodiac), and arbitrary (musical notation, etc.). More importantly, however, they may be organized according to the discipline in which they are used (agriculture, business, photography, religion, etc.), their theme (figures, rural, silhouette, etc.), and their designDagaray or class of meaning (building signage, in and out, measurements, off and on, pressure, time, etc.).

The list of Disciplines covered in the book's Table of Contents, includes introductions, explanations, and legends are in English, but the Index organizes the Design Category alphabetically. Thus a single symbol may be located and identified from knowledge of either its primary meaning or the secondary meaning it relates to. It can also be found "out of context." In the Graphic Form section, the symbols are grouped according to shape and type of line in a 16-class organization by key Form, without regard to meaning. Here all the basically square forms appear together, and each is referenced to its page in the Discipline section. triangular forms are similarly presented in another group, and so for circles, ellipses, rectangles, U's, V's, etc.

Early in the 1930's, basic symbols were shown and ways of combining them were delineated. Near the end of the book, a Section discusses the use of color to convey information and presents a "glossary" of color symbolism. The Bibliography section gives titles of books not limited to any one discipline, some source of plus additional material, listed by discipline, and sources which supplied information on color.

A two-page spread shows the geographic areas from which the signs were compiled. Frequently, signs come from China and parts of southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and parts of countries in central and South America. Dreyfuss further acknowledges the help of the National Collection of Universal Symbols (UCB), a national and international standards organization, and various governmental departments of the U.S.

Symbol Sourcebook is an amasingly sophisticated yet easily used reference volume, certainly a significant effort to solve problems of international communication, and to promote international understanding and goodwill.

One interesting flaw is noted by the author, who points out that the book contains no symbols for the effects of sex, death, and Pull. Unfortunately, he says, these two notions are too obvious for graphic delineation. An elephant pushing a tree, a man pulling a rope, abstract designs, snakes in the grass-every symbols have been suggested, but seem to have been limited in application or just plain confusing.

Have you any good ideas, PC'er?
Visual Aids

The Newcomer for July 1979, was a special is-

eue devoted to multimedia presentation. Some of

eer articles may give PEsers helpil ideas.

Robert K. Kowaleski writes on "AV Services: Which

Should You Do?" He discusses and we may consider,

for our own particular application, the use of hand-

held visuals; opaque and transparency projections;

movies; and videotapes. Which visual aid is most

suitable, most practical, most manageable for any

given situation? Whenever you choose, rehearse with

it.

Robert Mccarthy discusses "How and When to Use

Slides." This practice article points out not that all

material lends itself well to slide presentation, that

a speaker's words and his pictures should be in

full partnership, that the slides must be logical and

simple, and that their speech and slide communication

must be rehearsed together. Furthermore, the speaker

must familiarize himself, before the time of his presen-

tation, with the physical aspects of his projector and

how to project this onto a large screen to reinforce verbal messages. This is an excellent "do-it-yourself" article for a

Good Usage

How can writers improve most usefully between

slavish adherence to strict rules and impul-

sive yielding to transitional fashion?

Don Bush, in "How to Handle Grammatical Doubts" (Technical Communication, First Quarter 1980), makes a good suggestion: he says to use a "higher law" than strict grammar, he says--

the need for smooth, natural, communicative English, which does indeed ob-

serve the highest historical standards but which is written to satisfy both the

intelligent reader and the writer himself.

If the writer sounds natural, and avoids a few obvious "pet peeves," the chances are

that his writing will be more effective, and the narrow grammatical pedant will

never know the difference.

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never know the difference.

Beyond Speech

Universal Components of Communication: Paralanguage, Silence, Paraverba is a special-

ized newsletter that deals with the silent part of communication.

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1. What goals do I want to reach and why?
2. Do any of these goals conflict?
3. What obstacles exist, and how can I overcome

4. What sacrifices as I willing to make?
5. What specific actions must I take?
6. In what order and when must I take these actions?
7. With whom can I form "goal groups"? (i.e.,

Who can help me, whether they know my goals or not?)

Nuke - Speak

Frank Kozak, Jr., of Bart Patocka, NY, sends the

following list of interests:

Science (December 7, 1979) notes that the Double-

peak Award given annually by the National Council of

Teachers of English was granted in 1979 to the Nuclear

Power Industry for performance by Industry spokesmen

before, during, and after the accident at Three Mile Island.

William L. Klotz, Professor of English at Rutgers Uni-

versity and Chairman of NCTE's Double-peak Award

Committee, cited as cause for the award as such expressions as

nuclear evolution

normal abstraction

plant transmutation

energetic transmutation (explosion)

nuclear radiation (fire)

Perhaps the most delicate euphemism veiled the fact

that plutonium had contaminated the reactor resem-

bly reassembly and plutonium had "taken up

residence" there.

The NCTE gave a special award to increasing

nuclear President Figureman, who announced, "I

intend to open this country up to democracy, and any-

one who is against that I will jail, I will crush."

Professor Lota called 1979 "a good year for Double-

peak speak."

Pause to Emphasize

In "Appeal for the Pause" (The Newcomer for

April 1979), Dr. R. Paige points out that aces

at attention, and that well-timed "rests," in speaking as in music, reinforce the sounds which pre-

cede and follow them.

It takes courage to use deliberate pauses for the first

time, admits this free-lance consultant, and it takes

practice to use them effectively. But, she says,

speakers who emphasize arguments and separate topics by pausing are more understandable, and

more successful than those who rush through remarks or

punctuate speech with "ahhs."

Welcome, New Members!

From December 1, 1979, through February 15, 1980, 26 new members joined the PC Society

(2) from 33 of the United States, 26 from 6 Canadian provinces, and 70 from 30 other coun-

ctries. Welcome to all!

And now, do more than pay PC dues and read PC publications. Write to PC officers and

editors—send suggestions for action, suggest subjects for discussion, send articles for

publication, send offers to work on committees.

