

# Ten Tips for International Communication

by Deborah Flaherty Kizer

Success in today's global business environment does not depend solely on an excellent product. Rather, today's successful international business requires persons who are skilled negotiators and communicators. Through my experiences in international service negotiation and development, I've developed my "Top Ten Tips for Effective International Communication". While they may seem obvious to you at first glance, I have seen situations time and time again where these "rules" have not been followed. The effects of such gaffes are cumulative and can lead to undue delays, misunderstandings, and even a total breakdown in negotiations.

Are you ready?

**Tip 1:** Understand the culture and be cognizant of current events.

Clearly, a key success factor in international negotiations is building rapport with your business partner. By demonstrating a knowledge of the country, culture, and current events, you are showing that you have taken the time and effort to understand your partner. Not doing so can be embarrassing not only for you, but for your colleagues as well. For example, at a meeting in Prague following the break-up of Czechoslovakia, a member of the U.S. delegation continually referred to the country as "Czechoslovakia" rather than the correct name, "Czech Republic". Finally, a member of the Czech delegation felt compelled to correct the American; all present were very much embarrassed.

In addition to reading globally focused newspapers, such as the *New York Times* and the *Christian*

*Science Monitor*, you may want to order Brigham Young University's Culturegrams for the countries you are visiting. These excellent publications provide detailed background information on history, demographics, and culture.

**Tip 2:** Hold your initial meeting face-to-face.

Granted, this can be expensive, but I have witnessed how valuable these initial face-to-face meetings can be in terms of building relationships, making sure everyone has a common understanding of the project, and seeking to understand expectations and desired results. You will reap the benefits by taking the time to initiate the project in person. After this first meeting, you can certainly rely on tools such as videoconferencing, facsimile, and telephone.

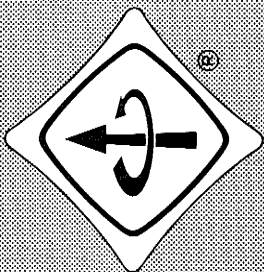
**Tip 3:** Understand expectations, motivations, and desired outcomes.

Clearly, if everyone has different goals, expectations, and motivations for a given project, that project is doomed to fail. A good place to start understanding these factors is at the face-to-face meeting. However, because many of these factors

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## FROM THE EDITOR

We have a pair of common threads to this newsletter issue. The first is international communication, represented by the page 1 article by Deb Kizer and by two letters to the editor in response to Joe Chapline's letter in the last issue. English *is* the language of technical communication today, but most U.S. citizens, corporate and individual, seem oblivious to the benefits of knowing some other language to some degree. Whether or not the reason for this is hubris, the inability to even make a start at conversing in another language regularly puts the U.S. party at a serious disadvantage in today's international world.

The second thread is change, a topic brought up in the columns by Michael Goodman and Howard Scheiber. Change is inevitable, so the saying goes; and that's likely true in language, throughout the biological world, and in today's personal and work life as well.

Change can be considered the essence of biological life. Yet even if that is true, the change being referred to is the change of growth and senescence and of occasional, almost imperceptible environmental alterations that can be adapted to without trauma. Major cataclysms — disruptive, life-threatening change — are rare within the

lifespan of an individual organism within the natural order.

Organizational changes over the past five to ten years have been, in most cases, neither occasional and imperceptible nor cataclysmic. But the strain of a constantly shifting work environment is, I think, beginning to count among its victims even those who Mike Goodman describes as *adaptable*.

About six years ago I met a scientist whose workplace had been facing moderate but continuing budget cuts for several years. When we were introduced, he smilingly stated that he was one of the "survivors" in his organization. Today, he still has his job, but he no longer has most of his staff, and cynicism has replaced the smile. Despite winning the "war" for continued support for his work, the attrition of spirit and enthusiasm (and creativity, no doubt?) has been devastating.

Anyone can read the literature and find that placing animals under constant stress over long periods causes both psychological and physical damage. I think that many people today are in an analogous position in terms of their work life: trying to take on new responsibilities, and do everything perfectly, even while they are still *learning* how to do carry out these new responsibilities . . . and to top it off, continually wondering if they will be in the next list of those who, in Howard Scheiber's phrase, have been *empowered* by no longer having jobs.

I hope that some of the authors of the literature that Howard and Mike are drawing from recognize that it's not *saying* that people are a firm's most important asset that is important. What is important is the firm's managers *acting* on the basis that this is true.

—D.E.N.

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## Tips for International Communication

(continued from page 1)

are culturally driven, they will not always surface immediately. Getting to the heart of these issues requires your having a good relationship with your partner, and this takes time.

For example, one project I was working on concerning the building of a maintenance center in our partner's country seemed to be going nowhere for several months. Through increased communication with our partners, several face-to-face visits, and the assistance of our in-country support staff, we came to realize that we were at a stalemate because of different objectives. Our objective was to provide the best customer service available, but our partner's goal was to acquire foreign currency in the short term. Thus, while improving customer service via a maintenance center would likely bring additional revenues in the long term, it clearly would be a currency user in the short term. Once we realized that we had disparate goals, we were able to deal effectively with this issue.

### Tip 4: Confirm everything.

Just because your fax machine indicates that the transmission was received, this does not mean that the desired recipient has the information. Perhaps the fax machine at the receiving end was out of paper or the cleaning woman threw out your fax, which was written in English. Just because you sent a letter confirming your travel arrangements and meeting agenda, don't assume that your partner received it, much less understood it! I have been on the wrong end of both these situations, and my recommendation is to confirm everything, in a variety of ways, and in the language of your partner if possible.

And even having done so, expect the unexpected. After working for months to set up a meeting in an Eastern European country, we were told after we had arrived that the meeting had been canceled. Thanks to the intervention of our in-country support person, we were able to hold a meeting after all, but we were taken slightly aback by the whole experience.

**Tip 5:** Prepare and send your materials well in advance when preparing for a meeting, conference call, etc.

Always try to send any documentation to your partners well in advance of any meeting, in English as well as in your partners' language. This will give them time to adequately review the material and prepare any questions, thus making your meeting more productive.

