



Who's Responsible For The Message?

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“Good communication” is a culturally-bound concept.

Regardless of culture, all communication carries a message.



Outline



- *Strategies/ principles
- *Resources
- *Simulation: Redundancia™



Audience

Reader Audience?



- *Underlying premise is start where they are
- *Who are they?
- *How do they feel about us and what we represent?
- *What motivates them?



Content

Language:

- *Avoid idioms:
Business language is often contextual and therefore culture-specific, eg “Get stuck in.”
“Kick for touch.” “Out of left field.”
- *If phrase requires knowledge of other information, Game or metaphor, try to avoid




Structure

Language:

- *Be specific
- *Spell out explicitly your expectations and deadlines very clearly


E.g. In email, instead of “Get back to me shortly.”
“Please email the completed report by 5:00pm Eastern Standard Time on Wednesday 21 February.”



Language:

Strategies

- *Avoid jargon
- *Watch use of TLAs and other organisational language
- If used, provide in parentheses a description of what these are



Multiple channels:

Structure


- *Provide information via multiple channels
- *Follow any phone calls with emails that summarise What's been said.
- *When possible provide presentations, agendas etc in advance of phone link-up for those working non-native language



Structure: creating and maintaining context

Structure


- *L2 readers can be linguistically akin to visitors in strange city with only a tourist map
- *No familiar landmarks or signposts to guide them.
- *Writers need to map out clear route and stay within confines



Structure: creating and maintaining context

Structure


- *Subject must be unambiguous, "Criminal Law and the Media"
- *POV stated early in writing and very clear to guide reader; acts as a rudder for L2 reader
- *Colleague to give 1 sentence feedback on writer's POV



Structure: creating and maintaining context

Structure

- *Clustering Research - 7 + or - 2 key ideas at time
- L2 this drops to 3-4 key ideas





Language:

Language

- *Simple headline words and phrases are essential for establishing and maintaining context
- *Use the same headline words throughout piece of writing; eg. "Key Benefits of Adopting XYZ"
- The first benefit is.....
- The second benefit is.....
- *Don't change to using "advantage"



*



Language

Language:



Use transition words
Key transition words for establishing sequence are:
First/ly, second/ly, third/ly
Omit "Let's consider, let's look at, moving on to...."



Language

Language:



*Avoid a myriad of dependent, co-ordinate, subordinate, or relative clauses. Makes sentences too difficult to follow.
*Favour simple or compound sentences where relationship b/n subject and predicate (noun and verb) is clear
"The city parks plan will be ready next week."



Language

Language:



*Define abstract, non-specific terms.
"We need to consider personal impact. By personal impact we mean....."



Language



Language:

*Avoid Anglo-Saxon phrasal verbs and prepositional verbs ("get on with", "put up with")
*Phrasal verbs are some of the most difficult in the English language e.g. "bring up", "turn down", "put off"; "make up" has multiple meanings.
"Sticking to the plan" (wiped conference table clean at break)



Outline

*Strategies/ principles
*Resources
*Simulation: Redundancia™




ENGLISH:
writer-responsible language

*Responsibility of the writer to make sure the message is understood
*Writing is clear, direct and unambiguous. structure, thesis statement and topic sentences when writing in English
*Good writer assumes no or little background knowledge on the part of the reader.



**KOREAN, CHINESE, JAPANESE:
reader-responsible languages**

- *Reader is responsible for deciphering the message
- *Often not stated explicitly
- *For low-context reader who is expecting direct and explicit information, this style can be very confusing



**KOREAN, CHINESE, JAPANESE:
reader-responsible languages**

- *Little use of sign posting and transitional phrases, *on the other hand; secondly; as you can see; therefore*
- *Used in writer-responsible cultures to lead the reader through the writer's thought process
- *Without these phrases, the writing may seem choppy and disconnected to an L1 reader □




Low-Context Communicators

- *Task-centered
- *Knowledge is codified, public, external, and accessible
- *More interpersonal connections of shorter duration
- *Knowledge is more often transferable



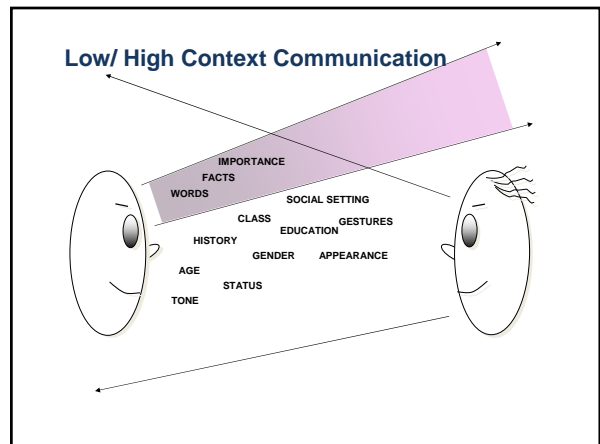
High-Context Communicators


- *Less verbally explicit communication, less written/formal information
- *More internalized understandings of what is communicated
- *Long term relationships
- *Knowledge is situational, relational



High-Context Communicators

- *Decisions and activities focus around personal face-to-face relationships, often around a central person who has authority






Resources

“I use the Fogg index for most docs that are intended for a second language group to increase comprehensibility.”

http://www.online-utility.org/english/readability_test_and_improve.jsp


Dr George Simons



Resources

“I use **Flesch Kincaid Readability Test** to keep track of my complexity. Eg word like ‘Am-er-i-can’ with 4 syllables makes assessed reading level fly through the ceiling.”


Dr Anne Copeland, The Interchange Institute.



Resources

Contending with Globalization in World Englishes

2010 Mukul Saxena, Tope Omoniyi, eds.



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