Or, better still, come to an AAoC meeting—take part in our deliberations and decision-

making, find out what turns your ceek or matches your talents, and help yourself by

working for the Society.

PC's AAoC meets four times a year, usually at IEEE headquarters in New York City. This

notice will not reach you April 10, but there will be two meetings in the fall—probably September and either November or December. Let a PC officer know if you

would be like to be notified more precisely by letter.

And for those who live in Minneapolis—do try to get in touch with the PC-ers who will

attend NCTE's 7th ITUC at the Radisson South Hotel, May 15-17, 1980. They will be glad

and you will never be sorry.
For the Whole Family

Individual brochures in a university Technology and Society Series should be of interest social, civic, student, consumer, and even professional groups. For example, the 30-page "Auto Safety" discussed Traffic Fatalities:

Traffic Fatalities: A Major Health Problem

History of Auto Safety

Safety, Economy, Environment, Energy, Research Safety Vehicles

Drunk Driving

Driver Education

55-MPH Speed Limits

Occupant Protection

Air bags

Testing Restraint Systems

Cost Benefit Analysis

Public Response

Motor Vehicle Safety Standards

Another booklet, "Supermarket Automation," discusses the operation and management of large food stores and the use of automated systems in stores and service industries, including a complete account of the Product Code Reader and its black-and-white-stripe representation.

The reports are thoughtfully conceived, beautifully designed, carefully written, and excellently illustrated. Covering particular socio-technological issues and recent developments in technology, they were planned to provide background information for course offerings... from pre-college through graduate levels and to contribute to public understanding of problems of current and future importance.

To obtain them free of cost, write to the Department of Technology and Society, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, State University of New York at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, New York 11794.

Suggestions

As the possibilities and thus the number of possible questions multiply, it becomes a problem to handle such a large number of questions. Here are some suggestions:

1. Responses may be printed as articles in The Transcripter, October 1979, containing the following ideas that may help PC-users:
2. Thomas Montalto urges us to use "ventilating speech titles." Do often give our talk interest-killing labels, he says. Why not give a conventional title by making it one of these things: ask a question, as in "Why Exercise?"; or contain words from a familiar quotation, as in "Good Night, Sweet Prince" (from Hamlet); or show alliteration, as in "Good as Gold" (the same sound starts several words).

5. Give opinion as opinion, but support it with evidence.

6. Be brief your answers to your main speech, or to what has been said earlier.

7. Respond directly to argument, maintain your points of view, but don't argue.

8. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so.

9. Recognize as many different members of your audience as possible.

10. Help people to word their questions if they seem to have trouble asking them.

How Do You Listen?

Augusta C. Yale and Jean M. Vining write about listening skills in a recent issue of The Transcripter.

When listening, you can improve your results by:

1. Have you "hear" speakers through?

2. Do you "listen" between the lines?"?

3. Do you think about what you have heard?

4. Do you "some speakers out" when you disagree, their messages, their tone, or their manner?

5. Do you get yourself to become, or when you disagree with a speaker?

6. Do you let yourself to be distracted when you should be paying attention?

7. Do you know who is being said, or do you look bored, half-left, or absent-minded?

Ask yourself these questions. You should answer your ears for the first time, and after the second half.

In a recent letter, you do not have to agree with me, you will think about what you have heard in the full text.

Can You Answer Questions?

To do so, you need to know the answers that are direct, precise, and easy to follow--especially after you've given a speech. If your audience wants more information, you can help them.

1. Listen carefully, to catch the content as well as the emotion of the question.

2. Repeat the question, so that you and all present will know what you asked.

3. Define terms, to put everyone on the same basis.

4. Find facts as simply and briefly as possible.

5. Give an opinion, but support it with evidence.

6. Be brief your answers to your main speech, or to what has been said earlier.

7. Respond directly to argument, maintain your points of view, but don't argue.

8. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so.

9. Recognize as many different members of your audience as possible.

10. Help people to word their questions if they seem to have trouble asking them.
Question for PC-ers

In this article, Dr. Valerie Brain says that deliberately ineffective communication is used consciously by business and professional people as a tool in the struggle for power and survival, and as an ego-support or status symbol.

Is this true of everyone, PC-er? Do we maintain careers through tradition? Do we advance by lying and falsifying?
Who wants to communicate anyway?

V. A. Bram

Introduction

Communication has been the focus of considerable attention in recent years and so it is not surprising that we have gone into analysing the causes of communication problems and in suggesting solutions to them. But what has been overlooked is that effective communication is often the last thing people want in British industry today. Indeed, any marked increase in the accuracy of messages, or any decrease in the ambiguity, might severely restrict the running of some companies. There are a number of reasons for this — none of which concern the job — that illustrate the types of conflict that give rise to dangerously ineffective communication.

The struggle for power

The struggle to tilt the delicate balance of power in favour of unions or management is constantly manifest in communication exchanges. This is one area where the status quo can be maintained by exploiting failings in communication systems, especially when the issues under discussion involve face-saving, or projecting a specific image. For example, we are told by staff in a number of companies that union representatives may deliberately misinterpret messages for a number of reasons. Either they read too much into them in their search for hidden motives, and so add their own interpretation to the original information, or their version may be unlike the intended message because their interpretation of the wording is different from that of the management, for emotional or psychological reasons.

Sometimes, I was told, they feel it is their duty to create difficulties because too close a relationship between themselves and the management arouses suspicion among their members, and they want to avoid this. The psychological needs and desires that prompt these actions obviously influence the efficiency of communication to a considerable extent, and while this struggle for power exists the situation is unlikely to change.

However, management can be equally guilty of deliberately ineffecti- ve communication. It is found in all types of industry, and is often expedient in the political games they play to create confusion by using vague or ambiguous language. It was widely agreed that by doing so 'they allow themselves room to manoeuvre' and that this is essential because 'if you try to tie everything down, then things won't work'.