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It can also help ensure that the right people are present at the meeting. For example, in preparation for a service development meeting, we sent a "service negotiation package" to our partners in an Eastern European country several weeks before the meeting. Once they received and reviewed the package, our partners realized that they did not have correct technical representation planned. However, because they determined this early on, they were able to plan accordingly.

**Tip 6:** Learn a few words in your partner's language.

You certainly don't need to be fluent in your partner's native tongue

— chances are he or she speaks English very well — but it will help break the ice and build a relationship. There are other communications benefits as well. For example, we routinely spent an hour trying to phone our partner in Moscow, only to reach a secretary who did not speak English and would hang up. However, once we learned enough Russian to ask, at a minimum, where the individual was or when he would return, we made a connection. Oftentimes, our partner was merely at another desk or had just stepped out for a minute. Knowing this, we were often able to complete the conversation.

**Tip 7:** Choose translators with care.

One size does not fit all when it comes to translation. Consider whether you need a business or legal document translated, a technical document translated, or a meeting translator. Ask for recommendations and be sure to check references. Time permitting, have the document translated back into English as a cross-check to ensure the meaning hasn't changed; you might want to consider tapping a university language department for this if one is nearby. The ideal option is to have a member of your team who is fluent in the language.

**Tip 8:** Understand the legal structure of the country in which you are doing business.

What's legal in Peoria may not be legal in Prague, and vice versa. It is important to understand not only the cultural nuances of doing business in a given country, but the legal ramifications of your actions. Understand in particular the role and validity of contracts. In many countries, the contract is a personal, not corporate, issue. For example, in one country, when the head of the company changed, all contracts issued by the prior corporate officer were deemed

invalid. Enlist the assistance of an internationally focused corporate law attorney.

**Tip 9: Avoid ethnocentricity.**

Americans have the reputation of thinking that their way is the only way. We've seen the NIH — not invented here — syndrome in many companies, and this transfers over to the international arena as well. Take the time and effort to be open to new ideas and processes. You may need to adapt your products and systems to meet the needs of the non-U.S. market, but the end result will be positive.

**Tip 10: Take the time to build relationships.**

Clearly, the underlying theme in all these points is to take the time required to build personal relationships. International business, for the most part, is done not at the corporate level, but at the personal level. It is also crucial that your management understands this and allocates the appropriate time and resources. Don't expect overnight results, and recognize the importance of communication in building these relationships. ◀

## Washington D.C. Chapter Kickoff

The Washington D.C. Chapter of the Professional Communication Society kicked off the new year with an organizational dinner meeting on 19 January 1995 at Blackie's House of Beef in Washington, D.C. Members of the PCS AdCom as well as the Washington D.C. Section Chairman, Jerry Gibbon, and the Washington D.C. Section Director, Bill Ostaff, were on hand for this event. Anyone interested in additional information about the D.C. Chapter should contact Nancy Corbin at (703) 754-9502. ◀

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It was good to read Joe Chapline's comments in the Jan/Feb issue. I'm glad to know that Joe is still "tickling the keys" [of] his organ.

His comment about multilanguage-ism for PCS deserves consideration rather than a knee-jerk response of "Oh, no." The language of engineering and science is English around the world with few exceptions; in those exceptions the knowledge of written and read English is still very high among fellow engineers. BUT — and this goes to the nut of Joe's lemma: should PCS deal with communication topics in our field in more than English? He gives us good food for thought.

Also, Editor, an observation about the PCS Newsletter, from a fellow IEEE Editor who got speared by it in the past: one good reason for having the banner head of the publication across the top of the cover is to be able to be visible in the thousands of magazine racks that populate our libraries and other literary establishments. Unfortunately, those of us who would, for good reason, want to turn the title vertically, cannot change those racks. This, in my parlance, is a SYSTEM CONSTRAINT.

Pop quiz for readers concerned with trivia & systems constraints. How many remember the "improved, pop-up tissue" marketing fiasco of 40 years back? That company never regained market share. We never learn from history . . .

Keep up the good — and unaplauded enough — work on the newsletter.

—Dave Dobson  
Chevy Chase, Maryland

Joe Chapline in his Letter to the Editor in the January/February issue of the *Newsletter* cites his experience with the technical manuals of the International Society of Organbuilders, which are published in at least two and sometimes three languages; he asks why "bigger and

more significant technologies" can't also provide multilingual publications. I can't speak for all such technologies, but I do know something about the situation in physics, having edited a physics journal for much of my career. There are two aspects involved.

First, the development of the subject has been such that the international language of physics has been identified as "broken English". I'm not in a position to say how that came about, but I do know that for many years anyone who wanted to keep up with developments in physics has had to know how to read English. I note that when I got my doctorate over 40 years ago, one requirement was that I be able to read the literature of the subject in German and French; that requirement has long since been dropped as unnecessary.

More pertinent is the matter of economics. The journal I edited was not one of the biggest, but even so it consists of some 5000 or 6000 pages per year. Chapline's proposal would at least double that. And there are journals whose page count runs to tens of thousands per year. Subscription costs are already substantial, and would have to increase — perhaps not by a factor of two, but not far from it. And that doesn't count the expense of finding translators to handle the papers that would be submitted in languages other than English. Someone may say, "Just have the author submit in German and English, with another language if he wishes." That I regard as senseless. If the author knows enough English to submit a version in English, why should there be the bother of publishing in other languages, given that interested persons can read English?

I must say that I think it regrettable that so few Americans bother to learn any language other than English (and far too many don't even learn that very well). But I don't see Chapline's suggestion as a useful way to encourage a change.

—George L. Trigg  
Brookhaven, New York ◀

## CURMUDGEON'S CORNER



by Joan G. Nagle

### On Writing and Life

No one ever said I could use this column for a book review. No one ever said I couldn't either, and anyway I'd always rather ask forgiveness than permission. So that's what this is.

The book, which I wish I could give a copy of to every reader of this column, is *Bird by Bird*, by Anne Lamott (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994).