But the struggle for power is not only evident between union and management; it exists between managers themselves and influences their communication exchanges too. One classic example was provided by a training executive who complained that the instructions he was given by his superior were vague and forced him to make his own decision about what the job entailed and how he should get it done. The senior executive explained that he did not want to give the younger man any preconceived ideas, so he kept his message brief. But an objective third party had this to say about the situation:

The instructions were obviously explicit enough just to get the job started, but general enough for the boss to claim credit or disclaim blame when it was finished.

An interesting situation, but one that is hardly conducive to a two-page draft summary. As a result of their decision, they found that the problems which they had identified as a result of their decision had been overlooked. In this type of situation the interests of the company are of secondary importance to the psychological needs of the staff involved, and effective communication is the last thing staff aim at.

But this drive for power can be equally well revealed by the absence of any communication at all. Over 50% of the managers questioned agreed that individuals try to strengthen their position within a company by withholding infor-
mation. They enhance their status by becoming experts on subjects about which there is a considerable amount of ignorance and nothing and are able to learn nothing. As one manager said, 'they clutch information to them like a hot water bottle — warm and comforting'. This practice of refusing to communicate is found in all types of industry, and has no amount of training in communication skills is likely to change.

The instinct to survive

Where the success of a company depends on unified and harmonious cooperation between those who make up the company, then a sense of insecurity can have serious repercussions on efficiency, as communicating will often be a tense business with each side wary and defensive. In this type of situation the desire to survive is supported and can lead to all sorts of inefficient communication exchanges.

The most common misuse of the communication system is to produce vast amounts of unwanted and unnecessary paperwork either as a form of self-protection, or, in accordance with Parkinson's Law, as a means of self-justification. Producing large amounts of paperwork as a form of self-protection has a number of advantages. It provides a means of the 'weak' manager to hide behind, it enables him to shift responsibility by sending memos, and he can protect himself by publishing his intentions in advance, before committing himself to a specific course of action. He may also use the postal system to avoid having to give immediate answers to disturbing questions.

On the other hand, the reams of paper work produced can simply be a means of justifying his existence in the company and help add to the illusion that he is indispensable by virtue of the amount of work he does. Again over 50% of the managers questioned agreed that this was so, and one was prompted to add that...
STC and PC in Minneapolis

It is not too late for P-overs who live in or near Minnesota to consider attending the 27th International Technical Communication Conference. This year's sessions will be held at the Radisson South Hotel in Minneapolis, May 15-17, 1980, under sponsorship of the Society for Technical Communication.

Registration fees are $120 for STC members, $150 for non-STC members. Both fees cover admission to all sessions, two lunches, one banquet, and one copy of the Conference Proceedings. The non-member fee includes a one-year membership in STC.

Five types of communication and communication-related activities will be discussed in lectures, workshops, and demonstrations:

- Computer application and technology
- Graphics and audiovisuals
- Management theory and practice
- Research and education
- Writing and editorial editing

Get more information from John Muller, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55101.

P-overs who work or live in Minneapolis are especially urged to attend this Conference. If you cannot or do not have the time to attend, we encourage you to at least visit the Radisson and try to see or talk with any of the following ACDM members who will be there:

- Bob King
- Craig Bunker
- Lucy Martin
- Bert Pearlman
- Emily Schleffer
- Lois Thorpe
- Bells Willard

We will have at least one PC dinner meeting or after-dinner meeting, as we did last year in Los Angeles at the 26th ITCC last year. STC's annual Conferences provide wonderful opportunities for P-overs to get to know each other. Minneapolis, let us hear from you either in person or during the 27th ITCC and let us see you at our May ACDM meeting in your great city.

INTECOM

Mary Schaefer represents the Society for Technical Communication and the United States in INTECOM, the International Council for Technical Communication. She is also President of INTECOM in 1980. Her report on INTECOM's 11th Council and General Assembly, held in Paris in September 1979, is as follows:

1. Plans were approved for the Norwegian Society for Technical Communication to hold Forum '81 in August under INTECOM sponsorship. (See full-page announcement.)
2. The Professional Communication Society of IEEE has been accepted as an Affiliate Member of INTECOM.
3. Delegates agreed to provide information on laws and practices in their respective countries regarding responsibility for safety in the use of products, especially as it might relate to technical communicators. A committee in Sweden will analyze the data and prepare a position paper for submission to the European Economic Community (EEC) with the approval of the INTECOM Master Organizations.

How to Kill an Association

1. Don't participate beyond paying your dues—let 'them' handle things.
2. Don't do all offices and committee appointments—you're too busy.
3. If appointed to a committee, don't work—it's a courtesy appointment.
4. Don't rush to pay your dues—they're too high anyway.
5. Don't complain about poor financial management.
6. Don't encourage others to become members—there's no membership.
7. Don't read the mail from headquarters—it's not important.
8. Don't complain that you're not kept informed.
9. Don't volunteer your talents—that's ego fulfillment.
10. Don't call a meeting—there's been one already.

Zaire to Satellite to Anywhere


Why not develop technology for generating hydroelectric power in low-demand, underdeveloped areas of Africa, Asia, or Latin America, transforming it into microwaves beamed toward a reflector in geosynchronous orbit, and having the microwaves arrive on earth where energy is needed?

Varsavsky points out that he is proposing a modification of the Solar Power Satellite (SPS) concept in which:

1. A large array of photovoltaic cells (an area of about 100 square kilometers) in geosynchronous orbit would produce dc electricity.
2. The dc electricity would be converted to microwaves and beamed to earth from an antenna of about 1 kilometer radius.
3. The microwaves received on earth would be converted back to dc electricity.
4. The dc electricity would be used in existing power grids.

Varsavsky's scheme would:
1. Substitute a hydroelectric station for the solar power version.
2. Put in place only a passive reflecting antenna (large, but smaller than the array of cells).
3. Eliminate eclipse-caused blackouts.
4. Help a developing country or province.
5. Appear to be easier and quicker to implement than the SPS plan.

The chief disadvantages of Varsavsky's scheme are the need for large power resources on earth and the NSF's effort to work on, and probably greater losses.