"Thirty years ago," she writes in explaining the title, "my older brother, who was 10 years old at the time, was trying to get a report on birds written that he'd had 3 months to write. [It] was due the next day. He was at the kitchen table close to tears, surrounded by binder paper and pencils and unopened books on birds, immobilized by the hugeness of the task ahead. Then my father sat down beside him, put his arm around my brother's shoulder, and said, 'Bird by bird, buddy. Just take it bird by bird.'"

The work is subtitled *Some Instructions on Writing and Life*, and isn't that just? Haven't we all been there, in our writing projects and/or our lives, surrounded by the tools for the job but crushed by the weight of the job itself. And didn't we need someone to tell us, "Just take it bird by bird." (To say nothing of the arm around the shoulder, which is always nice.)

Admittedly, the writing instructions are aimed at writers of fiction; Ms. Lamott, though writing a nonfiction work herself, makes no nod to us who deal in the factual stuff. Except that she sees telling stories as telling *truth*, in some way, and we are all in that business. In any case, there's a lot that applies. For instance . . .

First, she says, give yourself short assignments. "Often when you sit down to write, what you have in mind is an autobiographical novel about your childhood, or a play about the immigrant experience, or a history of — oh, say — say women. But this is like trying to scale a glacier. It's hard to get your footing, and your fingertips get all red and frozen and torn up."

She describes vividly the ensuing panic ("I realize that the well has run dry and that my future is behind me and I'm going to have to get a job only I'm completely unemployable") and her efforts to get control through slow and quiet breathing.

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### *At our best, we write one-square-inch pictures.*

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Then "I finally notice the one-inch picture frame that I put on my desk. . . . It reminds me that all I have to do is to write down as much as I can see through a one-inch picture frame. This is all I have to bite off for the time being."

Our immediate reaction, as *employed* writers, is to scream, "NO! NO! I've got to write this whole manual on the ChickenSoup program, and I've got to do it all now!"

But the truth is, we don't write a manual "all now". Trying to write anything all at once produces convolution and contortion and complexity. At our best, we write one-square-inch pictures. That's all the reader can take in at a time anyway. Give

yourself and your reader a break, with short assignments.

She also recommends writing bad first drafts. (Well, her word isn't *bad*, but this is a family publication and I am learning to be a Southern lady.) "All good writers write them. This is how they end up with good second drafts and terrific third drafts." This is how, she says, we quiet the voices in our heads that tell us what we're doing isn't very good, or interesting, or marketable.

"I know that," we reply. "I'm only just *getting it down* on paper." Lamott calls this draft the down draft, and the next, in which we fix it up, the up draft. And there's a third version, too, maybe more . . . but it's that bad first draft that we have to write first. It's okay for it to be bad. (God forbid that the boss or the client will ever see this, though.)

If you haven't seen yet how instructions for writing can be instructions for life, try her words on perfectionism:

I think perfectionism is based on the obsessive belief that if you run carefully enough, hitting each stepping-stone just right, you won't have to die. The truth is that you will die anyway and that a lot of people who aren't even looking at their feet are going to do a whole lot better than you, and have a lot more fun while they're doing it.

Take that, you low-fat-diet nerds!

If any of this makes sense to you, as it did to me, and if you adore this kind of deceptively simple, almost monosyllabic, but packed-with-meaning writing as much as I do, get the book. You'll love it. "Why does our writing matter?" she asks.

"Because of the spirit . . . because of the heart. Writing and reading decrease our sense of isolation. They deepen and widen and expand our sense of life: they feed the soul."

Feed yours a little something today. (And have a doughnut too.) ◀

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE



by Cheryl Reimold

### A - C - T - N - O - W, A Six-Step Response to Disaster (Continued)

#### Step 4 (Cont.): Prepare for a More Thorough Response to the World

Once you have organized your centers of information, called in experts, and formed a crisis team, you can prepare for a thorough response to the outside world.

**Check your priorities.** Care, compassion, and safety come first. Your first act at any point is to see if you can do anything more to help the victims or prevent any further disasters. If you are called upon to answer questions while engaged in helping people, simply tell the truth: you are taking care of people now. You will get all the facts later. No one will accuse you of making the wrong choice.

Then, plan for your explanations and updates to the public. Remember that you are addressing people — workers, spouses, parents, and children — not “the media”. You are not trying to outsmart, outguess, or evade reporters. Rather, your goal is to speak through the media to the people who are in some way affected by your crisis. If you keep people as your focus, you will give an honest, thorough, and meaningful account.

**Prepare for the five W's.** You can build good media relations by calling frequent news briefings and inviting reporters from local and national papers, radio, TV, and the wire services. Newspapers want the basic facts for the same day's edition and more background and possible implications for future issues. The broadcast media want less background and more updates. All will ask you the five W's:

What happened? Who is affected (employees, customers, stockholders, the public at large, kids)? Where did it happen? When did it happen? Why? (Who/what caused it?)

If you still lack answers to these, search for them wherever you can. Get details on the product or event from your engineers, designers, operators, attorneys, and anyone else who would know. Seek any remaining facts from everyone involved, from company executives

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*You need the media even  
more than they need you.*

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and outside experts to customers, bystanders, and even the media themselves. You can bet the reporters will check all these sources, and you want to know at least as much as they do!

Be scrupulously honest. Do not try to hide damaging information about your company's performance or product. Remember, you are not the media's only source of information. If you lose credibility in the early days, when people feel some compassion for you in your difficult situation, you will never regain it. Furthermore, mistaken attempts to cover up a company flaw may eventually bury the company itself.

Now, formulate complete answers to the five W's. Keep the latest facts, figures, and other specifics in a small notebook that you can always

refer to and update. Make your answers clear and precise, with all technical terms explained in plain English. Rehearse your answers. You can be pretty sure that with a mike thrust under your chin, your composure will slip a notch. Having your answers ready will help you regain the confidence and composure you need.

**Say your piece.** Now think about what you want to say. You are not simply an answering machine! You have the right — and the obligation to your company — to get your message across.

Prepare a written statement to read and distribute. Make it a single paragraph if possible. Say what you believe happened, what it means, what your company is doing about it, and any other message your company wants people to hear.

You can use questions as bridges to get your message across. Answer the question, then say you would also like to look at the larger picture or take a different approach, and then deliver your own message.

The media can help you get your message across if you approach the interview not as a battle but as a conversation between decent people, both of whom want to help people and stem a disaster. Remember, you need the media even more than they need you. They will ultimately tell the story to the world. How you approach them may determine whose story they tell.

*Cheryl Reimold is a member of the PCS Administrative Committee and the author of more than 200 articles and several books, including How to Write a Million-Dollar Memo, Being a Boss, and The Language of Business. She is President of PERC Communications—6A Dickel Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583; (914) 725-1024—which offers businesses in-house workshops and courses in writing, presentations, and on-the-job communication skills.* ◀



## Book.Bytes (an occasional roundup and review)

by H. J. Scheiber

These days, whether you function as a technical communicator, "quality" manager, or corporate VP, you well know that your own organization, and scores of others just like yours all over America (and beyond), are now being *reinvented* — reengineered, rethought, restructured, resized, downsized, decentralized . . . or just plain streamlined.

Similarly, just about all of you are, have been, or shortly will be (in one form or another) engaged in the process of *empowerment* — even if, for some of you, that actually means joining the swelling ranks of the under- or unemployed. Or, perhaps you're currently involved in yet another process, that of becoming a leader and, at the same time, learning to cope with some level of organizational chaos.

On the other hand, maybe you're working in a cultlike organization, without readily discernible charismatic leadership but with some sort of unique corporate culture. Your organization might be a (proven) "marathon performer", according to *Fortune*, "built to last", consistently serving customers faithfully, maintaining satisfying P/E ratios, and yielding nothing but success.

Is all of this mere hype? Does it all add up to much? Is it all any more than an empty rhetoric of managerial whimsy? And, most importantly, how does it all affect you?

A number of thoughtful books have surfaced over the past few years which you might want to have a look at. With two major aims in mind,

- (1) to help you survive and prosper during 1995, and
- (2) to help you sort out the very best of these books from the purest samples of pretentious "pythonesque" chatter,

I've put together a list of the *creme de la creme* in business, management, and organizational studies. Here goes.

Management gurus come and go, but Charles Handy seems to be as solid a force in organizational studies as the converted stone farmhouse in the Tuscany hills where he spends much of his time — some 20% — thinking. Actually a self-styled philosopher on business, management, and organizations, Handy has written a number of important texts stressing, most recently, that the "assets of an enterprise are primarily its people" and that "education will have to become never-ending" with corporations fully (and finally) recognizing their central "role in training and education".

Handy's *Understanding Organizations* (Oxford University Press, 1993) is the revised edition of his classic text examining "how understanding the ways organizations actually work can be used to manage them better". The text illuminates key concepts of concern to all managers: corporate culture, motivation, leadership, power, working in groups, and role-playing. Boxed sections of information, quoted material, and short case studies appear throughout the text to aid the reader.

As a student of organizational communication, I have found Handy's discussion of the barriers to effective communication in organizations — including, for example, tactics of conflict, information control, information distortion, networks, and "telling" — particularly perspicacious, comprehensive, and useful.

He is equally sensible and clear on such important processes as managing conflict and channelling change. And his review of the field of organizational culture (Chapter 7), examines four varieties of culture

- (1) the *power* culture
- (2) the *role* culture
- (3) the *task* culture
- (4) the *person* culture

and the phenomena, structure, and "set of systems" related to each, as well as the "influencing factors" on these cultures and the "implications for organizational design".

Handy's two most recent books, *The Age of Unreason* and *The Age of Paradox* (Harvard Business School Press, 1991 and 1994, respectively), explore a) the nature and consequences of change and "progress", and the disappearance of the "employment organization"; b) the "paradoxes" and "confusions" that confront our society, our businesses, governments, and, increasingly, ourselves, as individuals unprepared for the dramatic changes to be faced in the years preceding and into the next millennium; and c) those innovative organizations already evolving and responding to new technologies and the realities of global competition.

Handy speaks directly, concretely, and prophetically about

- change:  
The society which welcomes change can use that change instead of just reacting to it. (*Unreason*, p. 5)
- work:  
To reinvent work in its fullest sense, we need another word. *Portfolio* might be that word. . . . A portfolio is a collection of different items, but a collection

which has a theme to it. The whole is greater than the parts.

A work portfolio is a way of describing how the different bits of work in our life fit together to form a balanced whole. (*Unreason*, p. 183)

- the new ("shamrock") organization:

... a form of organization based around a core of essential executives and workers, supported by outside contractors and part-time help. (*Unreason*, p. 32)

The shamrock organization ... has flourished because organizations have realized that you do not have to employ all of the people all of the time to get the work done. ... Offices for part timers become common-rooms for telecommuters and, in time, clubs for everyone. The early morning crush in the commuter train will one day be a thing of the past or at least only a twice-weekly chore. (*Unreason*, p. 111)

- the paradoxes of our time: If we are to cope with the turbulence of life today, we must start by organizing it in our minds. ... *Framing the confusion is the first step to doing something about it*

I have identified nine principal paradoxes [intelligence, work, productivity, time, riches, organizations, aging, the individual, justice], nine ways of explaining what is going on in our societies and why some confusion is inevitable.

Nine paradoxes are far from an exhaustive list, but if we can manage them to forge a better world, we shall have done well. (*Paradox*, pp. 17-18; italics added)

If Charles Handy is down on *reengineering* because in the final analysis, "there will be no results if there is no investment in peo-

ple", then Michael Hammer and James Champy, in *Reengineering the Corporation* (HarperCollins, 1993), and Champy in *Reengineering Management* (HarperCollins, 1995), state the proverbial case for the defense. "Reengineering", according to Hammer and Champy, consists in the "radical redesign of a company's business processes, reinventing the way the business operates in order to meet the demands of a modern economy".