Coal Burner

A "little black box" that could solve many of today's critical coal-burning problems may be a key future power plant. According to the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI, December, 1979), carbon is mined coal.

A fluidized-bed burner, the "little black box" will burn coal of any quality - low sulfur to grades high in sulfur, ash, and moisture content - with few, if any, sulfur or nitrogen emissions. The elimination of these emissions is achieved through specialized lining which, unlike the boiler's standard tubing, is embedded into the bed of ash and heated temperatures which are continuously changed by forced air.

While the burning coal mixes up less than 1 percent of the bed, all the particles are heated quickly by the turbulent action, which surrounds the boiler's water-filled tubes with hot solids and gases. This intimate contact makes heat transfer much more efficient than in a conventional boiler where pulverized coal must be blown out of jets and burned in flue before the resultant heat can be used to boil water in the tubes and cause steam.

The limestones in the fluidized-bed combustion, moreover, trap dry calcium sulfate waste that results from burning, so that the new process may even eliminate the need for costly scrubbers.

EPRI, the research and development arm of the U.S. electric utility industry, which is actively promoting fluidized-bed boiler technology, is hopeful that commercial use of the "little black box" may be available in the late 1970's.


Engineers' Ethics

In "Ethical Trilemmas" (Technology and Society, December 1979), L. B. Cahick discusses the three-cornered conflict often faced by on-the-job engineers in their role as professionals, employees, and concerned citizens.

Professor Cahick (University of Tennessee) points out that such trilemmas, created by real problems, have profound ethical codes of ethics into the areas of power-law and required training of their value, and effort. Boy, he concludes, in addition to the forms and activities prescribed and proscribed by codes, regulations, and policies, there are still "human relationships and ideals of endeavor to preserve and make real. As in all ethical adventures of mankind, not the printed page but only the hearts and minds of dedicated professionals can preserve them.

Second-Language Research

A new newsletter has been established for researchers and teachers working in the field of second-language acquisition. Its goal is to inform its readers about the most recent developments in the field of second-language research. The newsletter is called SALT, which is short for Second Language Acquisition News & Topics.

Researchers in second languages are invited to submit to SALT reviews of their research in progress. These reviews may describe their subjects, data acquisition procedures, and the language involved but must be limited to 800 words. Researchers should include the names of their own complete mailing addresses so that others who are interested in the work can contact them directly.

SALT is published semi-annually, fall and spring. Subscription prices for the calendar year are $20 for individuals in North America and $5 for others. Rates are $3 higher for institutions.

SALT is an outgrowth of Recommendations for a challenging human resource for second-language education (SALT newsletter, Vol. 3, 1979). SALT newsletter, subscription correspondence to the University of California, 3600 La Jolla, CA 92093 U.S.A.
Zaire to Satellite to Anywhere

Writing in Technology and Society (November 1979), Carole N. Varsavsky of New York University's Institute for Economic Analysis suggests "Exporting Hydroelectric Energy."

Why not develop technology for generating hydroelectric power in low-demand, underdeveloped areas of Africa, Asia, or Latin America, transforming it into microwaves beamed toward a reflector in geosynchronous orbit, and thus sending power to areas on the earth where energy is needed?

Varsavsky points out that he is proposing a modification of the Solar Power Satellite (SPS) concept, in which

1. a large array of photovoltaic cells (an area of about 100 square kilometers) in geosynchronous orbit would produce dc electricity
2. the dc electricity would be converted to microwaves and beamed to earth from an antenna of about 1 kilometer radius
3. the microwave receiver on earth would be transformed back into dc electricity
4. the dc electricity would be converted to microwaves for use in existing power grids.

Varsavsky's scheme would

1. substitute a hydroelectric station for the solar concentrator
2. put in space only a passive reflecting antenna (large, but smaller than the area of cells)
3. eliminate loss-causing blackouts
4. help develop a country or region
5. appear to be easier and quicker to implement than the SPS plan.

The chief disadvantages of Varsavsky's scheme are the need for large power stations on earth than any of the SPS efforts would involve, and probably greater losses.

Coal Burner

A "little black box" that could solve many of today's critical coal-burning problems may be only a few years away from commercial application, according to the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) Journal (December 1979).

Coal, a fluidized-bed boiler, is a "hot" burn coal of any quality—low-sulfur to grades high in sulfur, ash, and moisture content—with few, if any, sulfur or nitrogen emissions.

The enthalpy operation is achieved through specialized tables, which, unlike the boiler's standard tabling, is embedded in burning coal and heated cement that is continuously charged by forced air.

While the burning coal rises up less than 1 percent of the bed, all the particles are heated quickly by the turbulent action, which supports the boiler's water-filled tubes with hot solids and gases. This intimate contact makes heat transfer more efficient than in a conventional boiler where powdered coal must be blown out of jets and burned in air, before the resultant heat is used to boil water in the tubes and thus create steam.

The limestones in the fluidized-bed combustion, moreover, trap dry calcium sulfate waste that results from the burning of coal, so that the new process may even eliminate the need for costly scrubbers.

EPRI, the research and development arm of the U.S. electric utility industry, which is actively supporting fluidized-bed boiler technology, is hopeful that commercial use of "little black box" may be available in the late 1970's.


Engineers' Ethics

In "Ethical Trilemma" (Technology and Society, December 1979), L.B. CHABK points out that the three-cornered conflict often faced by on-the-job engineers in their role as professionals, employees, and concerned citizens.

Professor Chabik (University of Tennessee) points out that such trilemmas, created by real problems, have pushed professional codes of ethics into the arena of quasi-law and required the judgment of time, money, and effort. "But, he concludes, in addition to the forms and activities prescribed and prescribed by codes, regulations, and the law, there are still 'human relationships and ideals of endeavor to preserve and make real. As in all ethical adventures of making, not just the printed page but only the hearts and minds of dedicated professionals can preserve them.'"