Reengineering ought not to be equated with downsizing and other "slash and burn" exercises in cost reduction. On the contrary, these authors argue, reengineering has "everything to do with creating and cultivating innovative strategies". These books are chock full of examples and illustrations of what the authors call "true business reengineering". Their examples demonstrate the four requisite characteristics of a reengineering effort and fulfill the definition that reengineering is the *fundamental* rethinking and *radical* redesign of business *processes* to achieve *dramatic* improvements in critical, contemporary measures of performance, such as cost, quality, service, and speed. (*Reeng. the Corp.*, p. 46)

In addition, Hammer and Champy provide readers with three rather elaborate cases involving the development, or "redesign", of corporate strategies — at IBM Credit, Ford, and Kodak — to examine several themes intrinsic to and typical of reengineered processes. Some of the "recurring themes" encountered at these three corporations, and dozens of others where the authors have observed and participated in reengineering projects, include these:

- Several jobs are combined into one.

- Workers make decisions.
- Steps in the process are performed in a natural order.
- Processes have multiple versions.
- Work is performed where it makes the most sense.
- A case manager provides a single point of contact. (*Reeng. the Corp.*, pp. 51-63)

Hammer and Champy continually remind readers that "reengineering entails the radical redesign of a company's business processes". But they insist, too, that process redesign is just the beginning; basic changes in business processes have implications for every facet of an organization. Indeed, when an organization reengineers its business processes, Hammer and Champy claim that a major shift in the organizational culture will occur as well:

- Work units change — from functional departments to process teams
- Jobs change — from simple tasks to multi-dimensional work
- People's roles change — from controlled to empowered
- Job preparation changes — from training to education
- Values change — from protective to productive (*Reeng. the Corp.*, pp. 65-74)

All of the changes necessary for creating a new culture, and sufficient for real "structural [re]configuration", demand support by management and "management systems". That is, senior executives must change "from scorekeepers to leaders"; thus, Champy's *Reengineering Management: The Mandate for New Leadership*. This book, aimed at managers at all levels, examines how "radically" managers themselves will "have to change their way of doing things for reengineering to fulfill its promise".



Hammer and Champy have come to understand that without management support — from “self-managers” in sales, R&D, and customer service, from “process and people managers”, from “expertise managers”, and from “enterprise managers” like CEOs and division heads — reengineering “will be stopped in its tracks”. Throughout this book, Champy confronts a variety of key questions that have surfaced in connection with the *practice* of reengineering. He examines four broad issues —

- (1) issues of purpose
- (2) issues of culture
- (3) issues of process and performance
- (4) issues of people

— before concluding that we are in the throes of “a second managerial revolution”. The first focused on a “transfer of power”; this one involves an “access of freedom”. And that, finally, is Champy’s central message (however ambiguous):

Free markets need free men and women to invent the future. Feel free . . .” (*Reeng. Management*, p. 205)

Well, if reengineering can provide such access (personal? professional?) to freedom, who among us wouldn’t buy in?

[This article will be continued in the next issue. Ed.]

*H.J. Scheiber is Director of Solaris Communication in Lakeland, Florida. Formerly Associate Professor of Rhetoric and Managerial/Technical Communication at Florida Institute of Technology, Dr. Scheiber is a member of the Editorial Board of the IEEE Professional Communication Society.*

## IEEE Fellows

Congratulations to PCS members Dr. Fred Aminzadeh and Dr. Amitava Dutta-Roy, who have been elected to IEEE Fellow grade as of 1 January 1995.

Dr. Aminzadeh, a candidate of the Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society, was cited for contributions to the application of modeling and signal processing, pattern recognition, and expert systems in the processing and analysis of seismic and acoustic data.

Dr. Dutta-Roy, a candidate of the Professional Communications

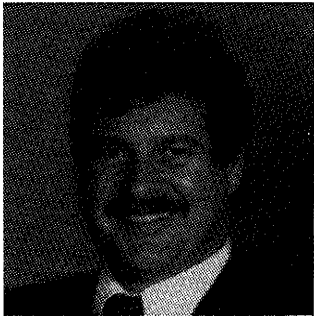
Society, was cited for contributions to the development of techniques and programs for the effective dissemination of information on computer networks and communications technologies in Brazil. His work has included writing and lecturing on these topics and their usefulness in developing countries and developing novel written and audiovisual instructional materials. Dr. Dutta-Roy’s ability to focus on technologies appropriate to the country and to present them understandably to both technical audiences and to decision-makers has been a major and unique contribution. ◀

## PCS AdCom Meets in Washington, D.C.



*At the PCS AdCom meeting on 20 January 1995 were standing, left to right: R. Robinson, D. Dobson, R. Joenk, and H. Michaelson; seated around the table from left foreground, M. Goodman, N. Corbin, D. Kemp, M. Haselkorn, R. Grice, D. Flaherty Kizer, J. Rochester, C. Reimold, L. Grove, G. Hayhoe, and J. Nagle.*

# On MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION



by Michael B. Goodman

## I. Why Organizations Find it Difficult to Change

I have discussed the metaphors of change (Jul/Aug 1994) and the forces driving change (Nov/Dec 1994). Here begins a discussion of why some change efforts succeed and why an overwhelming majority fail. This part of the discussion focuses on people, expectations, and corporate culture.

Keep in mind throughout this discussion that *all change is personal*. If our foundation rests on that observation, then we can ask: What type of person is best suited for change? What role do expectations play in the change process? Do some corporate cultures adapt to change better than others?

## What type of person is best suited for change?

You may have noticed around your organization an individual (and that person may be you) who sees the widespread changes in work processes and outcomes as a stimulating challenge. This person comes to work with a smiling face and a spring in the step, often arriving early and leaving late. No matter how much chaos the organization is in, this person appears to respond well to the situation.

Others in the organization respond less well to change and exhibit dysfunctional behavior, in varying degrees. For instance, examples of a low degree of dysfunction are poor communication, reduced trust, blaming, defensiveness, increased conflict with fellow workers, decreased team effectiveness, and inappropriate outbursts at the office. Moderate dysfunction: lying or deception, chronic lateness or absenteeism, symptoms such as headaches or stomach pain, apathy, and interpersonal withdrawal. High degree of dysfunction: covert undermining of leadership, sabotage, actively promoting negative attitudes in others, substance or family abuse, physical/psychological breakdown, violence, murder, and suicide.