Second-Language Research

A new newsletter has been established for researchers and teachers working in the field of second-language acquisition. Its goal is to inform its readers about the most recent developments in the field of second-language research. The newsletter is called SLANT, which is short for Second Language Acquisition News & Topics.

Researchers in second languages are invited to submit to SLANT summaries of their work in progress. These summaries may describe their subjects, data acquisition procedures, and the language involved, but must be limited to 500 words. Researchers should include a resume of their complete education so that others interested in the work can contact them directly.

SLANT is published semi-annually, fall and spring. Subscription prices for the calendar year are $6 for individuals in North America and $5 for others. Rates are $3 higher for institutions.

Send research summaries to Research Director, SLANT Newsletter, and subscription correspondence to Tom Hargrave, 1452 Washington, San Francisco, CA 94103 U.S.A.

--Free Communication Notes, November 1979.
STC and PC in Minneapolis

It is not too late for PC-ers who live in or near Minnesota to consider attending the 27th International Technical Communication Conference. This year's sessions will be held at the Radisson South Hotel in Minneapolis, May 15-17, 1980, under sponsorship of the Society for Technical Communication.

Registration fees are $320 for STC members, $450 for non-STC members. Both fees cover admission to all sessions, two luncheons, one banquet, and one copy of the Conference Proceedings. The non-member fee includes a one-year membership in STC.

Five types of communication and communication-related activities will be discussed in lectures, workshops, and demonstrations:
- Computer application and technology
- Graphics and audiovisuals
- Management theory and practice
- Research and education
- Writing and editing

Get more information from John Muller, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55106.

PC-ers who work or live in Minneapolis are especially urged to attend this Conference. If you cannot or do not register to any session, at least visit the Radisson and try to see or talk with any of the following AdCom members who will be there:
- Ron Ding
- Craig Harkins
- Lucy Martin
- Bert Pearlman
- Emily Schlimm
- Lois Thomas
- Dell Whittaker
- Paul Brown

We will have at least one PC dinner meeting or after-dinner meeting, as we did in Los Angeles at the 26th ITCC last year. STC's annual conferences provide wonderful opportunities for PC-ers to get to know each other. Minneapolisites, let us hear from you either before or during the 27th ITCC, and let us see you at our May AdCom meeting in your great city.

INTECOM

Mary Schaefer represents the Society for Technical Communication and the United States in INTECOM, the International Council for Technical Communication. She is also President of INTECOM in 1980. Her report on INTECOM's 11th Council and General Assembly, held in Paris in September 1979, is as follows:

1. Plans were approved for the Norwegian Society for Technical Communication to hold Forum '80 in August under INTECOM sponsorship. [See full-page announcement.]

2. The Professional Communication Society of IEEE has been accepted as an Affiliate Member of INTECOM.

3. Delegates agreed to provide information on laws and practices in their respective countries regarding responsibility for safety in the use of products, especially as it might relate to technical communicators. A committee in Sweden will analyze the data and prepare a position paper for submission to the European Economic Community (SEC) with the approval of the INTECOM Master Organisations.

How to Kill an Association

1. Don't participate beyond paying your dues—let 'them' handle things.
   Then complain that members have no vote in management.

2. Decline all offices and committee appointments—'you're too busy'.
   Then offer ridiculous advice on how to do things.

3. If appointed to a committee, don't work—it's a courtesy appointment.
   Then complain because the organization has stagnated.

4. If you do attend management meetings, don't initiate new ideas.
   Then you can play 'devil's advocate' to those submitted by others.

5. Don't rush to pay your dues—they're too high anyway.
   Then complain about poor financial management.

6. Don't encourage others to become members—that's sailing.
   Then complain that membership is not growing.

7. Don't read the mail from headquarters—it's not important.
   Then complain that you're not kept informed.

8. Don't volunteer your talent—that's ego fulfillment.
   Then complain that you're never asked and never appreciated.

9. And, if by chance, the organization grows in spite of your non-contributions
   Group every opportunity to tell the youngsters how tough it was, how hard you worked in the old days to bring the organization to its present level of success.
IEEE Transaction on Professional Communication

Special Issue: Making Information Usable

Devices, machines, and systems are becoming more complex and sophisticated while at the same time they are being made available to more people. Unfortunately, the operation of these products—whatever their nature—is seldom self-evident. At best we turn to instructions simply to confirm our expectations and learn what is new. At worst we must depend on them to compensate for a lack of human engineering in the product. Most of the time, however, we need instructions to use all the functions and capabilities that have been provided to us at an acceptable cost. Information has to be part of the customer's package. In issue number one next year we will be looking at techniques for making printed information usable.

Special Issue March 1981

MAKING INFORMATION USABLE

THE APPLICATION OF HUMAN FACTORS TO INFORMATION TRANSFER

Deadline August 15, 1980

What makes information usable? It has to be available and its availability has to be known. It has to address the appropriate tasks or problems. It has to be written for the audience. It has to be understandable. Its use has to leave the user with the knowledge of accomplishment. These qualities suggest three areas of investigation:

- Understanding the user—motivation, expectations, intelligence, experience, learning characteristics, human information processing, task identification
- Designing for comprehension—organization, task orientation, paced instruction, graphics, cues, reinforcement
- Building in readability—grammatical factors, sentence structure, vocabulary

The IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION is published for engineers, engineering managers, technical communicators, teachers and others who are concerned with communicating technical information. Our twofold purpose is to provide them with pragmatic material in digestible doses and to offer exposure to new ideas, methods, etc., useful in technical communication.

Normally, there is little human factors training in their backgrounds. Therefore, we are inviting two articles, pragmatic, and "how to" papers to educate and guide our readers in the design and development of printed instructional materials. Case studies with an enlightening result would also be of interest, as would critical reviews with a useful conclusion. Papers should be previously unpublished but need not contain new research results. All papers will be refereed.

An expression of interest to submit a paper and a two-page draft summary are requested by June 6 to aid planning and avoid overlap. Our "Information for Authors and Readers" is in most issues of the TRANSACTIONS. Please write or phone the Editor for further information.