The person who responds well to change exhibits buoyancy, elasticity, resilience — the ability to recover quickly from change. Note that such people possess a

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*Survival . . . depends  
on buoyancy, elasticity,  
recilience.*

---

strong, positive sense of self, which provides them the security and confidence to meet new challenges, even if they do not have all the answers. These people, like successful athletes, are focused on a clear vision of what they wish to accomplish, and they are tenacious in making the vision a reality. In addition, these people tend to be accommodating and flexible in the face of uncertainty, and organized in the way they develop an approach for managing ambiguity. These people are "proactive". They engage the circumstances rather than defend against change.

The type of person I have described here is not that unusual.

Such a person practices fairness, integrity, honesty, and human dignity — the principles that provide us all with the security to adapt to change.

## What Role Do Expectations Play?

If, as I have suggested, all change is personal, then how can understanding and managing expectations help an individual or an organization through the change cycle? Everyone has made personal changes: leaving home for college, getting married or divorced, relocating to another town. Each personal change brings with it feeling that *things* will get better. As they were for most of the characters in Dickens' *Great Expectations*, fame and fortune are often illusory, because people neglect to consider that change is an equal opportunity for failure. A contemporary rock song puts it this way: "If you don't expect too much from me you may not be let down."

However, it is not to lower expectations, but to manage them. In managing expectations, consider that in responding to positive change most people go through phases: 1) uninformed optimism or certainty at the start, like the joy at a wedding; 2) informed pessimism or doubt (here people may quit publicly or, more destructively, quit privately and continue to work, allowing the negative feelings to generate dysfunctional behavior); 3) hope emerging with a sense of reality; 4) informed optimism, resulting in confidence; 5) satisfaction, which closes the cycle of change.

The good news is that the cycle is predictable and can be used to manage expectations by helping people prepare for the rough periods. The bad news is that most people feel they are the exception and they will not follow the cycle from beginning to completion.

## Do Some Corporate Cultures Adapt to Change Better than Others?

The concept of corporate culture is complex, but for this discussion, we can consider that it is made up of the physical things and patterns of behavior that reflect the values, beliefs, and basic assumptions of the organization. A culture that values the status quo may resist change, but may paradoxically be best suited to meet the challenge of change. A *process* culture, such as a public utility or telecommunications company, may have the scope and resources to make a successful cultural change. It has the capacity to survive as the people and processes go through the cycle of change. A *macho* culture such as an investment bank or movie studio may be entirely wiped out by changes in laws or in the economic environment. AT&T and IBM are still alive; E.F. Hutton and Drexel Burnham are not.

The survival of an organization, like the survival of an individual, also depends on its buoyancy, elasticity, resilience. Corporations which have such people have such organizational abilities.

## II. Eighth Conference on Corporate Communication

The Eighth Conference on Corporate Communication, exploring "New Forces in Corporate Communication", will be held 24-25 May 1995 at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Madison, New Jersey. A 10% discount on registration is available to IEEE/PCS members. The best papers from the conference relevant to IEEE members will appear in the *Transactions*. For further information, write to The Conference on Corporate Communication, M.A. Program in

Corporate Communication, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Madison, NJ 07940; phone, (201) 593-8709; faxes, (201) 593-8510.

## III. Coming Up . . .

In the next "On Management Communication," a continued look at the forces changing communication in the workplace, and the role of professional communicators as *change agents* in the process.

## IV. IEEE/PCS Archive

Papers, *Transactions*, and *Proceedings* are among the items held in the IEEE/PCS Archive at the Madison Campus of Fairleigh Dickinson University. The archive is open to PC members and scholars. If you have questions contact Michael Goodman at (201) 593-8709; or Ron Blicq at (204) 488-7060. ◀

## Newsletter Schedule

The *Newsletter* publication schedule is:

Issue	Deadline
May/June	7 April 1995
July/August	2 June 1995
Sept./Oct.	4 August 1995
Nov./Dec.	6 October 1995

Contributions are welcome; ASCII e-mail and ASCII IBM-compatible diskettes are preferred. Please send them to:

David E. Nadziejka  
6009 Osage Avenue  
Downers Grove, IL 60516  
d.nadziejka@ieee.org  
Tel: (708) 252-3019  
Facs: (708) 252-3387 ◀

## Rudy Mancke Named Keynote Speaker for IPCC 95

Rudy Mancke, host of the nationally syndicated PBS series *Nature-Scene*, which is produced by South Carolina ETV, will give the keynote address at IPCC 95. Mr. Mancke will speak about how people perceive the world and make sense of it, and how scientists, engineers, and professional communicators can aid in this process.

IPCC 95 promises to be another success story for the PCS, as proposals are still rolling in from Canada, France, the People's Republic of China, and the United States. Program Chair Roger Grice reports that proposals are split about 50-50 between workshops and presentations. Conference Chairman George Hayhoe encourages casual dress as we meet in beautiful Savannah to learn and to exchange ideas on maintaining our technical competency in one of the most dynamic and technologically challenging professions.

In addition to learning, George promises fun too. The conference banquet will be aboard the Savannah River Queen, which will leave from River Street adjacent to the hotel and cruise the Savannah River.

Make plans now to attend IPCC 95 and watch upcoming *Newletters* for additional details of the conference. ◀

*I have yet to see any problem, however complicated, which, when you looked at it in the right way, did not become still more complicated.*

Paul Alderson

## University of Washington to Launch Digital Media Design Laboratory

Someday soon, according to plans being made at the University of Washington's Department of Technical Communication, a new laboratory on the Washington campus, packed with the latest computer technology, will be abuzz with activity as part of the digital revolution. If the laboratory succeeds, its organizers believe it will help put Washington State over the top as the undisputed world capitol of the multimedia industry.

The facility, called the Digital Media Design Laboratory, springs from a broad private-public partnership involving about 20 of the state's most successful software and software-related firms and organizations belonging to the Digital Media Alliance, a subgroup of the 1200-member Washington Software Association; the UW; and the Washington Technology Center. The latter will house the new laboratory on the UW campus.

The laboratory will serve as a conduit to increase the flow of ideas,

talent, and technology between the state's already booming digital media industry and the UW, according to Mark Haselkorn, project advisor and professor and chairman of the Department of Technical Communication in the UW College of Engineering.

"The digital media industry in Washington is poised for unprecedented growth, and is likely to challenge areas such as North Carolina, California, and Georgia," Haselkorn commented. "It is essential that the state develop facilities that bring together experts from the multitude of disciplines that contribute to digital media design, which many believe is the single most common activity in computing today."

The terms digital media and multimedia refer to an amorphous category of new software combining sound, video, and graphics that meld, for example, film and television with computing. Such technology is being brought to

bear in a host of new delivery mechanisms and applications in business, entertainment, education, the arts, telecommunications, scientific research, medicine, and many other sectors.

As Haselkorn and others point out, however, many fundamental problems remain unresolved, ranging from thorny questions of social and legal policy to hard-core technological challenges. "We want this new laboratory to foster cross-disciplinary and cross-sector interaction among the best minds in digital media in this state today," said Haselkorn.

Initial funding for the project's start-up phase amounts to \$60,000: \$25,000 each from the UW and the Digital Media Alliance and \$10,000 from the Washington Technology Center. For more information, contact Haselkorn at mark@uwtc.washington.edu or (206) 543-2577. ◀

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## Conference Invitation

An interdisciplinary conference, "Individual and Societal Knowledge Tools for a Sustainable Civilization: Can Humankind Live in Harmony with Nature?", will be held 8-10 June 1995 at Ryerson Polytechnic University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The purpose of the conference is to explore a meaningful core of common human goals and values; to find, create, and promote knowledge tools that assist us in achieving a sustainable civiliza-

tion; and to assess the potential of information technology as a universal knowledge tool.

Business leaders, holders of public office, professionals, researchers, teachers, and graduate students in any branch of knowledge are welcome. The conference is sponsored by the International Society for the Systems Sciences, Eastern Canada Division; the Ryerson Polytechnic University Faculty of Engineering

and Applied Science; the IEEE Toronto Section; and Science for Peace, Canada. Early registration is available until 30 April 1995. For information, contact H. Burkhardt, Department of Physics, Ryerson Polytechnic University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5B 2K3; e-mail, burkhard@acs.ryerson.ca; phone, (416) 979-5000, ext. 7246; faxes, (416) 979-5064. ◀

## PCS Logo Contest: Free IPCC 95 Registration to Winner

Visual communication specialists should have the upper hand in a PCS contest designed to enhance the Society's image with a logo. The winner of the contest will receive free admission to IPCC 95 in Savannah and an appropriate trophy. But even more meaningful will be the knowledge that the winning design will regularly appear on Society literature.

The IEEE logo, which symbolizes the IEEE discipline, has long graced the Institute's documents. In recent years, more and more IEEE societies have emphasized their own missions by using a society logo in juxtaposition with the IEEE logo. PCS would like to enhance and publicize its mission and hopes to continue this trend.

The contest is open to nonmembers as well as members of PCS and IEEE. The judges are design professionals who are neither PCS nor IEEE members: they include Joan Hantz and Dona Bagley of Windsor Street Design, Rochester, New York; Theodore Kole of the Northrop Grumman Presentations Services Group, Bethpage, New York; and Michelle Robinson of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute School of Architecture, Troy New York. Details of the contest, including a final submission date and a synopsis of the PCS mission, are presented in the official contest notice (see box).



*The IEEE Professional Communication Society is pleased to announce a competition for the design of a logo that can be used by itself or in juxtaposition with the IEEE logo.*

### Enter the PCS Logo Contest



Communication skills are the key to every professional's career growth. Consequently, the primary mission of the IEEE Professional Communication Society is to help engineers, scientists, and technical communication professionals develop skills in delivering oral and written technical information. The Society fills its mission by:

- ✓ Promoting the advanced practices and theories for writing reports, proposals, and other scientific documentation to ensure technical accuracy while maintaining user friendliness.
- ✓ Developing technical presentation skills that aid speakers not only in capturing an audience but also in delivering information that bridges cultural and international boundaries.
- ✓ Conducting research on how to ensure effective communication in a modern engineering environment.

*Logo designs which communicate this mission statement would be most appropriate. The designer of the winning logo will receive free admission to IPCC 95 in Savannah, GA, free admission to the IPCC 95 Awards Banquet (for two), and an appropriate trophy.*

**Submit Entries by  
30 June 1995, to**

**Ms. Stephanie L. Rosenbaum  
Tec-Ed, Inc. P.O. Box 1905  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106**

# Last Call for Activators!

If you would like to be an active participant in FORUM 95, send by facsimile or e-mail, a brief proposal outlining your idea to co-chair Brigitte Beutenmüller. Proposals will be welcomed for the activities outlined below or others:

Technical Documentation  
Production Aspects  
New Media  
International Communication  
Professional Communication  
Visual Communication

The theme for FORUM 95 is "Disappearing Borders: An International Conference for Technical Communicators". This multinational conference will be held in Dortmund, Germany, 13–15 November 1995.

If you would like to attend as an observer/delegate, complete and mail or fax the form on the opposite page.

## Conference Site Information

The next issue of the *PCS Newsletter* will contain detailed information on Dortmund and the Westfalenhall (the conference hotel), as well as the best way to get there from the U.S.A. or Canada. For the moment, here are some highlights:

Forget everything you previously learned about Dortmund! For instance:

- Coal mining is out.
- Steel production, for which Dortmund has been famous for over 100 years, still is a major activity, but so is the city's machine tool and precision equipment industry.
- Commerce, banking, and insurance have become pre-dominant activities.

- Nearly 50% of the city's municipal area consists of green space.
- Dortmund's world-famous beer still tastes marvelous, but wining and dining now have equal prominence.