Papers will be due by August 15, 1980. The principal requirements are double-spaced typing, two complete copies, an informative abstract, and an author-identification sentence including occupation, address, and phone number. Well illustrated papers will be especially welcome. Send all material to the Editor.

R. J. Joenik, Editor
IBM Corporation
P.O. Box 1900
Boulder, CO 80302
(303) 447-5764

Who wants to communicate anyway?

V. A. Bram

Introduction

Communication has been the focus of considerable attention in recent years and in the last few years of time and energy have gone into analysing the causes of communication problems and in suggesting solutions to them. But what has been overlooked is that effective communication is often the last thing people want in British industry today. Indeed, any marked increase in the accuracy of messages, or any decrease in the distortion and ambiguity, might severely restrict the running of some companies. There are a number of reasons for this — none of which concern the job — that illustrate the types of conflict that give rise to dangerously ineffective communication.

The struggle for power

The struggle to tilt the delicate balance of power in favour of unions or management is constantly manifest in communication exchanges. This is one area where the status quo can be maintained by exploiting fallings in communication systems, especially when the issues under discussion involve face-saving, or projecting a specific image. For example, a chief engineer told by staff in a number of companies that union representatives may deliberately misinterpret messages for a number of reasons. Either they read too much into them in their search for hidden motives, and so add their own interpretation to the original information, or their version may be an attempt to influence the message because their interpretation of the wording of the message is different from that of the management, for emotional or psychological reasons. Sometimes, I was told, they felt it is their duty to create difficulties because too close a relationship between themselves and the management arouses suspicion among their members, and they want to avoid this.

The psychological needs and desires that prompt these actions obviously influence the efficiency of communication to an considerable extent, and while this struggle for power exists the situation is unlikely to change.

However, management can be equally guilty of deliberately ineffective communication. It is found at all types of industry. It is often more expedient in the political games they play to create confusion by using vague or ambiguous language. It was widely alleged that by doing so they allow themselves room to manoeuvre and that this is essential because if you try to tie everything down, then things wont work.

But the struggle for power is not only evident between union and management; it exists between managers themselves and influences their communication exchanges too. One classic example was provided by a trainee executive who complained that the instructions he was given by his superior were vague and forced him to make his own decision about what the job entailed and how he should get it done. The senior executive explained that he did not want to give the younger man any preconceived ideas, so he kept his message brief. But an objective third party had this to say about the situation:

The instructions were obviously explicit enough just to get the job started, but general enough for the boss to claim credit or disclaim blame when it was finished.

An interesting situation, but one that is hardly conducive to a two-page draft summary of a company by withholding information. They enhance their status by becoming experts on subjects about which they have little or nothing and are able to learn nothing. As one manager said, "They clutch information to them like a hot water bottle — warm and comforting. Their practice of refusing to communicate is found in all types of industry. It is often more expedient in the political games they play to create confusion by using vague or ambiguous language. It was widely alleged that by doing so they allow themselves room to manoeuvre and that this is essential because if you try to tie everything down, then things won't work.

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Blicq Workshop

Ronald E. Blicq of Red River Community College Winnipeg, Manitoba (Canada) is shown conducting a workshop on effective business and technical communication. His presentation was given in January for 25 staff members of the Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, MD (USA).

The two all-day workshop sessions were devoted to step-by-step methods of identifying the main message, determining readers' interests, constructing the presentation message, putting it all together, and honing it on fact.

APL's course coordinator described Ron's presentation as 'highly informative and idea-packed.' Participants said:

The instructor was very articulate and stimulating.

The course content and level were appropriate for those attending.

The procedures recommended were applicable to individual normal work situations.

The workshop should be offered to other co-workers.

Ron Blicq, a member of the Society for Technical Communication and the American Business Communication Association, is Chairman of the Society's Education Committee, owner of the Blicq Group (consulting/consultants), and author of books and papers on technical and business communication.

Opportunity

The Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Laboratory, where Ron Blicq recently presented his two-day workshop on communication and report writing, is the 'home' company of Lois Zuesse, a newcomer to PC's A/CAM.

Other AOC-supporting firms have used Ron's course too, notably Bob Wolfle's E-Systems, Inc. in Greenville, TX and Bert Pearlman's Stauffer Chemical Company in Dobbs Ferry NY. Stauffer, indeed, offered the workshop twice in 1979 and has scheduled four repetitions for 1980-81.

Material for this course comes from Ron's book "Technically-Written," on which PC's home-study course, "Technically-Written," is based also. Ron's sessions at AOC were video-taped in full, and the tape has been edited into a condensed seven-hour version for use in training other workshop teachers.

PC-era, SRC-era, or other interested readers of this Newsletter are welcome to inquire about learning to present this workshop or having it presented to a company or group. Write to Ronald E. Blicq, 569 Oxford Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R2H 2J7, or call him at 204-652-2699 (business)

PC Scholarship

To encourage the development of communication skills, PC will give annually a scholarship of $1,000 to a second-, third-, or fourth-year college student who has studied technical writing. Applicants must submit a completed application form, a one-paragraph statement of career goals and a copy of academic record, and recommendations from two faculty members.

Get forms and further information from Dr. Dalla Whitaker, 1000A Ashfield Road, Adelphi, MD 20783; 301-937-5555.

PC's Transactions

Copies of PC's Transactions on patents (June 1979) can still be obtained from the Editor. Send $1.00 to B. J. Jones, 161 Corporation, P. O. Box 1800, Boulder, CO 80302.

The March 1980 issue—20 papers on public speakers—is similarly available for $5.00 as above.

Two 1977 issues (September and November) are also in stock. Send $6 for each to Bert Pearlman, Stauffer Chemical Company, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522.

PC's PR

PC membership ads like the one in this issue of our own Newsletter are appearing in the Newsletters of other IEEE Societies. PC membership leaflets have also been sent to Student Members and Student Chapters.