There will be more information in FORUM 95's bi-monthly Newsletter. To receive a copy, contact Ron Blicq at facs (204) 488 7294 or e-mail: [r.blicq@ieee.org](mailto:r.blicq@ieee.org)

## Cost

Now that the Professional Communication Society is an INTECOM member, all PCS members qualify for the "member" rate for FORUM 95. The rates below are quoted in Deutschmarks, with 1 DM being roughly equivalent to 70 cents U.S. The first figure in each case is for conference registration only; the second figure (in parentheses) includes three nights' accommodation:

Member rate:

- Early registration  
695DM (1090DM)  
(before July 31)
- Late registration  
965DM (1360DM)

Non-member rate:

- Early registration  
965DM (1360DM)
- Late registration  
1165DM (1660DM)

## Program Information

For information about the technical program, contact Lisa Moretto at 6001 South Kings Highway (Unit 767), Myrtle Beach, SC 29575; phone, (803) 238 9417.

## Upcoming Planning Meetings

PCS will be represented at the next planning meeting, which will be held at the Dortmund Westfalenhallen on 4 March. This will enable us to get first-hand information on the city, the hotel, and the program, which we will report back to you.

Another meeting will be held in Washington, D.C., during the STC conference (23–26 April), when a FORUM 95 information table will be set up at the STC conference site. Look for us!

## Proposal and registration address

FORUM 95's European conference co-chair is Brigitte Beutenmüller. Contact her at:

tekomp (Forum 95)  
Markelstr. 34  
D-70193  
Stuttgart 1  
Germany  
Facs: +711 650767  
e-mail:  
[tek-b.beutte@geod.GeoNet.de](mailto:tek-b.beutte@geod.GeoNet.de)

—Ron Blicq  
FORUM 95 U.S. Co-chair

## Say Again?

Francis Crick, who shared the Nobel Prize for determining the structure of DNA, was named last fall as interim President of the Salk Institute. In the time since, he was appointed to the position permanently. When the change in status was reported, Institute officials claimed the appointment was never temporary: the original press release had not capitalized the word *interim*.

—As reported in *Science*,  
3 February, 1995, p. 619.





**Disappearing Borders**  
**International conference for technical communicators**  
**to be held**  
**November 13–15, 1995**  
**Westfalenhallen Dortmund, Germany**

Forum 95 will examine current trends concerning

Writers/Designers/Media–Specialists in Communication  
 Language and Culture  
 Producer and User  
 Research and Industry Practice

Forum 95 is jointly organized by the societies for technical communication from:



USA/Canada



United Kingdom



The Netherlands



Germany

## FORUM '95 Registration Form

*Note: if more than one registration is to be made a photocopy of this form is acceptable.*

*Please complete and return to:*

Brigitte Beutenmüller  
 Forum 95 conference organisation

Markelstr.34  
 D-70193 Stuttgart Germany  
 Phone: +(711) 654235  
 FAX: +(711) 650767

### For Official Use Only

Registration No:

Invoice No:

Amount:

Paid:

I wish to attend the Conference as a: Residential Participant ☐ Plus Partner ☐ Activator ☐

I enclose my remittance ☐ or wish to be invoiced ☐ or charge my credit card ☐

for the following amount: (All cheques to be made payable to "Forum 95") ..... DM

I authorise Forum 95 to charge my account: ☐ Access/Mastercard ☐ VISA ☐ Other .....

CREDIT CARD/CHARGE CARD NUMBER ..... Credit Card Billing Address: .....

CARDHOLDER'S NAME .....

DATE OF EXPIRY .....

SIGNATURE .....

Or special instructions and address for Invoicing: .....

### Participant/Activator Information (BLOCK CAPITALS)

Title: ..... Last Name: ..... Initials: ..... Forename: .....

\* Address: .....  
 for all Conference correspondence

\* Is this a Private or Business Address: ..... Tel.No. .... Fax.No. ....

Employer: ..... Position Held: .....

\* Address (if different from above): .....

If claiming Special Members' Rate please state the name of your Institution or Body: ..... Membership No. ....

Authority (if required) ..... Signed ..... Position: .....

Name (IN CAPITALS) ..... Date .....

Partner ☐ Yes ☐ No Name ..... Forename .....

Please indicate willingness to participate in any Partner's Program: ☐ Yes ☐ No

## Calendar 1995

**23-26 April**

**Society for Technical  
Communication 42nd Annual  
Conference**

Washington Sheraton Hotel,  
Washington, D.C.  
For information, call  
(703) 522-4114

**9-13 July**

**Eighth International Conference  
of the International Federation  
of Science Editors**

School of Biology, University of  
Barcelona  
For information: IFSE-8 Secretariat,  
Apartado 16009 K-08080,  
Barcelona, Spain  
Phone/facs: +34 3-448 2373  
E-mail: guerrero@porthos.bio.ub.es

**6-9 May**

**Council of Biology Editors  
39th Annual Meeting**

Hyatt Regency, Kansas City  
Missouri  
For information, call  
(312) 201-0101

**27-29 September 1995**

**International Professional  
Communication Conference—  
IPCC 95**

Hyatt Regency, Savannah,  
Georgia  
For information, contact  
G. Hayhoe  
(803) 644-5248 or  
gfhayhoe@srs.gov

**6-9 June**

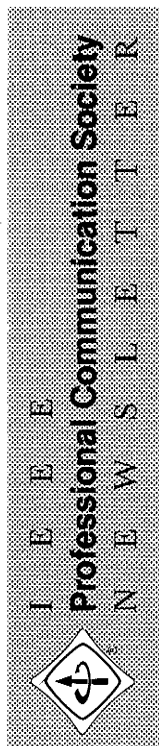
**43rd Technical Writers'  
Institute**

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
Contact: Elizabeth Keyes  
Dept. of Language, Literature &  
Communication, Sage Labs  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
Troy, NY 12180-3590  
Phone: (518) 276-2828  
E-mail:  
Elizabeth\_Keyes@mts.rpi.edu

**13-15 November**

**FORUM 95 International  
Communication Conference**

Dortmund, Germany  
For Information: Brigitte  
Beuttenmüller, Markelstrasse 34,  
D-70193 Stuttgart 1, Germany  
Phone: +711 65 42 35  
Facs: +711 65 07 67



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