Red-of-1979 figures show that PC has now nearly 2,000 members. This year represents a 20 percent increase over the previously announced total and the second highest growth reported for any IEEE Group, Society, or Section.

PC-era Bob Wolfle's Guide for Better Technical Presentations is third on the IEEE Press Best-Seller List. This statement refers to the original version, in English; the translation into Japanese is a best-seller also. Do you have a copy of this book in either language? It is an indexed collection of 35 reprinted articles. Send $7.95, your IEEE Member Number, and an order for PF 05954 (paperback) to IEEE Service Center, 445 Hoes Lane, Piscataway, NJ 08854.

Applications for PC's $1,000 scholarship are still being received and considered. The award will be announced in our Winter newsletter. Get more information from Dr. Dalla Whitaker, 1000A Ashfield Road, Adelphi, MD 20783; 301-937-5555.
For the Whole Family

Individual brochures in a university Technology and Society series should be of interest to social, civic, student, consumer, and even professional groups. For example, the Jo-page "Auto Safety" discusses Traffic Fatalities:

Traffic Fatalities: A Major Health Problem

History of Auto Safety


Drumbrake System

Driver Education

55-MPH Speed Limits

Occupant Protection

Air Bags

Testing Raster System

Cost Benefit Analysis

Public Response

Motor Vehicle Safety Standards

Another booklet, "Supermarket Automation," discusses the operation and management of large food stores and the use of automated systems in store and service industries, including a complete account of the Product Code Reader and its black-and-white-stripe representation.

The reports are thoughtfully conceived, beautifully designed, carefully written, and excellently illustrated. Covering "particular socio-technological issues and recent developments in technology," they were planned to "provide background information for courses offered... from pre-college through graduate levels" and to "contribute to public understanding of problems of current or potential importance.

To obtain them free of cost, write to the Department of Technology and Society, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, State University of New York at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, New York 11794.

Suggestions

Articles in The Tenostator, October 1979, contain the following ideas that may help P-O-Wers:

- Thomas Montalto urges us to use " Bentonizing Speech Titles." Do often we use our talk interest-killing labels, he says. Why not improve a conventional title by making it do one of these things:
  - ask a question, as in "Why Exercise?"; or
  - contain words from a familiar quotation, as in "Good Night, Sweet Prince" (from Hamlet);
  - show alliteration; as in "Good as Gold" (the same sound starts several words).

- Gregory Barrett ("Charting Your Path to Success") says that it's much easier to get where you want to if you decide on a part of destination before you launch your vessel. Don't sail the vessel of your life at the mercy of wind, tide, and current, he advises.
Visual Aids

The Postmark for July 1979, was a special issue devoted to multidimensional presentation. Some of the articles may give PC-ers helpful ideas.

Robert R. Konikow writes on "AV Services: Which Should You Invest?" He discusses and suggests, for our particular application, the use of handheld visuals; opaque and transparency projectors; and videotapes. Visual aid is not suitable, most practical, most manageable for any given situation! Whenever you choose, rehearse with it.

Robert McCarver discusses "How and When to Use Slides." This practical article points out that not all material lends itself well to slide presentation, that a speaker's words and his pictures should be in full partnership, that the slides must be logical and simple, and that slides and speech must be rehearsed together. Furthermore, the speaker must familiarize himself, before the time of his presentation, with the physical aspects of his projector and the room he is to speak in. As far as possible, he should control these to suit his purpose.

Bert Y. Auger, in "Up Front with the Overhead Projector," tells how to put a picture, diagram, etc., on a letter-size transparent film and how to project this onto a large screen to reinforce verbal messages. This is an excellent "do-it-yourself" article for any PC-er.

Good Usage

How can writers compose more suitably between slavish adherence to strict rules and imaginative yielding to transitional fashion?

Don Bush, in "How to Handle Grammatical Errors" makes a strong suggestion: "higher law than strict grammar, he says—the need for smooth, natural, communicative English, which does indeed observe the highest historical standards but which is written to satisfy both the intelligent reader and the writer himself.

If the writer sounds natural, and avoids a few obvious "pet peeves," the chances are that his writing will be more effective, and the narrow grammatical pedant will never know the difference.

Beyond Speech

Universal Components of Communication: Paralanguage, Ekistics, Presenta is a special issue newsletter article from Dr. Rosalind Sneider, Department of Geography/Geology, SUNY-Buffalo, 3050 South Division, Buffalo, NY 14214.

Welcome, New Members!

From December 1, 1979, through February 15, 1980, 946 new members joined the PC Society—580 from 33 of the United States, 26 from 6 Canadian provinces, and 78 from 30 other countries. Welcome to all!

And now, do more than pay your dues and read PC publications. Write to PC officers and editors—send suggestions for action, suggest subjects for discussion, send articles for publication, send offers to work on committees.

Better still, come to an ACoE meeting—take part in our deliberations and decision-making, find that strike your fancy or matches your talents, and help yourself by working for the Society.

Any PC-er who live in Minneapolis—do try to get in touch with the PC-ers who will attend ACoE's 7th ITUC at the Radisson South Hotel, May 15-17, 1980. They will be glad, and you will never be sorry.
Shorter is Better

Rich Osa, a senior editor for The Reader's Digest, talked about "Effective Writing" at a recent national meeting of Agricultural Communicators in Education. He spoke to a report in the ACE newsletter (September, 1979). In particular, he described something that follows the ACE approach to summarizing articles:

"Editing is the art of improving an article by making it easier to understand, easier to see the message, and easier to absorb. To make writing better, material that is unnecessary, unimportant, or uninteresting should be modified or eliminated—paragraphs, sentences, and words."

An edited article or publication is better than the original because it requires less reading time, is easier to understand, has more impact, is more enjoyable—"the reader isn't distracted and bored by repetitions, uninteresting, or irrelevant material."

The first step in editing is to read and re-read an article as many times as necessary to thoroughly understand its purpose and construction. Your challenge as an editor is to find or create, if necessary, the objective or structure of the article without unduly changing it. Sometimes outlining the material is helpful.

Once you understand the piece and are satisfied with its structure, delete the dull and insignificant material. Then focus on the force of the piece, giving it greater unity.

Next, provide smooth transitions to fill the gaps left by eliminating sentences or paragraphs. Good transitions are essential and are worth the time it takes to write them.

Work on individual sentences, phrases and words to make the material as concise and unobtrusive for the reader as possible, then correct for grammar and style.

—ACE Newsletter, September, 1979.

Signs of the Times


Symbol Sourcebook, by the industrial designer Henry Dreyfus, is a dictionary of graphic symbols. The book is based on "a random sample" of 20,000 representations obtained from all over the world. Alphabetics, numerals, letters, and logograms are included—"only signs" used to give instruction, direction, or warning.

Dreyfus's symbols do not constitute a language, nor can they easily be used as elements of conversational speech. Rather, the book was compiled to show what standardized forms exist as universally understandable representations, and to define these forms for the use of designers, artists, engineers and manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers, farmers, painters, and technicians, and all concerned with safety, shipping, standards, and regulations.

Graphic symbols may be classified as representational (silhouette of man on bicycle), abstract (signs of the zodiac), or arbitrary (musical or dance signs). More importantly, however, they may be organized according to the discipline in which they are used (agriculture, business, photography, religion, etc.), their shape (such as square, circle, trumpet, etc.), and their design category or class of meaning (building symbol, in and out, measurements, on and off, pressure, time, etc.).

The list of disciplines covered in the book's Table of Contents includes agriculture, art, communications, education, government, health, law, military, medicine, mining, music, and religion. Introductions, explanations, and legends are in English, and are accompanied by the design categories listed alphabetically. Thus a design or symbol may be located and identified from knowledge of either its primary meaning or the discipline it relates to. It can also be found "out of context." In the Graphic Form section, the symbols are grouped according to shape and type of line in a 16-class organization by key forms, without regard to meaning. Here are all the basically square forms appear together, and each is referenced to its page in the Disciplines section; triangular forms are similarly presented in another group, and so on for circles, ellipses, rectangles, etc.

Early in the book, thirty-six basic symbols are shown and ways of combining them are delineated. Near the end of the book, a section discusses the use of color to convey information and presents a "glossary" of color symbolism. The Bibliography section gives titles of books not limited to any one discipline, or source of additional material, listed by discipline, and sources which supplied information on color.

A two-page spread shows the geographic areas from which the symbols are collected. Most come from China and parts of southeast Asia, Asia Minor, and the countries of Central and South America. Dreyfus further acknowledges the help of the Bibliothèque Nationale (UNESCO), a national and international standards organization, and various governmental departments of the U.S. and elsewhere.

Knowledge, like timber, is best when well seasoned.

Worry is like a rocking chair; it gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere.

When you point a finger at someone, remember—three of your fingers point at you.
Metric Mnemonic or Crawford's Crutch

The following list of equivalents is suggested to help those who have trouble remembering SI prefixes:

10^18 = 1 examination
10^15 = 1 petacost
10^12 = 1 teraball
10^9 = 1 gigalov
10^6 = 1 angaphone
8 x 10^3 = 8 kilomockingbird
10^3 = 1 witithit
10^2 = 1 deciscard
10^1 = 1 scasscard
10^2 = 1 centesimal
10^3 = 1 millisecond
10^6 = 1 microsecond
10^9 = 1 nanosecond
10^10 = 1 picosecond
10^15 = 1 femtosecond
10^18 = 1 attofocal

—Dick Crawford in Technical Communication (Fourth Quarter 1978)

Affect or Effect?

1. Ovward sign, appearance —
2. Result (noun) —
3. To accomplish —
4. To result in or cause to come into being —
5. To reign —
6. To cultivate or make a display of using —
7. To influence or act upon to produce a response —

There are three kinds of people: those who make things happen; those who just watch things happen; and those who don't know what happens.

It's easier to keep up than to catch up.

You can't come back from where you haven't been.

There isn't much sense in putting your best foot forward if you drag the other one.

Answers

1. 10^3 = 1000
2. 10^2 = 100

Ad Com Meeting

Most of the business and reports discussed by PC's AdCom on February 11, 1990, at IEEE Headquarters are the subjects of separate articles in this issue of our Newsletter. Briefly, however, announcements and deliberations were made as follows:

1. Lois Thuss appointed to replace Pat Hostrie for the AdCom term ending 1990.
2. Dan Hostie planning a PC conference to be held in either Washington, DC, or Boston, probably October 20-22.
3. Consideration given to preparing a workshop "package" that could be offered to any IEEE Society conference.
4. Scholarship applications coming in slowly.
5. Goldsmith Award to be presented to H. O. Taylor at a meeting of the UK/H1 Chapter.
6. Bert Pearlman chairing committee to nominate Division VI Director.
7. PC's Transactions issue on patents (June 1976) selling for $1.00 per copy; 1,000 sold to date. Extra copies of March 1990 issue on public speaking available for $5.00. Send check to Ruby Joens.
8. PC membership increased from 1945 to 1938 last year—to 195; only the Computer Society grew faster.
9. Three PC publicity releases sent to IEEE Societies and their newsletter editors, the Society for Technical Communication, the Council of Communication Societies, and Toastmasters International; subjects—our house-study course, scholarship program, Transactions on public speaking.
10. Consideration given to revising PC Bylaw 6, paragraphs 1, 5, and 5, which describe procedures for electing AdCom members; aid and proposed text to be published in Newsletter.
11. IEEE to pay dues to Society for Scholarly Publishing, PC to represent the Institute, Emily Schlesinger to represent PSC.
12. Consideration given to coordinating or merging some PC activities with those of IEEE Education or Engineering Management Societies.
13. Suggestion made that non-U.S. members should ask AdCom for specific help or services.
14. Suggestion made that the Newsletter have a feature column of "worst sentences." Send sample excruciating expressions, PC-ers; the editor will print them.